

Effects of Harmful Alcohol Consumption and Gender on Academic and Personal-Emotional Adjustment in First Year University Students in Spain

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Abstract : The first year at university is a critical period for personal-emotional and academic adjustment in emerging adults. Moreover, some studies show that alcohol consumption increases in young adults on transition to university. The main purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of hazardous alcohol consumption and gender on adjustment to university, understood as a multidimensional construct involving an array of demands. A sample of 300 first year students in Spain completed the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) and the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT). Examination of the data by analysis of variance revealed that adjustment to university was lower in the students undertaking hazardous alcohol consumption than in the other students. Surprisingly, the personal-emotional adjustment of students with hazardous alcohol consumption was not lower than in the other students. Analysis of the gender effect revealed that levels of personal-emotional adjustment were higher in males than in females. This is our first study examining the influence of alcohol consumption on university adjustment. Future research should examine this relationship more closely, with the aim of designing public health strategies focused on limiting abusive consumption of alcohol in university students.

Keywords : alcohol consumption, first year university students, gender, SACQ

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