

Addictive Psychopathology, Smoking, and Drinking Among Adolescents in One Region

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ABSTRACT

This study purported to investigate the psychopathology of addiction, smoking, and drinking among adolescents in one region. Addictive psychopathology was investigated in terms of anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression. This study performed a secondary analysis of statistical data from a survey with 28,256 participants; a two-sample t-test was used. The results of this study showed that anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression differed according to current smoking and drinking habits. Addictive psychopathology is related to smoking and drinking behavior; therefore, prevention of addictive psychopathology through smoking and drinking behavior correction is required.

Keywords: adolescent, addiction, psychopathology, smoking, drinking

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are more likely to accept the rewards from the smoking and drinking more positively and exhibit addictive behaviors more easily compared to adults because their “ability to regulate and control” is not yet fully developed [1]. Studies have reported that addiction to internet games and smartphones can negatively affect adolescents' emotions, behavioral patterns, and psychosocial development [2-3]. However, there is a lack of specific studies on the relationship between the addiction potential of smoking and drinking in adolescents and their resulting psychopathology.

This study aims to provide basic data for establishing youth addiction prevention policies in a local city. The specific study objectives were as follow:

1. To identify the relationship between addiction psychopathology (anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression) and smoking.
2. To identify the relationship between addiction psychopathology (anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression) and drinking habits.

METHODS

Study design

This descriptive study aimed to identify the relationship between addiction psychopathology, smoking, and drinking among adolescents in one region of South Korea.

Participants and data

This study used some of the addiction psychopathology data from the public data of the 2021 Drinking Survey Study [4] conducted on adolescents in City A. A total of 26,844 data points from 12 elementary schools, 171 middle schools, and 144 general high schools were used. The survey was conducted as a self-reported online survey, only for voluntary participants.

Study instruments

1. This 'addictive psychopathology' question consists of a total of 12 items and is measured on a 5-point scale, ranging from '1: not at all' to '5: very much'.
2. 'Addictive psychopathology' questions included 'anxiety: three questions', 'depression: three questions', 'impulsivity: three questions', and 'aggression: three questions'. The specific questions were as follows:
3. Anxiety: I am worried a lot. / I am usually sensitive and anxious. / I worry about small things.
4. Depression: I get sad easily about trivial things. / My heart is troubled by my mistakes. / No one understands me.
5. Impulsivity: If I do not do what I want to do right away, I feel like I am going crazy. / I cannot control myself, so I often act haphazardly. / There are times when I regret saying things without thinking.
6. Aggression: I get angry about small things. / I am harsh and mean to my family at times. / Sometimes, you want to say harsh words or swear words out loud.

RESULT

Addictive psychopathology and smoking

There was a difference in the mean anxiety scores ($2.94 < 3.25$, $t = -5.272$, $p < 0.001$), mean depression scores ($2.42 < 3.25$, $t = -9.740$, $p < 0.001$), mean impulsivity scores ($2.18 < 2.85$, $t = -14.210$, $p < 0.001$), and mean aggression scores of the non-smoking and the smoking groups ($2.34 < 2.85$, $t = -10.336$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 1). In other words, the scores for anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression were significantly higher in current smokers.

Table 1. Addictive psychopathology and smoking

Variables		Differences in addictive psychopathology			
		Mean	SD	t	p
Anxiety	No smoking	2.94	1.177	- 5.727	<0.001
	Currently smoking	3.25	1.224		
Depression	No smoking	2.42	1.058	- 9.740	<0.001
	Currently smoking	2.90	1.200		
Impulsiveness	No smoking	2.18	0.982	-14.210	<0.001
	Currently smoking	2.83	1.181		
Aggression	No smoking	2.34	1.050	-10.336	<0.001
	Currently smoking	2.85	1.191		

Addictive psychopathology and drinking

There was a difference in the mean anxiety scores of students ($2.93 < 3.23$, $t = -8.766$, $p < 0.001$), mean depression scores ($2.41 < 2.76$, $t = -11.294$, $p < 0.001$), impulsivity mean score ($2.17 < 2.56$, $t = -13.403$, $p < 0.001$), and mean aggression scores who did not currently drink and those who smoke ($2.33 < 2.70$, $t = -12.079$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 2). Anxiety, depression, impulsivity, and aggression scores were significantly higher among current drinkers.

Table 2. Addictive psychopathology and drinking

Variables		Differences in addictive psychopathology			
		Mean	SD	t	p
Anxiety	No drinking	2.93	1.178	- 8.766	<0.001
	Currently drinking	3.23	1.155		
Depression	No drinking	2.41	1.058	-11.294	<0.001
	Currently drinking	2.76	1.110		
Impulsiveness	No drinking	2.17	0.981	-13.403	<0.001
	Currently drinking	2.56	1.091		
Aggression	No drinking	2.33	1.049	-12.079	<0.001
	Currently drinking	2.70	1.106		

DISCUSSION

This study found that addictive psychopathology is related to smoking and drinking habits. This is similar to the finding that smoking and drinking among adolescents are correlated with depression and anxiety [5-6] and that they are correlated with anger and impulsivity [7]. Based on the finding that smoking and drinking among adolescents are correlated with addictive psychopathology, education on smoking and drinking prevention should contribute to the betterment of the mental health of adolescents.

References

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