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Influence of Social, Economic and Family Factors on Alcohol Consumption: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Alcohol consumption is increasing global and it is the reasons for large number of death. According to WHO 2018, 3.3 million deaths worldwide related to alcohol consumption was recorded in 2016 alone. The use of alcohol has a serious impact on lives which leads to poverty, road accident, injury, domestic violence and crime. This study reviews the literature to find the predictors and provide direction for future work. Using a systematic literature review, several filtering process using selected keywords a total of 20 articles were reviewed. The findings showed that most of studies were conducted in Europe followed by US. There are limited number of reviewed studies and the predictors are mainly related to socio-economic status, social factors, demographics, social networking sites, family factor and stress. Findings were discussed and direction of future work were highlighted. More studies are needed to understand the predictors of alcohol consumption in the community as large. Due to limited studies related alcohol consumption in the developing countries, topic of alcohol use are needed to be investigated in order to fill in the gap in the literature. It is important to identify and understand factors causes alcohol consumption which leads to social and health problems in the society. By identifying these predictors could reduce a potential risk when individuals are exposed to harmful behavior.

Keywords: socio-economic status, alcohol consumption, social factors, stress, family factor

Introduction

Alcohol consumption is one of the concern for public health authority, families, and countries. It has several negative consequence on health, economy, and society. According to United Nation, Alcohol consumption is responsible of 3.3 million death annually worldwide (Quiroga et al., 2018). The use of alcohol in the community is the reasons of 200 types diseases as well as injuries caused by road accidents (World Health Organization, 2018). The average of drinking is increasing among adult and underage and it could increase more in this difficult time of stress during COVID 19 and the lockdown of businesses and countries. Quantity of consumption increased drastically during this outbreak as solution to cope with their depression which was forced to stay put, socially not active and not being allowed to be in public place for a longer time (Tran et al., 2020). The consumption of alcohol when individuals are under stress is a form of releasing that particular pressure they might want to get rid of for not thinking about the problems they have to endured even though the impact of alcohol on body system are in short period of time (Keyes et al., 2012). Previous studies indicate that individual who are emotionally instable or under stress are six time more likely to drink alcohol (Stapinski et al., 2016). Consistent with the findings of Dvorak et al. (2016) found that those experienced unstable

emotion are associated with alcohol consumption. According to World Health Organization (2018), poverty and loss of job is related to alcohol consumption. Those with low socioeconomic are more likely to engage in alcohol consumption which results in economic deprivation due to continuous of risky behavior (Beard et al., 2016).

According to Shin et al. (2021) alcohol consumption is one of the leading cause of preventable death in the US in which resulted a total of 88,000 mortality annually as well as lead to the country economic burden of USD 250 billion including medical costs, deaths and declines in productivity at workplace. Moreover, the burden of alcohol consumption in the UK is estimated around Euro 3 billion per year (Balakrishnan et al., 2009). Researchers believe that the socio-economic status is an essential predictor of higher alcohol consumption. For example, some studies found that the high socio-economic status is the reason for increased in alcohol consumption (Collins, 2016; Juliana Gabrielle et al., 2016; Stapinski et al., 2016). On the other hand, some studies argued the opposite. Those with low socio-economic status tend to drink more alcohol (Beard et al., 2019; Huckle et al., 2018).

There is contradiction in the literature regarding the role of socio-economic status and social factors and their effects on alcohol consumption. To understand the effect of socio-economic status and other variables in the literature on the alcohol consumption, this study aims to review the literature and understand the predictors of alcohol consumption from social perspective. This paper consists of five sections. The presents section has provided the background of this paper. This is followed by the research methodology and the summary of the reviewed articles. The findings of this paper is presented in figures. The last section presents the conclusion, limitation, and the direction for future research.

Method

This study is a quantitative and it conducts a literature review using available articles that are related to the topic. Keywords such as social factors, alcohol consumption, SES, stress, family and a combination of these words were used to identify the related articles. Search for the articles was conducted using google scholar since all the articles are indexed in this search engine. As a result, a total of 171 articles were identified. Three screening were applied to identify the most related articles. In the first screening the non-English, duplicated, and outdated articles were removed. This has resulted in removing 133 articles. The remaining articles were further screened by reading the abstract and the title. This further resulted in removing 15 articles. The last screening included a full reading of all the articles and this has reduced the articles to 20 related articles. The articles are analysed and important information are extracted. The data of the articles are analysed using excel sheet to present the findings. Figure 1 shows the process of filtering the articles.

Figure 1: Filtering process

Results

The literature into alcohol consumption can be divided into four main themes. The first theme related the alcohol consumption to social factors. For example, in Russia, the study of Murphy et al. (2012), alcohol consumption was related to social factors. The findings showed that males and smokers are

more likely to consume alcohol. Ajan and Hanafiah Juni (2016) in Malaysia found that social factors is responsible for several behaviour such as smoking and alcohol consumption. Robinson et al. (2016) in UK pointed out that the increase in social ingratiation will lead to more alcohol consumption. Similar findings in Sweden was derived from the study of Agahi et al. (2019) who found that social interaction increases the alcohol consumption. McCartney et al. (2016) found that the changes in income, social, and demographic factors has affected the rate of death caused by alcohol consumption. Social factor also were the predictors of alcohol consumption in the study of Mehanović et al. (2020) in Slovenia where the findings indicate that parent alcohol consumption, low monitoring, peer, belief, and refusal skills are important factors for alcohol consumption.

