Food and Alcohol Disturbance Among US College Students: A Narrative Review
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INTRODUCTION

Background
- Disordered eating and problematic alcohol use are primary health concerns on US college campuses
- Research has highlighted that a reciprocal association between disordered eating and alcohol use might exist for some individuals (e.g., Dudge & Clarke, 2018; Peralta et al., 2019). This phenomenon is referred to as food and alcohol disturbance (FAD)
- Most definitions of FAD emphasize the use of compensatory behaviors to offset caloric intake associated with alcohol consumption and/or enhance intoxication effects (e.g., Dinger et al., 2017; Gorrell et al., 2018)

Study Aims
- **Aim 1:** Examine how FAD has been conceptualized in the current literature
- **Aim 2:** Determine estimated prevalence rates of FAD, and how this differs according to demographic factors and subcultures
- **Aim 3:** Identify the psychological correlates of FAD
- **Aim 4:** Investigate the consequences of FAD

METHOD

Conceptualization
- The Compensatory Eating and Behaviors in Response to Alcohol Consumption Scale (CEBRACS) was the most commonly utilized measure followed by single items (see Table 1)
- Almost a third of the studies did not address enhanced intoxication effects
- The majority of studies operationalized FAD behaviors as including proactive (i.e., before drinking) eating (e.g., caloric restriction) and/or exercise modification

RESULTS

Prevalence
- Prevalence estimates of FAD behavior ranged from approximately 10-55% of participants (see Figure 2)
- **Gender:** FAD behaviors, especially those connected to weight control, might be more common in women
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Findings are inconclusive but white students may be more likely to engage in FAD than Black/African American students
- **Subculture:** Greek affiliation may be associated with higher FAD and athlete status with lower FAD

Correlates
- **Alcohol use:** Drinking quantity, frequency and episodes of heavy episodic drinking may predict FAD
- **Disordered eating:** Disordered eating (e.g., cognitive restraint, excessive exercise, and drive for thinness) may predict FAD
- **Personality:** Masculinity and masculine orientation may potentially predict FAD
- **Affective:** Potential links between PTSD symptoms, cortisol levels, and coping motives
- **Social:** Peer appearance pressures, internalized sexual objectification, and conformity motives were identified as correlates

Consequences
- FAD associated with higher levels of alcohol-related consequences

DISCUSSION

Limitations of Current Research
- Measures and definitions for examining FAD have been inconsistent
- Enhanced intoxication effects have been largely neglected
- Samples have been predominantly White and female
- Few studies have examined the same correlates
- Majority of studies are cross-sectional

Future Directions
- A comprehensive and consistent definition of FAD is needed
- Enhanced intoxication effects should be further evaluated when studying FAD behaviors
- Studies should also recruit more diverse samples in order to examine prevalence among different demographics
- Additional research is needed to examine the underlying motives of FAD as well as to identify other predictors and correlates that might increase risk
- Longitudinal research on the progression and outcomes of FAD is warranted

Table 1: Measurement of FAD and the Number of Studies That Used Each Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement of FAD Behaviors</th>
<th>Number of Studies Using Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Item</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEBRACS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkorexia Scale</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkorexia Motives &amp; Behaviors Scale</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICB-WGA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDBS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Search Strategy Flow Chart

Figure 2: Bar Graph of the Studies that Reported the Prevalence of FAD Behaviors