

# The Influence Of The Availability Of Alcoholic Beverages On The Drinking Habits Of Adolescents

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## Abstract

Alcoholic beverages are all types of drinks that contain ethanol (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH). Consumption of alcohol hurts the health and psychological health of the drinker, even the impact of environmental damage. Alcoholic beverages among youth are increasing along with the development of information and ease of transportation. Ease of access to alcoholic beverages is thought to be one of the factors increasing consumption of alcoholic beverages in youth. According to the KPAI, supervision of the circulation of alcoholic beverages is still weak, so young people who are not old enough can access these drinks. The study aimed to determine how much influence the availability of alcoholic beverages had on the drinking habits of junior and senior high school youth in Kelurahan A in Merauke Regency. The research method used was Correlative Descriptive Research on junior high and high school youth in Kelurahan A in Merauke Regency. The results of this study indicate that based on the results of bivariate analysis using the results of the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) statistical test, with a CI = 95% ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ), a value of  $p = 0.000$  is obtained. This suggests that the availability of alcoholic beverages affects the drinking habits of junior and senior high school youth in Kelurahan A in Merauke Regency because it has a  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ . The results of the linear regression analysis test showed that the variable that had the most influence on the habit of drinking alcoholic beverages in junior high and high school youth was the availability of alcohol because it had the highest odds ratio of 2.184. This means that the availability of alcohol has a probability of 2.

**Keywords :** Alcohol, Merauke, Youth, Indonesia

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## INTRODUCTION

Consumption of alcohol has become a problem that is quite complicated in society. Indonesian people, especially eastern Indonesia, have a tendency to consume alcohol, which can be said to be very unhealthy. For this reason, control measures are needed as well as an analysis of the influence of cultural and environmental factors, especially on the habit of drinking alcohol.

The bad effects of alcohol target many groups, especially men (Sudhinaraset et al., n.d.). In fact, the disease caused by alcohol is diverse. It is very important for us to understand the factors that cause unhealthy alcohol consumption.

The dangers are very real. Consumption of liquor has a negative effect on the health, mental and psychology of the drinker as well as the environmental damage it causes. Alcohol drinkers will experience damage to vital organs, dehydration, decreased brain function, and even death (Maier et al., 2022; Pimentel et al., 2020). In several studies, alcoholic beverages have also been shown to reduce cognitive abilities and learning abilities so that the effects of alcohol are actually systemic negative in the quality of human life. (Koob & Colrain, 2020).

At first glance, there are several things that cause alcohol addiction. Several factors such as stress, life pressure or even peer pressure because people around also consume alcoholic beverages (Sattarovna et al., 2021). Several other reasons are because this increase is caused by deviations in people's lifestyles, both smoking and eating unhealthy foods which then end up being activities to consume alcoholic beverages. ([https://kesmas.kemkes.go.id/assets/upload/dir\\_519d41d8cd98f00/files/hasil-risikesdas-2018\\_1274.pdf](https://kesmas.kemkes.go.id/assets/upload/dir_519d41d8cd98f00/files/hasil-risikesdas-2018_1274.pdf), nd).

Given the urgency of the danger and emergency to understand the causes of this unhealthy alcohol consumption, the authors decided to conduct research on the causal relations of society, especially young people, to consume excessive alcohol. The author conducted research in Kelurahan A in Merauke Regency as a benchmark for understanding the causes of excessive alcohol consumption.

In the research that the researchers did before, the researchers focused on several factors. However, in this research presentation, the authors focus on the availability of alcoholic beverages to youth which causes alcohol consumption to increase.

## Theoretical Framework

Alcohol consumption has long been a part of society. Initially only as a means of socializing, over time alcohol consumption then moved to a better place socially and was used for ritual and religious purposes (Hamdan-Mansour, 2016). Consumption of alcohol also then becomes part of the people's feasts and other celebration needs. This brings alcohol closer to society.

Various types of local alcohol then began to be known along with mainstream alcohol sold in the free market. This then makes alcohol an integral part of society. However, it is not surprising that there is concern that this alcohol will be abused and this alcohol abuse is thought to occur due to many factors.

But over time, alcohol consumption becomes excessive and causes problems. Some of the things that cause alcohol consumption are:

### **Accessibility**

Advertisements and approaches to alcohol products can encourage children or young people to consume alcohol (Diouf et al., 2023). Some exaggerated depiction of figures can encourage youth to be more interested in drinking alcohol. Even worse, sometimes adverts for alcoholic beverages are portrayed as fun.

But of all these factors, what plays a role is access to alcoholic beverages. Access creates youth emotionally feel closer to alcoholic beverages. Psychologically, young people will feel that alcohol is a normal part of their lives. This common sense is followed by the thought that alcohol consumption is a natural thing, even after they know the dangers of consuming alcoholic beverages (Xazratovich, 2022). When young people are exposed to access to alcoholic beverages, they will act as if alcohol is a common way of life and they have difficulty changing it. That's why actually limiting alcohol is an effort of social engineering, changing the reality that drinking alcoholic beverages is a common and legitimate thing to accept.

