

Motivations for Pre-drinking in Undergraduate Students

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Background

Pre-drinking (also referred to in the research as prepartying, pregaming, preloading, and prefunking; Pederson & LaBrie, 2008) is defined as consuming alcohol before going out to an event where more alcohol may or may not be consumed (Pederson & LaBrie, 2007). Thomas (2007) calls this a "dangerous new type of teenage drinking" that researchers should begin to examine, and other authors suggest that pre-drinking is associated with greater alcohol consumption and more alcohol-related consequences (DeJong, DeRicco, & Schneider, 2010; Pederson & LaBrie, 2007). However, it was only recently that researchers began to explore the reasons for pre-drinking. While it has been proposed that lowering the drinking age would significantly decrease pre-drinking, based on the assumption that under-age students cannot otherwise obtain alcohol at public events, the high prevalence in students who are of legal-drinking-age suggests that age is not the only factor. LaBrie, Hummer, Pederson, Lac, and Chithambo (2012) developed a measure to assess reasons for pre-drinking, entitled the *Prepartying Motives Inventory*. They discovered four factors within their measure suggesting that students predrink for reasons of interpersonal enhancement (e.g., loosen up before going out), situational control (e.g., to decrease the risk of drink-tampering at the main event), intimate pursuit (e.g., to increase the likelihood of 'hooking up'), and barriers to consumption (e.g., if alcohol is unavailable at the final destination). This sixteen-item measure was determined to be reliable and valid, with a good factor structure, but has yet to be cross-validated or tested with another sample. The current project sought to (a) confirm the factor structure of the current PMI, (b) determine the validity and reliability of the measure with a new (Canadian) sample, and (c) determine if there are any common reasons for pre-drinking that are not assessed by the PMI.

Methodology

Participants

- 226 undergraduate students drawn from our Psychology participant pool (mean age = 20.27)
 - 66% Female
 2% Transgender
 - 10/ upknovyn
- 77% White
- 7% Middle Eastern

• 13% Other

• 31% Male • 1% unknown • 3% Black

Measures completed via an online survey

- Prepartying Motives Inventory (PMI; LaBrie et al., 2012)
- Open Ended Questions regarding pre-drinking behavior
- Demographic questionnaire

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Model	χ ²	df	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA		IE	SC	ВС	IP
One Factor Model	651.121	99	<.001	.693	.628	.151	IE	.74			
Three Factor Model*	219.894	96	<.001	.931	.914	.073	SC	.28	.69		
Three Factor Model* (without item 3)	183.071	83	<.001	.940	.925	.070	BC	.35	.73	.75	
Four Factor Model*	178.552	94	<.001	.953	.940	.061	IP	.63	.19	.40	.77
Four Factor Model*† (without item 3)	143.865	81	<.001	.963	.952	.057	Factor Correlation Matrix, for the final model, with square root of AVE (average variance extracted) on diagonal				

*statistics indicate adequate fit according to recommendations by Hu & Bentler 1999 †best fitting model

