Typologies of alcohol consumption on a Saturday night among young adults

Author(s)
Sunderland M, Chalmers J, McKetin R et al.

Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Alcohol policies and interventions seek to curtail risky single-occasion drinking (RSOD) and the negative health and public order consequences. Yet RSOD behaviors are not easily defined since people can drink excessively at a variety of locations and drink a range of products. The current study examines the presence and correlates of different typologies or classes of drinking behavior on 1 Saturday night to facilitate a nuanced policy response to harmful drinking.

METHODS:
Data from 1,883 adults aged 18 to 30 were collected using an online survey. Latent class analysis was used to categorize respondents into mutually exclusive classes based on the quantity, type, and unit cost of alcohol consumed plus location of alcohol consumption on the past Saturday night. Significant correlates and predictors of latent class membership were then identified using regression analysis.

RESULTS:
Seven distinct classes were identified that represent qualitatively distinct profiles of Saturday night drinking behavior among young adults. Multivariate analyses indicated that alcohol risk (measured using the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test), age, and recent (past 12 months) stimulant use were strong predictors of heavier drinking. The heaviest drinkers also consumed some of the cheapest alcohol and consumed alcohol at multiple locations over the course of the night.

CONCLUSIONS:
Given the large degree of heterogeneity among drinking behaviors, policy makers need to be cognizant that alcohol type and drinking location-specific policies may be less effective in targeting some groups of the population.

Web link
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24796289
View PDF