This social engineering itself is an integral part of legal objectives and regulations so that it cannot be categorized as manipulation but as an effort together to create a healthy society (Syafitri et al., 2022). Even then, there will often be counters from business actors who feel disadvantaged. There are also frequent lobbies whose goal is to change regulations so that the role of regulation as a tool for social engineering does not work as it should.

Accessibility also means price affordable alcoholic drinks for youth (Neufeld et al., 2022). In applying pricing to alcohol, there are many things that we must pay attention to. Prices that are too low can increase the frequency of young people's habit of drinking alcoholic beverages, but prices that are too high can increase the circulation of illegal alcohol. Therefore it is necessary to have the right settings. By making access to alcohol limited, prices will come to levels that are healthy enough to ensure youth do not drink alcohol excessively and thus fulfill the function and purpose of controlling alcohol accessibility.

### **METHOD**

The research question is whether the availability of alcoholic beverages influences the drinking habits of junior and senior high school youth in Kelurahan A in Kab. Merauke? This study used a quantitative descriptive correlation approach to find the effect using the Simple Linear regression method with a Likert scale based questionnaire survey with a cross sectional paradigm. The sample itself was determined using a probability sampling scheme with a sample of students from 2 junior high schools and 3 high schools which later found that the n sample was 431 students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the authors found that out of 431 youth samples, 244 youth regularly drank alcohol and the availability of alcoholic beverages and the accessibility of alcohol had the greatest effect on excessive alcohol consumption.

The results of the chi square ( $\chi^2$ ) statistical test, with CI = 95% ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ) obtained a value of  $p = 0.000$ . This suggests that the availability of alcoholic beverages influences the drinking behavior of youth in Kelurahan A in Kab. Merauke because it has a  $p$  value  $< 0.05$  or  $H_1$  is accepted and  $H_0$  is rejected. Meanwhile, the results of the linear regression analysis showed that the variable that had the most influence on the habit of drinking alcohol in junior high and high school youth was the availability of alcoholic beverages because it had the highest odds ratio of 2.184. This means that the availability of alcoholic beverages has a 2.184 times chance of causing adolescents to drink alcohol.

Access to alcohol has been shown to be a major cause of excessive alcohol consumption. The first is exposure to commercials. Young people who see advertisements about alcoholic beverages will unconsciously imitate their drinking habits because they see the framing in the advertisements about people who appear to be successful and healthy who actually consume alcohol. Or worse, they are exposed by seeing 'advertisements' in their own family environment when fathers sip alcohol quietly and joke around with their friends. This seems to make the child believe consciously that it is okay to have a lifestyle of drinking alcohol and glorification of alcohol is a common thing. (Addressing Alcohol Consumption and Socioeconomic Inequalities: How a Health Promotion Approach Can Help Snapshot Series on Alcohol Control Policies and Practice, nd)

There are also many thickeners in exposure to commercial access, from friends and family. Even though in Merauke there was less indication of thickening from the side of friends, it doesn't mean that friends don't cause problems. Several other studies have shown that environmental and peer pressure pushes children towards an alcoholic lifestyle (Chhoa et al., 2019; Konneh & Koroma, 2022; Luomanen & Alasuutari, 2022; Naben, 2023; Sholeye et al., 2022). But on the other hand, a healthy friendship environment can also encourage youth to break free from an alcoholic and negative lifestyle. So it's actually a healthy reciprocal relationship. However, there must be other driving factors.

For Merauke, what is thicker is because of the family. Interestingly, there is a systemic impact due to the all too easy commercial access to alcohol. The problem is that this easy commercial access is felt not only by young people but also by their parents.

While from the family is because the child is trying to adapt to the surrounding conditions. For example, when a child is faced with a parent who likes to consume alcohol, the child will instinctively try to imitate it so that he can be close to his parents. (Gupta & Mishra, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2022). Apart from that, there is also the influence of Melanesian culture, namely that the closeness of Melanesian people to their families is also a direct result of the feeling that they are excluded and ostracized, especially since there are many agendas of big countries that seem to isolate them through unfair reporting and downplaying issues that are important to them. Melanesian (Robie, 2020)

Children want to always be close to their parents and it is natural for children to try to imitate their parents' way of thinking, big and small habits of their parents and everything that brings them closer to their parents. (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2022).

The problem is, children do not have the ability to properly filter whether their parents' attitude is right or not, including this is the habit of drinking alcohol. Children only judge

whether something is successful or not in bringing their relationship closer to their parents(Lin & Szczygieł, 2022). Parents who cannot educate social intelligence in their children will end in the failure of the child's development to sort out what is good and bad for him so that he is prone to social disease problems such as addiction to alcohol, for example.

So, as the author explained earlier, parents also attract this commercial access and then transmit their image of alcohol to their children. This further emphasizes the existing problem that the process becomes systemic and descends to the bottom, giving rise to the problem of drinking alcohol that is inherited—ironically—from generation to generation. All of this because of a problem as simple as access to alcohol.