All Cronbach's Alpha ≥ .73 Composite Reliability ≥ .72

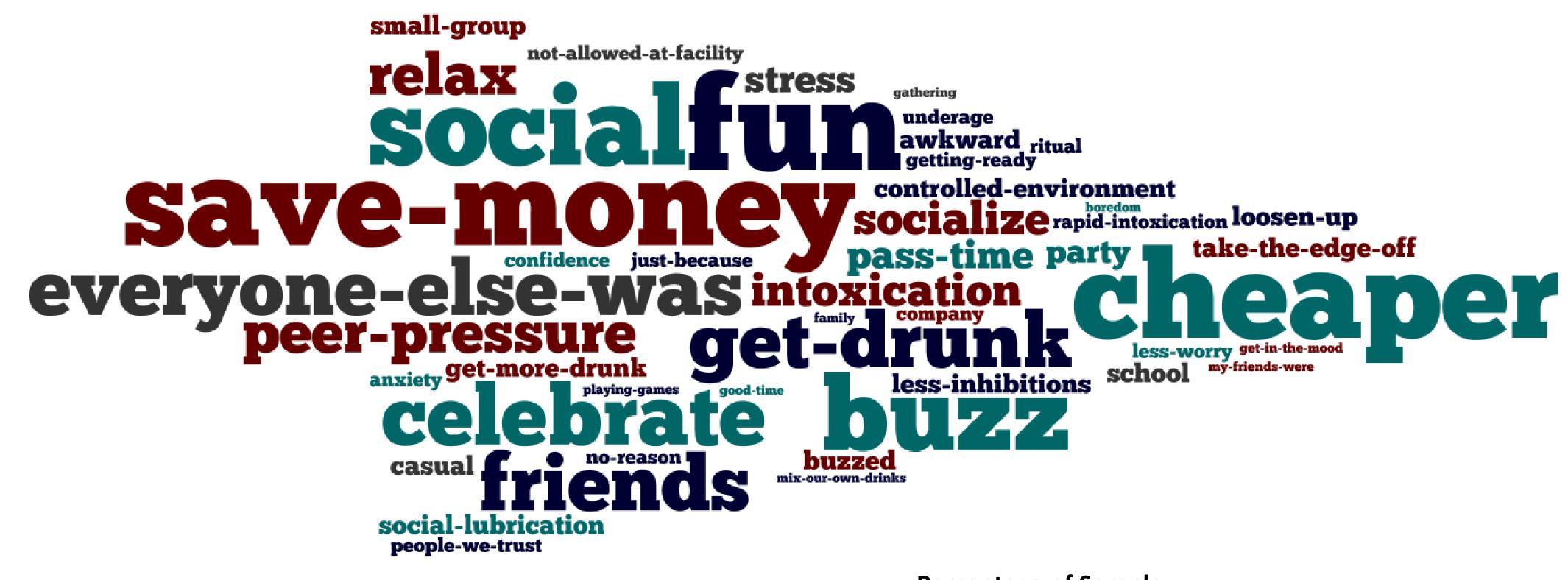
Factor	Item (standardized weight)
Interpersonal Enhancement (IE)	To pump myself up to go out (.55) Because having a few drinks before going out makes the night more interesting (.73) To meet new friends once I got out (.68) To relax or loosen up before I go out (.77) It makes talking to new people easier (.84) It helps me feel more relaxed when meeting new members of the opposite sex (.86)
Situational Control (SC)	To enjoy my favourite drink in case the place I am going does not serve that drink (.55) So I have control over what type of alcohol I consume rather than relying what's available at the destination (.86) So I don't have to worry about whether someone has tampered with the drinks at the party (.76) So I don't have to drink at the place where I'm going (.50)
Intimate Pursuit (IP)	To meet a potential dating partner during pre-drinking (.67) To meet a potential dating partner once I go out (.76) To increase the likelihood of hooking up (.87)
Barriers to Consumption (BC)	Because alcohol may not be available or may be hard to get at the destination (.75) To avoid getting caught with alcohol on the way to, or at the final destination (.76)