Table 1: Summary of Extracted Articles

Author/ year	I.V.	D.V	Findings
(Agahi et al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2012; Robinson et al., 2016)	Social factors	Alcohol consumption	Social factors have an important effect on alcohol consumption.
(Ajan & Hanafiah Juni, 2016; Beard et al., 2019; Collins, 2016; Huckle et al., 2018; Juliana Gabrielle et al., 2016; Mehanović et al., 2020; Moan & Halkjelsvik, 2020; Sadler et al., 2017; Stafström & Agardh, 2013; Stapinski et al., 2016; Thern & Landberg, 2020)	Socio-economic factors	Alcohol consumption	Findings regarding the socio-economic status is contradicted. Some studies found that high socio-economic status consumes more alcohol. On the other hand, other found the lower socio-economic status are more consuming and drinking alcohol.
(McCartney et al., 2016)	Demographic	Alcohol consumption	The changes in income, social, and demographic factors have affected the rate of death caused by consuming alcohol.
(Geusens et al., 2017; Quiroga et al., 2018)	Social networking site	Alcohol consumption	Exposure but not self-sharing has impact on alcohol consumption. Personality did not moderate the effect.
(Clay & Parker, 2018; Goodman et al., 2017)	Stress	Alcohol consumption	Group under stress showed more desire to drink alcohol.
(Vargas-Martínez et al., 2020)	Family factor	Alcohol consumption	Older with larger pocket money and family who drink alcohol are more consumer of alcohol.

The second theme is with the opinion that alcohol consumption is more related to the SES. For instance, Sadler et al. (2017) in UK found that socio-economic status gradient is a critical reasons for the alcohol consumption. In the study of Stafström and Agardh (2013) in Uganda, the finding showed that education of the head of house as well as gender and religion, and family connection and relationship has important effect on alcohol consumption. Collins (2016) in US found that those with high socio-economic status tend to consume more alcohol. Similar findings were derived by Juliana Gabrielle et al. (2016) in Brazil who found that high socio-economic status and male are more likely to drink, and in the study of Stapinski et al. (2016) in UK who found that high income are more likely to drink to increase self-confidence. Moreover, those who have low income drink to adjust the mood and socio economic and demographic has big role in drinking patterns. On the other hand, (Huckle et al. 2018) in a global study found that lower socio-economic status lead to more alcohol consumption. Similarly, the findings of the study of Beard et al. (2019) in UK indicate that those in lower social grade drink more than those in upper one.

The third theme is the effect of social networking on the consumption. In the study of Geusens et al. (2017) in Belgium, the findings showed that exposure but not self-sharing has impact on alcohol consumption. Personality did not moderate the effect. In Spain, Quiroga et al. (2018) found that due to

social network, there is high alcohol consumption among female. Lower intensity of the friendship and relationship with peers as well as the structure of the class are important predictor of alcohol consumption.

The fourth theme is related to the social stress and anxiety. In the study of Clay and Parker (2018) in UK, the findings showed that group under stress showed more desire to drink alcohol. Goodman et al. (2018) in US also found that high alcohol consumption affect the relationship between social anxiety and quality of everyday social interaction.

Location of the Studies

The findings of the literature can be classified based on the approach of the study, location, predictors, respondents, and data analysis tools. In the following sections, the findings are presented. In this study showed that there were eight countries involved in this study which was selected systematically using filtering process mentioned in the method. The findings of this study indicates that the highest percentage of studies (35%) were conducted in the UK followed by US (10%) and Spain (10%). These are countries that dominated the area of alcohol consumption which comprised of many aspects. Distribution of the study based on countries can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Location of the Studies

Countries	Number of studies	Percentage
UK	7	35%
US	2	10%
Spain	2	10%
Sweden	2	10%
Slovenia	1	5%
Norway	1	5%
Russia	1	5%
Uganda	1	5%
Belgium	1	5%

Predictor of Alcohol Consumption

Based on the reviewed studies, there are several important variables that have been used and associated with Alcohol consumption and drinking. The most frequently used variable is the socio-economic status of the respondents. This is followed by social factors, demographics such as age, gender, and education. Stress and social networking site as well as the family factors were also significant predictors of Alcohol consumption. Figure 2 shows the predictors of alcohol consumption.

Figure 2: Predictors of Alcohol Consumption

Participant

The findings of this reviewed studies focused in general on students. Most of the studies collected data using students population followed by employee and adolescents population where the focus on drinkers. This is followed by general respondents which has accounted to only 5% of the reviewed studies. Table 3 shows the respondents of the reviewed studies.

