



The Relationship Between Perceived Stress & Alcohol Related Problems in Couples that Identify as White or Black

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Purpose: Existing literature establishes a robust association between romantic relationship stress and elevated levels of alcohol use. This association may be particularly salient for couples with minoritized identities as racial inequities lead to greater social disadvantages (e.g., poverty & stigma). Consequently, racial discrimination has been linked to increased alcohol use and alcohol-related problems. Furthermore, prior research has found an association between perceived racial stress and elevated levels of alcohol consumption. The current study examines the relationship between race, perceived stress, and alcohol-related problems among community couples. **Methods:** Participants included 92 (N=184) couples that self-identified their race as either Black or White. The sample included same- and mixed-sex couples with shared racial identities. At least one partner met criteria for alcohol use disorder and all couples reported a history of intimate partner violence. The Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) was used to measure alcohol use related problems. Additionally, the sample's stress levels were assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). **Results:** To test these associations, we estimated a two-level multilevel model. Alcohol-related problems were regressed onto perceived stress moderated by racial identity (i.e., Black or White). Surprisingly, there were no significant associations between alcohol-related problems, racial identity and perceived stress. **Conclusion:** Given the sample characteristics, it is possible these participants experience higher than average levels of perceived stress which may account for the lack of associations observed. Limitations and future directions will be discussed.