ABSTRACT

This study examined the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory - III profiles in a sample of 107 Chinese substance abusers in Hong Kong. Moreover, it investigated whether qualitatively different subgroups of substance abusers could be identified using the self-medication and sensation-seeking models of substance abuse. Subjects completed the MCMI-III, the Sensation Seeking Scale (Form V), and a questionnaire on demographic characteristics and drug-use pattern. Results indicated that the majority (65%) of substance abusers met criteria for at least one comorbid personality disorder, with antisocial personality disorder being particularly prominent. Subjects also showed an elevated Axis I disorder profile, especially on scales of mood dysregulation. Group comparison analyses revealed that substance abusers high on depressive mood traits had a more elevated Axis I profile than those who were low on depressive mood traits, with mood-related clinical syndromes being most prominent. On the Axis II scales, the substance abusers high on depressive mood traits demonstrated higher interpersonal isolation and mistrust, lower self-esteem, and were more impulsive than those with low depressive mood traits. Also, the substance abusers with high depressive mood traits were more likely to use tranquillisers/ narcotics-analgesics and to use drugs to relieve their painful affective states. Substance abusers high on sensation seeking traits were less socialised, more impulsive, irritable, and reckless than low sensation seekers. Also, the substance abusers with high sensation seeking traits tended to abuse a wider variety of drugs and to have used drugs for a shorter period of time than the low sensation seekers. Results were discussed in the context of self-medication and sensation-seeking models.