

# The Prevalence of Alcohol Consumption: A Cheap Liquor Consumers Perspective during Pandemic

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## **Abstract**

*The study was conducted using an established Alcohol use disorder identification test and accompanied by a face-to-face interview with the consented respondents. The main of this study is to understand motives of cheap liquor consumption among youngsters. The information has been gathered from 10 respondents from rural vicinity in Perak. The outcomes indicated the primary motive for consuming cheap liquor is because of the monetary burden faced by the drinkers. It was observed that male drinkers might devour alcohol to kill boredom and at the same time to release body aches after a day's task. The findings of this study are imperative in providing direction for future studies on alcohol consumption amongst Malaysian adolescents and information for the strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol in the communities.*

*Keywords: Alcohol; Peer pressure; Cheap alcohol; Monetary burden*

## **1. Introduction**

Alcohol consumption is well-known to be the contributing factor to mortality across the globe. On a yearly basis alcohol is responsible for 3.3 million deaths (World Health Organization, 2014). Nevertheless, alcohol is responsible for the increase of economic cost for medical treatment and hospitalization. Alcohol needs to be seen as a pandemic that need to be curbed proactively (Anderson & Baumberg, 2006; Thavorncharoensap et al., 2009). Alcohol intake amongst teenagers can bring about numerous consequences. Glaringly, alcohol intake will affect the health of consumers. There are four primary problems could be resulted from alcohol intake; educational success, social relationships, hazard-taking behaviors and health issues.

Alcohol intake is assessed as craving, tolerance, and pensiveness with alcohol and continues consuming regardless of the drinker privy to its insidious consequences to their health, personal or maybe business affairs (Drummond et al., 1990). The complications of frequent alcohol consumption constantly ignored. Alcohol companies often promoting alcoholism as something 'amusing', but the predominant consequences of everyday consumption are that after humans' 'fun' is constrained the instant they start to rely upon alcohol to socializing (Steketee, 2013).

Alcohol is commonly the first drug that teens engaged with. Patterns of alcohol intake range among nations. In Western societies, alcoholism is socially acknowledged and it is the world's most favoured drug. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, it is legal to consume alcohol in most areas; even though it is forbidden to Muslims. The legal age for consumption is eighteen which would be raised to 21 on 1st December 2017. Christina (2011) stated, regardless of its

small population and size Sommers & Sundararaman (2007), opined that alcohol intake amongst teenagers below 21 has been recognized as a serious health problem.

Malaysia is facing a serious problem due to alcohol consumption. According to statistics retrieved from Institute for Public Health 2015 there is a spike in alcohol drinkers where an increase of above 11.6% in 2015. With the increase of consumption, the Malaysian households are willing to spend RM82.29 per month for alcoholic beverages (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2009; 2014).

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The primary impact on commencement of consuming habits among younger drinkers rooted from parents' attitudes and behaviour with respect to alcohol, before peer influences become more influential and convey it to the subsequent level of consumption referred to as 'addiction'. Youngsters from excessive alcohol consumption family and children of strictly prohibitive parents are much more likely to have an extra risk of consuming excessively. Nonetheless, that is a complex relationship. For example, some children from heavy-consuming parents consciously avoid alcohol due to the poor consequences that they have eye-witnessed in their family (Pettigrew & Donovan, 2013). However, this is seldom seen where children of alcoholic consumers have not tried alcohol.

The issue of alcohol consumption needs immediate attention due to death reports of 15 Malaysians and foreign workers died due to cheap liquor consumption and 30 others hospitalised (Channelnewsasia, 2018). There needs to better understand on the motive that contributes towards cheap alcohol consumption mainly among Malaysians.

## 2. Methodology and Data Collection

There were only ten respondents participated in this study. All respondents were selected for a face-to-face in-depth interview session. All of the participants are daily wage earners. The participants encompass 10 male respondents.

Besides seeking demographical questions to the participants, the Alcohol Use disorders identification test (AUDIT) was used as properly (Babor et al., 2001). The AUDIT is extensively used by scholars as well as medical practitioners to identify the level of hazard.

The participants were identified at surrounding areas of shops selling cheap liquor and informal permission to carry out the research was sought and granted individually. All of the participants were sober. Any participant, who fulfilled the inclusion standards, becomes eligible to participate. The inclusion standards were university students. The AUDIT becomes distributed individually and become accumulated right after completing. Respondents were then asked if they were willing to continue with the in-depth interview session.

## 3. Results

A personal interview was conducted on ten respondents using a snowball sampling technique. According to the comments, nine out of ten respondents might consume six

drinks in a single session. This infers that Malaysian youngsters have shown high occurrence towards alcohol consumption.

From the interview seven of the respondents consumed their first alcoholic beverage at some point of secondary school between the age of 13 and 15. And the other three respondents were at the age of 17. Eight of the respondents were approached by their peers and of the respondent via their very own initiative. The findings also discovered that each one respondent had the innate aim of consuming alcohol. All respondents were classified as current drinkers.

Based on the interview session, they might consume a variety of drinks starting from reasonably-priced beer to cheap liquor. However, due to their low paying job and high cost of living 6 of the respondents have opted cheap liquor which was recommended by their working peers working with them and could not afford the original drink. These findings suggest that peer influence is the foundation motive of alcohol consumption. In addition, the findings reveal that cheap, homemade liquor is popular among poor.

Limitation of taking a look at the findings of this study should be interpreted with limitations in mind; because it is self-reported, in which participants have been self-selected for participation. Subsequently, participants that have been anxious about discussing their alcohol use may also have elected not to take part in the study.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The findings of this study are imperative in providing direction for future studies on alcohol consumption amongst Malaysian adolescents and information for the strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol in the communities. A key indication of this study indicates peer pressure was said as the contributing factor of alcohol consumption. Despite the fact that self-initiation based on the environment the participant was brought up also plays as a contributing aspect. However, due to the rising cost of original alcoholic beverages can be said to be a contributing factor due to the rising cost of living.

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