

Experiencing aggression in clubs: Social group and individual level predictors

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Abstract

To examine the social drinking groups influence on the individuals experiences of physical or sexual aggression at clubs, data were collected from 368 groups (N = 986 individuals). Both group and individual level indicators were examined for impact on self-reports of physical and sexual aggression experiences while at the club. Recent aggressive experiences and perpetration, concerns for group safety, ones own plans and assessment of other group members plans to drink to the point of intoxication, and personal characteristics were examined, using both individual and group indicators. At exit, participants reported experiencing physical aggression (12.3 %) and sexual aggression (12.6 %) at the club. Using generalized linear mixed modeling to account for nested data (club, event, and group), group level indicators predicted both the individuals physical and sexual aggression experiences. Especially for experiences of physical aggression, group effects are notable. Being in a group whose members recently experienced physical aggression increased the risk for the individual. Interestingly, groups that had higher levels of planned intoxication decreased risks of experiencing aggression, while a discrepancy in these intentions among group members increased the risks. Group effects were also noted for experiencing sexual aggression. High levels of prior experiences for sexual aggression in the group increased the risks for the individual during the event. Also, being in a group that is identified as having at least one member who is frequently drunk increases the risk for experiencing sexual aggression. These findings inform prevention strategies for young adults engaged in high-risk behaviors by targeting social drinking groups who frequent clubs.

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