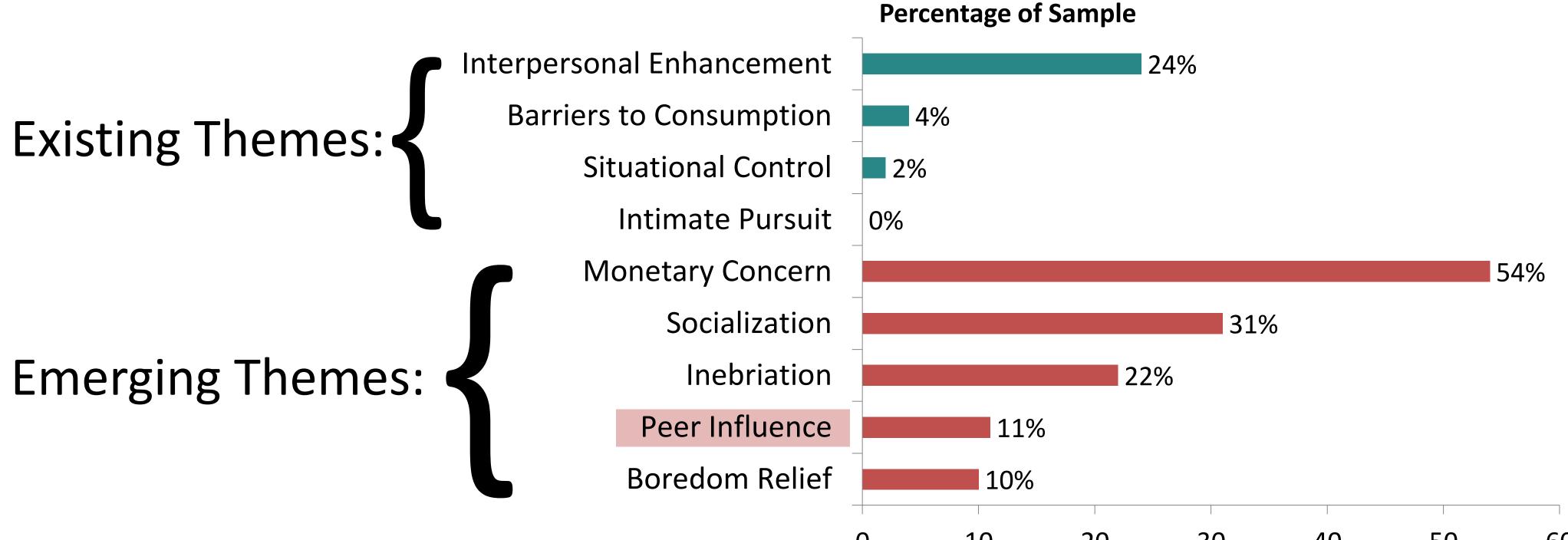
^{*}Item removed: Because I am underage and cannot purchase alcohol at the destination venue. (BC)

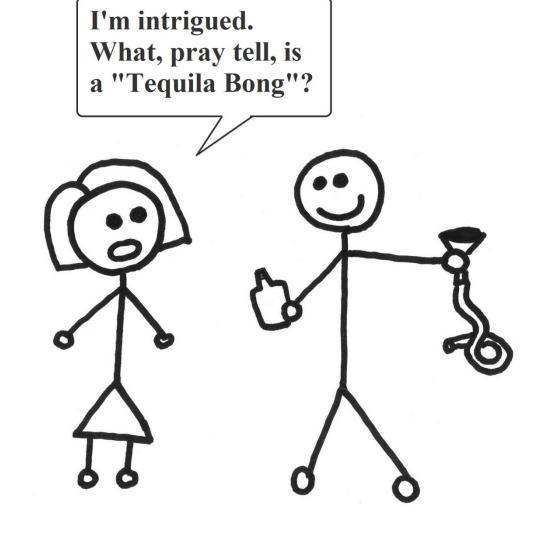
Improvement to the model fit was attained by removing one item. We acknowledge that it may still be important, but since our sample was largely over the legal drinking age in Ontario (19 years), there was minimal variance associated with this item. The contribution of "drinking age" to pre-drinking behavior is likely specific to areas with higher age requirements. However, it is definitely not the sole cause or contributor.

Situational Control and Barriers to Consumption have the highest factor correlation. This is likely because they both relate to the desire to control alcohol consumption, whether to limit it, ensure it, or simply control the environment in which one drinks.

Thematic Analysis Results







The existence of *peer influence* as a reason for pre-drinking incites some new questions. Some participants indicated that peer pressure is stronger while pre-drinking because there are less people and everyone knows how much you are drinking.



Conclusions, Implications and Suggestions

Intimate Pursuit was not freely identified by any participants when asked about reasons for predrinking. However, the construct does clearly exist. More research needs to be done to determine the most prevalent and most important reasons students decide to pre-drink.

The present investigation allows for a better understanding of student motivations for predrinking. Research in this area is particularly important because pre-drinking is associated with elevated risk in comparison to general drinking behavior.

It is recommended that future research in this area includes items related to the newly identified themes (especially those related to peer influence), and focuses on further inventory development and refinement. It is further suggested that the consequences associated with predrinking may be related to the reasons for which students engage in it, and future research should attempt to delineate a model for risky pre-drinking.