

Role of alcohol consumption on self- perceived attractiveness



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‘ Beauty is in The Eye of the Beer Holder’: People who think they are drunk also think they are attractive

Summary:

This study was designed by Laurent Begue et al. to test the role of alcohol consumption on self-perceived attractiveness and if alcohol could produce more responses. Two studies were done to test the hypothesis. The first study done had a total of 19 participants, both men and women. This is a correlational study because they are looking at the relationship between self-perceived attractiveness and how drunk they were. The second study had 94 French men at first, but some were removed because they did not follow the directions. The new total became 86 men. This study was experimental because it had independent and dependent variables. The independent variables are consumption of alcoholic drinks or nonalcoholic drinks and the participants. The dependent variables are whether or not the effects of self-perceived attractiveness were a pharmacological effect, or it was from the effects of alcohol, or both which the research is not able to control, and change and it is the outcome variable that resulted from the independent variable established by the researcher at the beginning of the study.

The first study were 63% male and 37% female. The participants were put in a barroom in Grenoble, France because it was a naturalistic setting. They were given a survey to rate how attractive, bright, original and funny they felt at the moment. The scale was from 1 being nor at all and 7 being extremely. Then the blood alcohol level was estimated. A breathalyzer was used to measure the blood alcohol level. After there were debriefed. The

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results supported the hypothesis of the study and showed a positive correlation between the alcohol in the participants' bloodstream and attractiveness. However, a direct relation cannot be proven because correlation does not equal causation.

In the second study, participants were recruited by a newspaper ad and were told it was a taste test study. There were tests done to determine if anyone was a potential at-risk drinker and allergic to anything. Participants were told it would be done at a private research firm, Stat-Food, which is a false company made for the study only. Some participants were given alcohol and others were given a placebo. The placebo group were randomly given drink conditions. Then the placebo group allowed researchers to find the pharmacological effects of alcohol. However, the placebo group grew suspicious. In the condition where they were given alcohol they were told they would taste drinks without alcohol, but it tasted like alcohol. After the participants had their drinks, they were asked to do an ad for the drinks. Then, they were told to rate how attractive they perceived themselves at that moment and an objective judge rated the participants as well. The results for the second study showed that when participants thought they drank alcohol had positive self-evaluations than those who did not have alcohol. The effect of alcohol content and alcohol expectancy were not important. "The study suggested that alcohol-related expectancies, but not actual alcohol content, influenced self-evaluations of attractiveness" (British Journal of Psychology, 2013).

The studies showed when people drink alcohol, they see themselves as more attractive and alcohol-related experiences lead to an increase of people thinking
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they are attractive, but there was no evidence that alcohol-related expectancies decreased attractiveness in unattractive individuals. The research showed alcohol-related expectancies can boost self-perceived attractiveness. However, the perceived attractiveness is not shared by anyone else

Critique:

Overall, the study chose a way to test the hypothesis. It was done ethically because all the participants had informed consent and they were debriefed at the end of the study.

I find this study reliable and valid. Validity is how to tell how well test measurements are being measured. Reliability is when a study or experiment is repeatable. In the second study was done better, if they did the study a second time the results would be the same. The participants in the study were tested and the researcher removed any participants that were suspect and might ruin the study. The study is measuring exactly what it says its measuring.

This study was ethical because the researchers took cautious steps before the study. They had participants see a doctor before doing the study and took out anything that may be at risk to alcohol dependence. They gave them alcohol doses based on their weight so it would not overly affect them. They were then able to leave when their blood alcohol content was 0.

One methodological problem was the sample of the study because it was based on men who could follow the rules. Women and younger people may

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react differently to alcohol composition than men. Having women in the study may have changed what they found during the study. In the second study they were all French men, so the population was not very diverse. Having the study with a random sample would make it strong because it would make it more relatable to the population as a whole.

Some problems encountered during the study were the suspicion in the participants. There were cues, internal cues, instructional cues and gustative cues. The cues affected the people on the placebo group because they did not feel intoxicated. In the other group that was not a placebo they felt intoxicated even though they were told their drinks were non-alcoholic. All of this raised the suspicion in the first study. In the second study they were less suspicious because steps were taken to reduce the level of suspicion.

Some additional research implications are how people would rate other people when they are intoxicated. The study shows how alcohol consumption could cloud and impair people's judgements. Alcohol consumption can have a huge impact on people's relationships.

The results were strong because they agreed with the hypothesis of the study. The study was weak because the sample was not very diverse and would need to be larger to make the study stronger. There would need to be males and females assigned to each of the groups in the study. The study was also weak because there were participants that were suspicious of the study. If they used a blind technique the suspicion could be lower, so the participants would not think of it.

Brief Summary:

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The study looked at how alcohol consumption could affect self-perceived attractiveness. This study had to separated studies to test the hypothesis. In study one they were given a survey to rate on how they felt about themselves. They got a lottery ticket for volunteering in the study. The results showed the more alcohol they more attractive people thought they were. In the second study participants were given either an alcoholic drink or a non-alcoholic drink. Half of the group believed they drank alcohol and half believed they did not. After they had the drinks, they gave a speech and rated themselves. The speeches were rated by 22 judges and were videotaped. They were recited from a newspaper ad and they were paid 21 dollars per hour. The results of this part of the study showed that participants thought they had alcohol rated themselves more positive self-evaluations, bit the judges showed that the boost in self evaluation was not related to their performance.

References

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