Table 3: Participant of the Studies

Categories	Number of studies	Percentage
Student	11	61%
Adolescents	3	17%
Employee	3	17%
General	1	5%

Year of Publication

The year of publication is presented in Figure 3. It can be seen that the highest percentage of studies were conducted between 2013 and 2017. Number of studies has increased in 2020 and this could be due to the outbreak of COVID 19.

Figure 3: Year of Publication of the Reviewed Studies

Approach of the Reviewed Studies

Among the reviewed studies, the majority (86%) were empirical studies and conducted using data that are collected from the respondents. Only (14%) of the studies are review studies that aimed to gauge the understanding of previous studies and present the direction for future work. Table 4 shows the approach of the reviewed studies.

Table 4: Approach of the Reviewed Studies

Categories	Number of studies	Percentage
Empirical	18	86%
Review	2	14%

Sample Size

In this findings showed several of total number with regards to sample size that was being used in previous study using the quantitative approach. Out of the empirical studies, the study found that sample size used in previous studies ranged between 39 and 57,807 respondents. The mean score value of the sample size obtained in these studies is 8453. Therefore, figure 4 shows the variety of total sample size of the reviewed studies.

Figure 4: Sample Size of the Reviewed Studies

Data Analysis Approach and Tools

The previous studies have deployed mainly the SPSS software to conduct their studies. The majority has deployed the SPSS to understand the casual relationship between the independent variable and Alcohol consumption. In addition, SPSS software was widely used in the reviewed studies due to the fact that the researchers were examining for the factors caused alcohol consumption in their selected population. The descriptive studies were less than the causal studies and STATA software was used in a little of studies. Figure 5 shows the data analysis approach and tools.

Figure 5: Data Analysis Approach and Tools

Conclusion

This study was conducted to review the existing literature regarding the effect of socio-economic factors on the alcohol consumption. The study also aimed to provide the future researchers with

direction and the status of the alcohol consumption. A systematic literature review was conducted to assess the literature and extract the related articles. As a result, a total of 20 articles were reviewed and important information were extracted. The finding of this study showed that the studies on alcohol consumption has been carried out in developed countries such as UK, US, and Spain while few studies were conducted in the developing countries. Findings also showed that there are several predictors of alcohol consumption such as socio-economic factors, social factors, demographics, social networking site, and stress as well as family factors. Findings also showed that the majority of respondents in previous studies are students and number of studies have increased during 2020. Few of the reviewed studies were a review of the literature and the sample sizes of the empirical studies were large. The findings also showed that SPSS dominated the method of analysis in the reviewed studies.

This study is limited to the search criteria and keywords that have been used. It is also limited to the number of articles that has been extracted. As a way forward, future studies are recommended to examine the alcohol consumption in developing countries. Due to social and health problems caused by the use of alcohol in developing countries, there is need for future studies to study these factors in understudied population which provides significant findings. Future studies are also recommended to examine the effect of socio-economic factors. The literature is contradicted in term of the effect of socio-economic status on Alcohol consumption, future studies are recommended to conduct more studies to understand the nature of the relationship between socio-economic status and alcohol consumption. Further, future studies are suggested to deploy moderating variables such as the demographic information i.e., age, gender, education, occupation, income, and marital status. This due to the fact that most of previous study found that there is relationship between alcohol consumption with demography and socioeconomic factors. Other important variable that can be used is the family and peer influence. Effective intervention are based on early information related the community lifestyle, health issues and social problems caused by alcohol consumption. The risk will continue high when alcohol use is adopted in the community without proper guidelines. These factors beneficial when considering effective community based intervention to reduce alcohol risk in the community.

General population studies which include all the class in the society are recommended for future studies. Majority of previous studies have focused only on students while other class of the population has not been researched. In addition, there is need the study on alcohol consumption among adults as at this stage an individuals are considered have full control over their lives as their decision making could have an impact to their future wellbeing. Thus, more studies on Alcohol consumption and the link with the outbreak of COVID 19 is needed. During the outbreak, the stress has increase due to the lockdown. This might lead people to stay home and drink more because of anxiety and stress. The future studies are suggested to deploy second generation of data analysis software such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because this software has the capabilities of analysing complex model. Structural Equation Modeling could be used with mediating and moderating predictors in order to have better understanding the relationship with alcohol consumption. Previous study indicates that structural Equation Modeling is a popular tools in predicting alcohol consumption.

The findings of this study can be of benefit for decision makers who are concerns about the public health. As people spent more time at home than before, unhealthy behavior like alcohol consumption is slowly developed in the community which this might expose people to a greater risk of developing health issues as well as could trigger domestic violence, crime, poverty and loss of productivity in performing their work from home tasks. By staying at home longer than before also caused stress and anxiety due to not being able to engage in social activities. This result in decrease of wellbeing of the person. During the COVID19, decision makers are recommended to broadcast entertaining programs to reduce the stress among the population. They are also advised to increase the awareness by launching an awareness campaign about the alcohol consumption and its harmfulness.

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