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The relationship between anxious-depressive symptoms and harmful cannabis use: Multiple mediation models via rumination, negative urgency, protective behavioral strategies and refusal self-efficacy

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ABSTRACT

Background: Distressful and negative affective states can be associated with limited self-regulation capacities, while emotion regulation processes (e.g., rumination, negative urgency) might contribute to further depletion of self-control capacities which in turn can lead to diminished control over cannabis use.

Aims: The mediating functions of rumination (i.e., brooding and reflection), negative urgency (NU) and constructs of cannabis use regulation (i.e., cannabis protective behavioral strategies [CPBS] and cannabis refusal self-efficacy [CRSE]) were examined on the associations between anxious-depressive symptoms and cannabis use outcomes (i.e., frequency, harmful use).

Methods: The cross-sectional study used a sample of cannabis users showing signs of harmful consumption ($N = 750$; Males: 70.13% [$N = 526$]; Age: $M = 29.11$ [$SD = 7.45$]). Standardized questionnaires measured anxious-depressive symptoms, rumination, NU, CRSE, CPBS, frequency of cannabis use and harmful cannabis use. A linear regression-based, double-mediation model was performed.

Results: Five significant indirect effects were demonstrated in the mediation model. Single-mediation effects were shown between anxious-depressive symptoms and harmful cannabis use via CRSE and via CPBS. Double-mediation effects were presented between anxious-depressive symptoms and harmful cannabis use via reflection and CPBS, via reflection and CRSE, and via NU and CRSE.

Conclusions: Emotion and cannabis use regulation pathways explained the associations between anxious-depressive symptoms and harmful cannabis use. The mediation model provided new details on how anxious-depressive symptoms, rumination and NU might lead to harmful cannabis use via regulation of cannabis use. Limited self-regulation capacities and similarities between emotion and cannabis use regulation processes might explain the identified indirect effects.

Contributions

Zsolt Horváth: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data Curation, Visualization, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing;
Péter Sárosi: Methodology, Investigation, Writing - Review & Editing; **Csilla Magyar:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Provision, Writing - Review & Editing; **Letícia Boda:** Methodology, Investigation, Provision, Writing - Review & Editing; **Eszter Farkas:** Methodology, Investigation, Provision, Writing - Review & Editing; **Mónika Koós:** Methodology, Investigation, Writing - Review & Editing; **Zsolt Demetrovics:** Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing - Review & Editing; **Róbert Urbán:** Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing - Review & Editing.