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EDITORIAL

Theory of Reasoned Action & Theory of Planned Behavior in Alcohol and Drug Education

In the mid to late 1960s Martin Fishbein (1965, 1967), a social psychologist at University of Illinois at Urbana, originated the idea of the relationship between beliefs and attitudes. In the seventies he teamed up with Icek Ajzen of University of Massachusetts, Amherst to write the book, "*Belief, attitude, intention and behavior. An introduction to theory and research*" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) which formed the basis of the Theory of Reasoned action (TRA). In 1980, the Ajzen and Fishbein came up with a second book, *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*, which simplified the TRA and made it more practical for use in a variety of fields. Since the early 1980s the theory has been popular among researchers and practitioners. In 1980s, a meta analysis was done on the TRA (Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988) and it found that the theory had strong predictive utility. Still it was felt by some researchers including Professor Icek Ajzen that theory was deficient in explaining behavior especially of people who have little or feel they have little power over their behaviors. As a result he added a new construct to the TRA. This construct is the concept of perceived behavioral control which resulted in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991).

TRA and TPB have been applied to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. A study conducted in south-eastern Michigan assessed the predictive potential of TPB with regard to use, frequency of use and misuse of alcohol among eighth-graders (Marcoux & Shope, 1997). The study also made a comparison between, TRA and TPB in predicting intention to use alcohol. Multiple regression modeling demonstrated that intention explained about 26% of variance in alcohol use, 37% of variance in frequency of alcohol use and around 30% of variance in alcohol misuse. Peer pressure and friend's experience with alcohol were found to be important variables in the model of TPB. The third important predictor was found to be normative belief of parents. Hence this study underscored variables such as reducing alcohol availability, decreasing