**IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES ON CURRENT E-CIGARETTE USE WITHIN A YOUNG ADULT SAMPLE**

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**ABSTRACT**

The current study examined the association between several emotion competencies, e-cigarette expectancies, and current e-cigarette use. Young adults (M = 20.41 years) answered questions regarding emotion regulation, distress tolerance, urgency, affect, beliefs about e-cigarettes, and e-cigarette susceptibility. The results indicate that negative affect and positive/negative urgency may play a role in e-cigarette use within this population.

**METHODS**

**Participants:**
- 216 young adults (M-age = 20.41, 36.6% African American)
- Participants included e-cigarette users and non-users.

**Respondents answered questions about:**
- Emotion dysregulation (Difficulties in Regulating Emotion Scale; DERS)
- Positive/negative urgency (Urgency, Premeditation, Perseverance, Sensation seeking, and Positive Urgency Scale; UPSS-P)
- Affect (Positive and Negative Affect Scale, PANAS)
- Distress tolerance (Distress Tolerance Scale, DTS)
- E-cigarette use

**RESULTS**

Path analyses displayed a significant direct effect of negative urgency (β = .208; p = .028*) on negative affect reduction outcome expectancies. Negative affect reduction outcome expectancies mediated the relationship between negative urgency and current e-cigarette use (β = .051, p = .008**).

**DISCUSSION**

It is possible that maladaptive fluctuations in negative and positive affect might play a role in an individual’s smoking behaviors (Kassel, Stroud, & Paronis, 2003). This is supported by the association between negative affect and e-cigarette use in the current study.

The results suggest that emotion regulation difficulties, particularly negative urgency may play a role in initial e-cigarette maintenance. It is possible that individuals with prior difficulties with emotion competencies are more susceptible to using e-cigarettes as a coping mechanism. Therefore, these results might provide some insight on more emotion-focused prevention to reduce e-cigarette initiation.

Emotion competencies, specifically the ability to control one’s impulses during highly emotional periods may play a role in e-cigarette initiation and maintenance. Future research should seek to determine whether these results vary by cultural groups. Further research should investigate emotion regulation training as a tool for prevention and cessation programs.

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