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Alcohol Consumption among youth in the Slough Berkshire Area

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Definition of Terms

Excessive Drinking: A 5-ounce glass of wine, a glass of 12-ounce beer and 1 ½-ounce of liquor each contain the same amount of alcohol and each counts as 1 drink. Excessive use of alcohol is defined as consuming five or more drinks in the case of a man, or four or more drinks in the case of a woman

Youth: Youth identifies the period that lies between childhood and adulthood. The United Nations has defined youth as the stage starts at 15 and continues until the 25 - year life of every human being, although there are no precise criteria about limits. The longer life expectancies mean that, in some respects, people of 40 years are considered young.

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Background

Excess consumption of Alcohol is a public health problem (Stahre, 2014; White & Hingson, 2014; National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2004), which is often underestimated in the society. Excessive Consumption of alcohol has impact on mortality and morbidity in adolescents and young adults; it leads to a multitude of social problems and the physical and mental health problems (Gore et al., 2011; Rehm, 2011).

Setting

Slough is a large town near London situated in the area of Berkshire. Slough has a population of 134,072 inhabitants representing 0.27% of the entire population of England (Seppings & Hamill, 2016). The time zone for the city of Slough is "Europe / London". Slough Berkshire area has the highest number of immigrants' population. Immigrant is anyone who 'migrates'; that is leave their country, city or town to settle elsewhere or immigrate. The figures of 2011 showed that there were 54,652 non-UK born residents in the area (Council, 2013). The figures also revealed that almost 39% of Slough's population are foreign born among which 5% are from South Asia.

In the Berkshire town of Slough, a diverse and deprived area, 7% of young people consume alcohol on monthly basis. Among this chunk of population which consumes alcohol on monthly basis (Council, 2013), 40% of these consume alcohol at home with the permission of their parents and 40% of them get alcohol from other sources (Council, 2013). The statistics of the Slough area also revealed that in the year 2013, 89 young people of Slough were involved in alcohol and drugs related crimes. This research study aims to explore the experience of alcohol use among youth in the slough Berkshire area.

Research Objectives

This research study has the following objectives

- To investigate the relationship between socio-economic conditions of the area and the excessive consumption of alcohol among the youth of Slough Berkshire area
- To explore perceived negative consequences associated with excessive use of Alcohol by youth;
- To determine facilitators for reducing excessive use of alcohol among youth in the area

Conceptual Model

To meet these objectives this work is based on a conceptual model of alcohol and its consequences proposed by the World Health Organization in 2014 (World Health Organization, 2014). According to the study of Gore et al (2011) the alcohol bears 7% of the global disease burden (estimated by disability adjusted life years). As comparison, the use of illicit drugs is 5th among mortality and morbidity risk factors with 2% of the overall load (Gore et al., 2011). A high frequency of excessive consumption of alcohol is a factor of significant risk of alcohol-related injuries among young adults aged between 18 and 24 years (Moure-Rodriguez et al., 2014).

In the conceptual model of alcohol and its consequences, which will be used in this study, the behaviours related to alcohol and its consequences are defined by the continuous interaction of individual and societal factors (determinants). These factors influence consumption, health consequences and mortality, socio-economic consequences and harm on others.

Rationale of the Study

Alcohol is the psychoactive substance that creates the most problems among youth (Nordås & Davenport, 2013). The impact of alcohol on psychomotor and cognitive level can cause a variety of negative social consequences for the consumer and the young entourage (Amrani et al., 2013). Excessive consumption of alcohol is, among others, often associated with intentional or unintentional teen trauma and young adults. The injuries inflicted or others are part of the consequences frequently observed. For example, it has been demonstrated in high school students that excessive consumption and early alcohol use are strongly associated with physical violence and attempts to suicide (Swahn et al., 2013). Mundt et al (2009) also observed that the risk of alcohol-related injuries is higher among university students who consume excessive alcohol compared to those who do not engage in this pattern of consumption (43% of occurrence of injuries related to alcohol against 10%).

Excessive consumption of alcohol is a common phenomenon among the youth in the Slough area. This excessive consumption is the basic reason of many diseases and complications among youth (Gore et al., 2011). This research is important because it will identify different risk factors perceived by local young people to be associated with their alcohol consumption. The findings of this research study could be used to create awareness among youth regarding the problems and diseases associated with excessive use of alcohol, as well as to formulate policies and intervention strategies for the youth of Slough Berkshire to prevent them from excessive use of alcohol. This ultimately will help the Slough Berkshire area to reduce their alcohol consumption rate.

