

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE-FACTOR MODEL OF PERSONALITY AND THE USE OF ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES IN ADOLESCENTS

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RESUMEN

El consumo de sustancias adictivas es una actividad muy popular en nuestra cultura que cobra gran importancia en la adolescencia. Aunque diversos estudios muestran que en la actualidad los adolescentes consumen menos alcohol que en años anteriores, el consumo de este, de cannabis o de tabaco continúan siendo preocupantes. Por lo tanto, es importante realizar estudios donde se analicen los factores que influyen en el consumo y desarrollar intervenciones para prevenir su uso. El Modelo de los Cinco Factores (MCF; McCrae y Costa, 2010) es uno de los más útiles actualmente. Propone cinco dimensiones de personalidad y 30 facetas (seis por dimensión). Los cinco factores son: neuroticismo (N), extraversión (E), apertura a la experiencia (O), amabilidad (A) y responsabilidad (C). El objetivo de este trabajo fue examinar la relación entre el MCF y el consumo de alcohol, tabaco y cannabis. Una muestra de 404 participantes (media de edad 14,24, 52% de chicos y 48% de chicas) respondieron a los cuestionarios. Los instrumentos utilizados fueron la forma corta de la versión española para adolescentes del NEO-PI-R (JS NEO-S; Ortet et al., 2010) y la escala de consumo de sustancias (AIS; Ibáñez et al., 2015). Los resultados mostraron que las facetas de impulsividad (N) y búsqueda de emociones (E) se relacionaron con el consumo de alcohol y tabaco, pero no con el cannabis. La faceta fantasía (O) solo se relacionó con el consumo de cannabis, mientras que actitud conciliadora (A) correlacionó negativamente con las tres sustancias. Por su parte, deliberación (C) no se relacionó con ninguna sustancia. Por lo tanto, solo parte de nuestras hipótesis se cumplieron. A pesar de los resultados no esperados, podemos concluir que los rasgos de personalidad juegan un papel a tener en cuenta en la predisposición hacia el consumo de sustancias adictivas, y su estudio podría ser de gran ayuda para el desarrollo de programas de prevención.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Personalidad, adolescentes, adicciones, alcohol, cannabis, tabaco.

ABSTRACT

Substance use is a very common activity in our culture that becomes very important in adolescence. Although different studies show that adolescents nowadays consume less alcohol than in previous years, its consumption and also the use of cannabis or tobacco is worrying. Accordingly, it is important to carry out studies that analyze the factors that influence consumption and develop interventions to prevent their use. The Five-Factor Model (FFM; McCrae & Costa, 2010) is one of the most useful personality models. It proposes five broad traits: neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness to experience (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C). The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between the FFM and the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis. A sample of 404 participants (mean age 14.24, 52% boys and 48% girls) answered the questionnaires. The instruments used were the Short form of the Junior Spanish version of the NEO-PI-R (JS NEO-S; Ortet et al., 2010) and the Alcohol and other drugs Intake Scale (AIS; Ibáñez et al., 2015). Results showed that impulsiveness (N) and the excitement seeking (E) facets were related to alcohol and tobacco consumption, but not cannabis. Fantasy (O) facet was only related to the consumption of cannabis, while compliance (A) was negatively correlated with the three substances. Nonetheless, deliberation (C) was not related to any substance. Therefore, our hypotheses were only partly demonstrated. Despite the unexpected results, we can conclude that personality traits may be taken into account in the predisposition to consume addictive substances, and their study would help to develop prevention programs.

KEYWORDS

Personality, adolescents, addictions, alcohol, cannabis, tobacco.

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INTRODUCTION

METHOD

Substance use is very common in our society (Folgar, 2022). Adolescence is a key stage for starting the use of addictive substances, an age marked by discovering and experimentation. According to the ESPAD Report, Spanish youngsters consume more alcohol and cannabis than the European average (ESPAD, 2019). Therefore, knowing the factors and influences associated with this consumption may help to create prevention interventions and raise awareness about related risks for teenagers (Rial et al., 2020). Currently, one of the most useful personality models that has wide consensus is the Five-Factor Model (FFM; McCrae & Costa, 2010). It proposes five dimensions: neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness to experience (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C). Each dimension is composed of six facets. This model allows the integration of the majority of the biopsychosocial models of personality traits (Malouff et al., 2007). Previous studies have found that people with high scores in impulsivity and sensation-seeking tend to use substances (Mendigutxia-Sorabilla, 2020; Palma, 2021). Likewise, the facets of dutifulness and deliberation (C), and excitement seeking (E), and impulsiveness and angry hostility (N) have been the most related facets to alcohol consumption (Lui, 2022).

The **objective** of this research work was to examine the relationship between the FFM and the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis during adolescence.