In the end, slowly, even though young people cannot buy alcohol, they will be exposed to advertisements as well as observations around them and the idea that alcohol consumption is a lifestyle and they then live it as an integral part of their lifestyle. This has been proven by many studies regarding the relationship between alcohol and advertising(Alfayad et al., 2022; Gabrielli et al., 2022; Stevely et al., 2022).

When young people are not exposed to advertisements about alcohol, they also do not consume alcohol, and vice versa. According to the author, what happened in Merauke from the author's personal view is actually a natural phenomenon. The authors simply enforce the results of research that has been conducted in many places on the effects of alcohol advertising on adolescents and young adults(Tovmasyan et al., 2022).

The second part of access to alcohol is access to price rather than alcohol itself. If the price of alcoholic beverages is not affordable, consumption of alcoholic beverages will not be high either because youth will realize that they do not have access to purchase alcoholic beverages. However, if they have access to buy alcoholic beverages because the prices are affordable, the intensity of consumption will also increase rapidly. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the state should attend by providing ways for control and carrying out social engineering efforts with the final target being that people treat alcoholic beverages as a tertiary need so that their consumption is more controlled.

How then can we determine the healthy price of alcoholic beverages? The first is the obligation to limit the circulation of illegal alcohol. When the government has made regulations by way of taxes and so on but illegal alcohol is still freely circulating, efforts to increase the price of alcoholic beverages will be difficult to materialize(Manning & Kowalska, 2021).The reason that can be put forward is the reason that unrecorded alcohol is unhealthy, and it is not uncommon for it to be formed through an oplosan process which is certainly dangerous for health. In addition, health information on illegal alcohol is not clear. It could be that the alcohol to be consumed is claimed, for example, to contain a fraction of alcohol, but in fact the amount of alcohol that is available has multiplied so that it is unsafe for consumption, and so on. That's why illegal alcohol really must be eradicated to its roots.

Next, the prevention of drinking alcoholic beverages should also be carried out by analyzing the market regarding the need for alcoholic beverages(Motschman et al., 2022). Unreasonable growth in demand for alcoholic beverages should be an alarm for the government to limit access. A distinction must be made between restriction and prohibition. Total prohibition will only foster illegal business, but measured restrictions will control unhealthy alcohol consumption behaviors(Barbosa et al., 2021; Stockwell et al., 2021). Because, some people still need alcohol because they need a transition to deal with the

stress they are experiencing. So this effort must be carried out in stages according to the portion.

The next phase is price setting because now illegal alcohol cannot be found, only then can the price of the drink be regulated according to the needs of the industry. After this effort is successful, it is certain that efforts to control access to alcoholic beverages in terms of prices that are too affordable can be handled properly.

Next is access to the item itself or access to purchase alcohol. Places where alcoholic beverages are sold should be limited even though drinking alcohol is a free choice for everyone. In this case we must remember the government's function in forming regulations and we should not see this as a violation of human rights(Woodard, 2019)because on the contrary the government has an obligation to protect its people and guarantee the function of social control. From the research that the author has done, this access restriction gradually reduces the consumption of alcoholic beverages(Brunborg et al., 2022; Critchlow & Moodie, 2022; Martín-Turrero et al., 2022; Moreno et al., 2022).

The theory of government responsibility and the legitimacy of social engineering is reinforced by studies related to the impact that the government gets when the community is healthy, for example, if the community is more productive and joint insurance claims are far more realistic(Boyland et al., 2022).

As we know, in a country like Indonesia, many insurance claims are due to diseases caused by bad habits, such as the lungs and heart due to too much smoking or consuming unhealthy foods.

From the explanation above, it is appropriate if we ask the government to play a regulatory role in order to reduce alcohol consumption within unhealthy limits. Especially now that the alcohol market is starting to target the low income market and selling alcohol at low prices(Walls et al., 2020). Even the forms of their efforts to challenge the law are also starting to appear under the pretext of human rights and so on. This should be avoided because it is the lower classes who suffer the most(O'Brien et al., 2022).

Those are three reasons why access to alcohol can increase alcohol consumption. The government must do a tiered business. The first is controlling the psychological side by blocking access to the idea that advertisements and commercials about alcohol can be easily found anywhere. The second is to close price access so that there is no perception that the price of alcohol is friendly and easy for anyone to get because the price is too competitive so that at one point alcohol will not become a tertiary need but a secondary one that anyone can use. The third is access to obtain the goods themselves which should be reduced so as not to open opportunities for various forms of harmful violations to occur.

## CONCLUSION

The most crucial factor is the availability in alcoholic beverages. It is this easy access that causes people to consume alcohol excessively and therefore the government must act decisively. The government is not banning but trying to regulate so that the bad impact is not too detrimental to many parties. Access to alcoholic beverages is further divided into three. The first is access to commercials and advertisements about alcohol that are easy for people to get, thereby normalizing drinking activities. The second is access to prices that are too affordable so that many people buy alcoholic drinks without thinking twice. The third is the problem where this alcoholic drink is easy to find anywhere so that its consumption becomes

very excessive. These three accesses must be managed in order to facilitate the resolution of excessive alcohol consumption in young people

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