Literature Review

In a large majority of the studies, the prevalence of excessive consumption of alcohol is significantly higher in men than in women (Chung &Joung, 2013; Fuller-Thomson et al., 2013; Zarzar et al., 2012; Sanchez et al., 2011). Men report more opportunities for Excessive consumption than women and the occasions when the amount of alcohol they consume exceeds (Gliksman et al., 2003; O'Malley & Johnston, 2002). However, a recent study observes the inverse. Bartoli et al (2014) have found that women aged between 18 and 24 years involved in excessive consumption of alcohol have significantly longer life than men of same age. Some other authors also have the same view and argue that young women seem to increasingly indulge in the same "Patterns" of consumption as their male counterparts (Andersson et al, 2013; Keyes et al., 2008; Young et al., 2005; Nolen-Hoeksema, 2004).

Regarding socioeconomic variables, there are several associations that have been found in the literature. First, the positive association between income and excessive consumption has been discussed in some studies which also note that young people who have high financial resources are likely to exhibit this behaviour (Bartoli et al., 2014; Siliquini et al., 2012). Donath et al (2012) also find that low economic status would be associated with a lower likelihood of indulge in this mode of consumption among Grade 9 students. Chung &Joung (2013) report that a high economic status as well as very low (the highest level and lower in a 5-level scale) are associated with excessive consumption among youth.

Some studies show a clear link between drug use, more particularly cannabis and excessive consumption of alcohol (Bartoli et al., 2014; McKetin et al., 2014; Siliquini et al., 2012; Patrick &Schulenberg, 2010). Other studies establish a relationship between certain mental problems such as depression, and this method of consumption (Edwards al., 2014; Fuller-

Thomson et al., 2013; Chan et al., 2013; Paljarvi et al., 2009). Some social factors such as the family environment, peer pressure etc. are also important determinants of excessive consumption of alcohol (Bartoli et al., 2014; Galduroz et al., 2010; Kuntsche et al., 2004).

Studies report that excessive consumption of alcohol in adolescence increases the risk of continuing to consuming alcohol in this same modality of adult age and indulge in this fashion of consumption at a young age is also linked to a higher probability of alcohol dependence in later life (Viner & Taylor, 2007; Bonomo et al., 2004). Petit et al (2009) also observe that maintaining this behaviour beyond 25 represents a predictive factor of future alcohol dependence. Other authors (Rivara et al., 2009) estimate that 40% of young people who are new to alcohol to 14-year risk of developing dependence later, compared with 10% in those who start drinking after the age of maturity.

Adolescence is a critical period of neuro-maturation where cognitive processes are still in development. Research shows that young people whose brains are still developing, may be more at risk than adults to brain injuries due to heavy drinking (Nixon & McClain, 2010). Several studies have been conducted over the past decade to try to specifically include neurocognitive effects of excessive alcohol consumption among young people. It is now known that this behaviour has a negative effect on neurocognitive development of adolescents and young adults, more particularly as regards the Executive operation (decision making) and memory (Amrani et al., 2013). Amrani et al (2013) also observed that adolescents seem to be more sensitive to memory deficits and difficulties related to impulse control. Other authors have demonstrated that the intense and heavy drinking is linked to a reduction in cerebellum volume in healthy teenagers (Lisdahl et al., 2013). This study does not say what would be the long term effects of excessive consumption or whether these effects are reversible with discontinuation of consumption.

Methodology

Research Design

Research is usually conducted by using two research methodologies, i.e. the qualitative methodology and quantitative methodology (Bryman, 2015). The nature of the research decides what methodology will be used for a particular research study. Qualitative methodology is usually used when the research is about people's perceptions, attitudes, habits and how they subjectively observe their behaviours (Bryman & Bell, 2015). As this research is also about people's behaviours and attitude, the researcher will use qualitative research methodology in this particular study.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

The qualitative paradigm is closely linked to the structural and dialectic perspectives and focuses on understanding the meanings that subjects infer on actions and social behaviours. For this purpose, techniques based on language analysis are used, such as interview, discussion group, life history, and techniques of social creativity. The important thing is not to quantify reality or to distribute it in classifications, but to understand and explain the latent structures of society, which make social processes; develop in one way and not in another (Lewis, 2015). Put another way, from this paradigm the researcher tries to understand how the subjectivity of people (motivations, predispositions, attitudes, etc.) explains their behaviour.

In this particular study, interpretative paradigm will be used. The Interpretative paradigm seeks assumptions about customs, politics, economic development, religion etc., which are generally present in a community (Creswell, 2012). The interpretive paradigm understands that

the reality is dynamic and diverse directed to the meaning of human actions, social practice, understanding and meaning(Bryman, 2015).

Study Design

Qualitative in-depth individual interview study.

Sample

The researcher will use purposive sampling to recruit young adults, living in the Slough area, who are involved in excessive alcohol consumption.

