Alcohol use disorder (AUD) classification: Exploring the impact of childhood adversities and parental influence

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Background: Patterns of alcohol use in later life may become clearer by exploring developmental trajectories. Recent person centred approaches have begun to focus on how varying combinations of adverse childhood events can have differing long term outcomes at an individual level.

Method: Data from the U.S national epidemiologic survey on alcohol and related conditions were analysed (n=34,254). A latent class analysis which identified childhood adversity profiles was incorporated into the AUD model. Multinomial logistic regression was used to explore associations between past experiences and the impact on current AUD status.

Results: Three subtypes of childhood adversities emerged from the latent class analysis: Class 1 (60%) 'low adversities', class 2 (14%) 'high adversities' and class 3 (26%) 'high emotional and physical abuse'. The experience of multiple and varying adversities and experience of high emotional and physical abuse had a substantial impact on a lifetime diagnosis of AUD and alcohol abuse. Demographic variables: Gender, age, income, ethnicity and education, all also had a significant impact on a lifetime diagnosis of AUD and alcohol abuse.

Conclusions: This research has been useful in assessing the impact of past experiences on current AUD status. It further highlights the utility of considering early development trajectories.

Biography

Emma is currently studying for her PhD at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland, where she formerly completed her undergrad degree in psychology. The area of study for her thesis is focused on the experience of adverse childhood events, later life trauma, addiction, and intimate partner violence with implications for subsequent mental health.

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