

BEGINNING TO EXPLAIN DIFFERENCES IN RISKY ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BEHAVIORS ACROSS HOSPITALITY BUSINESS AND NON-HOSPITALITY BUSINESS POPULATIONS USING THE VOLLRATH AND TORGENSEN PERSONALITY TYPOLOGY

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Purpose Statement

This presentation will provide a brief review of research on alcohol consumption among college-age populations followed by a brief review of research on alcohol consumption specific to hospitality business sub-populations. This review will establish that the hospitality business sub-population engages in a higher rate of unhealthy and hazardous alcohol consumption than comparable non-hospitality populations, and that the attempts to explain the disparity in alcohol consumption have yet to yield much meaningful results. Subsequent to the alcohol consumption literature, the discussion will focus on the general association between personality, stress, and coping, but will specifically draw from the literature on personality typologies in a new attempt to start to explain why hospitality business populations appear to be more likely to engage in harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption than comparable non-hospitality business populations.

Brief Literature Review

The presentation will suggest that the disparity in alcohol consumption across hospitality business and non-hospitality populations can start to be explained from the perspective of self-selection and personality types. Specifically, two categories of personalities are likely to seek to consume alcohol at high levels and thus be attracted to hospitality business. These are a) those personality types that score high on sensation seeking, and b) those personalities that may desire to self-medicate with alcohol due to high levels of neuroticisms and not be inhibited in such self-medication by their levels of conscientiousness. The sensation seeking personality types labeled as Hedonists and Impulsives, and the highly neurotic but low conscientiousness personality types labeled as Insecures and Impulsives should thus be overrepresented among the hospitality students compared to students of a different major.

Results

The findings are consistent with expectations, Hedonists and Impulsives were over-represented in the hospitality student sub-population compared to other majors, while Insecures were unexpectedly under-represented. It appears that people self-select into hospitality based on personality typologies. Personality types that are sensation seeking and desire to experience the

effects of alcohol and experiences linked to alcohol consumption may seek to study and work in hospitality occupations. In addition, personality types that desire to self-medicate in order to feel less of a neurotic burden may seek to study and work in environments that allow and encourage such self-medications. It was proposed that the most likely personality typologies to wish to self-medicate would be those high on neuroticism and low on conscientiousness, however, conscientiousness does not appear to play the anticipated modifying role.

References

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