The **hypotheses** were:

- H1: Only the neuroticism facet impulsiveness would be related to the use of the three substances.
- H2: Extraversion would be related to the three substances, especially the excitement seeking facet.
- H3: Openness would not be associated with any substance, although the facet fantasy would be related to the use of marijuana.
- H4: Conscientiousness would be associated with the three substances, especially its deliberation facet.
- H5: Agreeableness would be associated with the three substances, especially the compliance and straightforwardness facets.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

N=404
M Age=14.24
σ Age=1.6
Min age=12
Max age=17
♂=209 (52%)
♀=194 (48%)

MEASURES

The Short form of the Junior Spanish version of the NEO-PI-R (JS NEO-S; Ortet et al., 2010)
The Alcohol Intake Scale (AIS; Ibáñez et al., 2015)



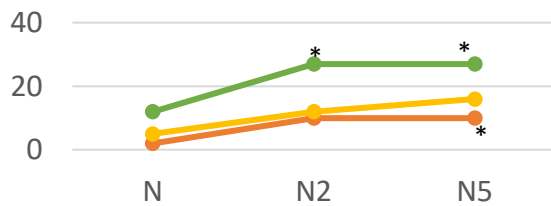
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DATA ANALYSIS

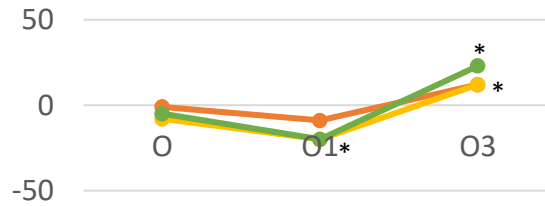
Pearson correlations

RESULTS

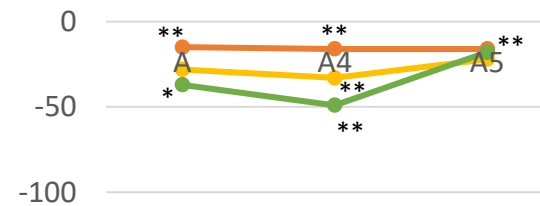
NEUROTICISM



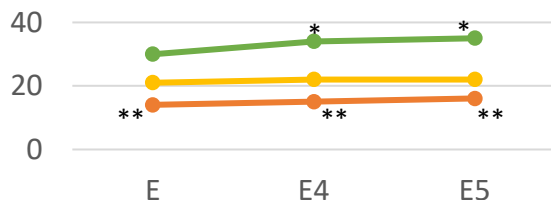
OPENNESS



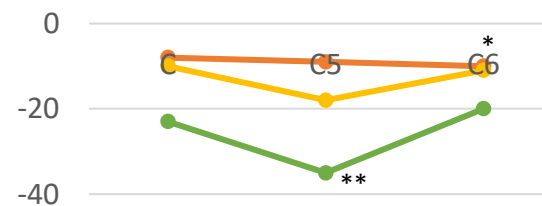
AGREEABLENESS



EXTRAVERSION



CONSCIENTIOUSNESS



N: neuroticism; N2: Angry Hostility; N5: Impulsiveness
E: extraversion; E4: Activity; E5: Excitement Seeking
C: conscientiousness; C5: Self-Discipline; C6: Deliberation
O: openness; O1: Fantasy; O3: Feelings
A: agreeableness; A4: Compliance; A5: Modesty



DISCUSSION

Neuroticism did not correlate with substance use, although the impulsiveness facet (urgency, difficulty to control cravings) was associated with alcohol and tobacco, but not cannabis. These findings partially confirmed the hypothesis (Mendigutxia-Sorabilla, 2020). As predicted, extraversion was related to alcohol consumption, but not the other two substances as hypothesized. Regarding the facets, as expected, the excitement seeking (need of novel and varied sensations) correlated with the consumption of alcohol and tobacco, but not marijuana (Palma, 2021). Openness to fantasy, as hypothesized, was associated with the use of cannabis. Accordingly, the tendency to imagination and search for the inner world would increase with the effect of cannabinoids. Agreeableness was only related to alcohol, thus partially confirming the hypothesis. Regarding the facets, as expected, compliance was negatively associated (low socialization) with the consumption of the three substances. In addition, a negative relationship was also found between straightforwardness (manipulation) and cannabis use. Finally, conscientiousness correlated negatively only with tobacco, partially confirming our predictions. Contrary to the findings in previous studies, deliberation was not related to any substance (Lui, 2022).

Although the hypotheses of this study were only partially confirmed, we conclude that those personality traits associated with low self-regulation, sensation seeking, and the tendency to break social norms (compliance) are risk factors for substance use. However, they have a small effect size for substance use in adolescence. These findings may be of particular importance in the development and implementation of personalized substance use prevention programs.

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