

Emotion Dysregulation as Mediator between Child Abuse and Opiate Use Motives

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Abstract : Coping motives are considered to be indicators of problematic substance use. The present investigation examined a model with emotional abuse as an antecedent and emotional dysregulation as a mediator leading to substance use. The intent of this study was to examine the associations between various types of childhood maltreatment and motives for substance use. The sample consisted of 72 male opiate users recruited from those enrolled for Methadone Maintenance treatment. Participants responded to measures of childhood maltreatment, emotion dysregulation, and motives for opiate use. All data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficients and bootstrap analysis of mediation. Results supported the hypothesis that the experience of emotional abuse in childhood is associated with problems in regulating emotions which in turn correlates with opiate use as a way to cope with negative affect, to enhance positive effect or to obtain social rewards. Bootstrap analysis confirmed the mediating role of emotion dysregulation. Findings support the potential utility of further research into emotion dysregulation and motives as antecedents of problematic opiate use.

Keywords : childhood abuse, emotion dysregulation, motives, substance use

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