Inclusion Criteria

- The participants must be involved in excessive consumption of alcohol;
- The participant must live in Slough Berkshire Area
- The participant must be between 15 and 24 years of age

Exclusion Criteria

- Persons who are not willing to take part in the research and have not filled the consent form;
- Persons who cannot communicate their opinion in English

Procedure of Recruitment

If a person fulfilled the inclusion criteria of the research, the researcher will request him or her to take part in the research study. If he or she agrees, research consent form will be given

to him to fill which shows participant's consent in taking part of the study. The interviews will be conducted face to face. It is expected that each interview will take around 30 to 35 minutes.

Sample Size

In order to cover a wider range of views, the researcher plans to interview around 10 people for this research study. For this, it is expected that the researcher will have to contact at least 25 to 30 young adults of Slough area.

Data Collection and Handling

Interviews will be conducted by using a topic guide. Data will be collected and analysed iteratively with changes to the topic guide informed by responses during previous interviews. Interviews will be audio recorded with consent and transcribed by the researcher verbatim.

Anonymised will be kept in password protected computers where nobody, except the researcher, can have the access to it.

Data Analysis

The researcher will analyse the data by identifying themes and attach a code to each theme. The researcher will use the content analysis to analyse the data as it is the most appropriate method for the qualitative descriptive study (Polit and Beck, 2012).

Ethical Considerations

Researchers should keep in mind some ethical criteria when designing the study and at the time of qualitative research data collection. These requirements are related to the application of informed consent and the management of confidentiality and the possible risks faced by study

participants (Miller et al., 2012). All of these should be addressed in the question, objectives, theoretical references, data collection strategies and the dissemination of results.

Two aspects should be considered in order to minimize the risks to the participants in the research. The first one refers to the fact that the investigator must fulfil each of the responsibilities and obligations acquired with the informants. The second is related to the subsequent management of the data provided. Qualitative research is justified when it meets the following requirements: potential risks to individual subjects are minimized, potential benefits to individual subjects and society are maximized, potential benefits are proportional or outweigh risks. These requirements are related to the ethical principles of non-maleficence and beneficence established to conduct research in humans (Silverman, 2016). Among the consequences they were also estimate the damages that might result from the investigation. It should be explained to the informants that the study results will not generate any institutional, professional or personal harm or damage for the purposes of the information collected; In this regard, it should be clear to the researcher that the findings of the study should not be used for purposes other than those originally planned.

In the case of qualitative research, it is necessary to include participants with capacity and willingness to reflect and communicate that understand social values, priorities and vulnerability, and the concerns of the potential subjects of the study (Punch, 2013). In other words, plurality is another desirable condition in the evaluating groups. Just as this condition is met in qualitative research, it must be equally incorporated in the method that is used to construct ethical judgments.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are essential qualities that must be tested on scientific instruments for data collection, because they guarantee that the results presented are worthy of credit and trust (MacPhail et al., 2016).

Reliability refers to the possibility of replicating studies, that is, that one researcher uses the same methods or strategies of data collection as another, and obtains similar results. In this qualitative study reliability is a complex issue both because of the nature of the data, the research process itself and the presentation of the results. Therefore, an external investigator will be used to express his / her opinion on the whole process followed, to indicate if this has been done correctly or not, and if the strategies used for the reconstruction of the analytical categories are appropriate (Morse, 2015). For that reason it is suggested in the studies that are carried out by several investigators to make systematized registries and they go to the discussion of the process with other investigators who are interested in similar lines of work. It is stated that if the results are repeated reliability can be assured, that is why qualitative research is recommended to work with different methods of information collection).

The validity concerns the correct interpretation of the results and becomes a fundamental support of the qualitative investigations (Holliday, 2013). The validity gives an account of the degree of fidelity with which the investigated phenomenon is shown and can be obtained through different methods, among the most common are: triangulation, saturation and contrast with other researchers.

Therefore, it is said that, in this research study, there will be validity if there will be an exhaustive care of the methodological process, so that the investigation becomes credible (Ritchie et al., 2013). Establishing concrete and systematic frameworks of how data have been

collected and treated allows other researchers to ask themselves whether the results obtained are valid or not in other similar circumstances.

Potential Limitations

One of the limitations of this research study will be that the results will not be generalised as the data is collected from the locality of Slough Berkshire area. In addition to that another limitation of the study is that it has to be completed within the given short span of time, which means sometimes the researcher will have to compromise on quality.

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Appendix 'A'**Time Scale**

The Complete Project will need at least 10 weeks to complete. The break-up of the project is as follows:

Week Task	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten
Topic selection										
Background research										
Designing Research question & objective										
Literature review										
Data Collection stage										
Data analysis stage										
Conclusion & Recommendation for the study										
Writing of Executive summary										
Grammar check, printing & submission										