

Research paper on underage drinking

[Health & Medicine](#), [Alcoholism](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

1. 0 Introduction to underage drinking

Alcohol usage among the youth is becoming a drug of choice and this has resulted in the emergence of dire consequences to the society. The result of drinking at the tender age has also created serious problems in the public health domain. This is because of the fact that the problem appears to be induced to occur rather than being spontaneous. When anybody below twenty-one years begins to consume alcohol there are potential risks right from altering the working of the brain. The depressant nature of alcohol tends to make the consumer irrational, alters body coordination, and makes one to be violent. Underage drinking may also result in a number of legal consequences including being jailed, heavy fines, and bringing shame to parents. In some instances, parents who may show an element of irresponsibility on their children may be fined heavily or jailed with their children.

The effect of alcohol on teenagers who drink cannot be underestimated. The most serious problem is impairment in the ability to make wise and concrete decisions that is relevant to their lives. Alcohol drinking also gives rise to the emergence of liver diseases. It is necessary to appreciate the fact that teenagers are at their prime age of physiological development and their bodies are extremely responsive. The liver at age is also still developing and cannot be compared to that of mature adults. This shows that extent of liver damage by alcohol is substantial enough to cause death. The damage is much more lethal for adolescents who are overweight or obese than those who are not.

As mentioned initially, adolescents are at their prime of development. This shows that alcohol has some effect on their endocrine system and growth. The result is an imbalance in their hormones, which steer the development of vital organs, the muscles and bones.

A survey carried out in 2009 indicates that more than half of American youths in the ages of 12 and 20 have a habit of consuming alcohol frequently. This shows the magnitude of the risks that alcohol can bring to the American society. Many young people who may have started drinking alcohol at their tender age are now being medically challenged and forced to withstand the worst of their initial irresponsible behavior (Wagner & Waldron, 2001, p10).

At the moment, alcohol abuse by the underage tops the list together with stress and depression as the major cause of suicide cases occurring in the American society. Those are significantly affected fall in the age bracket of fourteen to twenty five years. In the same study carried out in 2009, about 37% of females in their eight-grade tried in most instances to commit suicide unlike their counterparts who did not consume alcohol.

Sexual assault especially on underage ladies is another social consequence of drinking. When these ladies go out for date, there are high chances that they might be given alcohol in order for the offender to have an easy way of manipulating them. This may not occur if the ladies in question are not alcohol drinkers. During such events also, the underage drinkers may engage themselves in risky sexual activities, which they will only realize when they sober up. This is because of the fact the alcohol impairs the

judgment of an individual which is more dangerous to the young drinkers. The activities may include having multiple sexual partners and this predisposes them to sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy (Scott, 2006).

2. 0 Factors contributing to underage drinking

There are various factors that are to blame for the rise in alcohol consumption among the younger population of the American society. An individual encounters various physical and emotional changes, as they grow from childhood, to teenage and later to adulthood. As one tends to adolescence, many youths feel as though they are independent and most of them believe that they make right choices. This is however not the case because most of them end up drinking at their tender ages. This is particularly driven by peers who may have started consuming alcohol. Other factors identified as the driving forces behind underage drinking include social factors, genetic, and environmental.

2. 1 Social factors

The factor arises from the way an individual interacts with others. Peer pressure plays a significant role as a social factor in facilitating underage drinking for those who may consider the activity as a way of deriving pleasure. Most people consider alcohol consumption as a way of relieving stress and one may be forced to drink if most of their friends do drink. Teenagers may also begin to consume alcohol especially if most people within their surrounding environment consume it. This social factor is known

as social acceptability and mostly pronounced in a society that tends to view alcohol consumption as nothing bad.

2. 2 Genetic factors

There are a number of genetic factors that predisposes teenagers to consume alcohol. Most of them are particularly caused by their parents who may be heavy alcohol drinkers. Children who are brought up in such an environment inherit some elements from their parents thereby rendering them alcohol-dependent. With regard to genetics, it is indispensable to appreciate the fact that there are genes that are associated with alcoholism and an extension of addiction to the same. This extends to include behavioral characteristics like conduct disorder and sensation-seeking disorders, which tend to make an individual to rely heavily on alcohol (Scott, 2006).

2. 3 Environmental factors

Peers and parents make part of the environmental factor that predisposes teenagers to consume alcohol. Teenagers may engage in alcohol-drinking activities if either of their parents consumes alcohol. This may occur particularly as a way of showing frustration owing to the fact that parents are always expected to be role models to their children. The environment that they create therefore may make the children drink alcohol. This also applies to friends and peers of individuals whom they spend most of time together. It is crucial to appreciate the fact that non-drinking individuals may begin to consume alcohol if they spend most of their together with those who drink. This is a peer pressure factor. Underage drinking is also driven by the media

especially adverts related to alcohol. Most adverts have been to present alcohol as desirable commodity and this lures the curious adolescents to try out the fun that appears to be in alcohol (Scott, 2006).

3. 0 Hypothesis statement

This is a suggestion by a researcher on providing an elucidation for a particular observable occurrence. In this research therefore, the formulated hypothesis states; there is a significant relationship between alcohol abuse among the youth and their number.

4. 0 Method of Research

A researcher can employ a number of methods of data collection during a research depending on the nature of parameters to be measured. Ultimately, the choices to be made on the most appropriate methods to be used include the time-frame for completion, resource availability, location, and the availability of the subjects to be interviewed. Methods can be quantitative, qualitative, or participatory. The use of focused groups and individual diaries constitute the participatory method that can be employed by a researcher. In this case, investigation is based on the collection of data from marginalized areas. Qualitative methods on the other hand entail the use of holistic non-quantifiable parameters to prove a hypothesis.

The success of this research however depended largely on quantitative methods to test the stated hypothesis. This involves the utilization of skilled analysts and designers to collect data using questionnaires, interviews, and surveys. Further appropriate statistical analysis can be carried out to ascertain hypothesis postulated. The extent of underage drinking will be

determined by the number of individuals collected during the research and compared with proposed hypothesis for any similarity (Wagner et al, 1999).

5. 0 Results

The results obtained from the research indicate that there has been skyrocketing numbers of youths engaging in alcoholism. The prevalence is increase tremendously with age at which children begin to consume alcohol drastically dropping. It was also proven from the research that teenagers tend to drink heavily unlike other age brackets. From the research, age 13 was identified as the prime age at which children begin to consume alcohol and the effects are devastating to the society.

6. 0 Possible solutions to the problem

The control of underage drinking depends much on addressing the three predisposing factors. These are the genetic, environmental and behavioral factors. Parents are required at all times to be close to their children during the adolescent stage because most of them tend to experiment a lot. This includes identify those who may be having alcohol dependent disorders and giving them urgent medical attention. Access to such facilities should be as easy as possible to avoid any alteration of the treatment program (Scott, 2006).

Another solution to this menace in elevating the minimum age in which an individual is allowed to consume alcohol. The current age of 21 years appears to be excessively low and is even worse when parents consume alcohol at their homes. If prices of alcohol can be increased, there is a high

possibility that a good number of individuals can be discouraged from purchasing it. This also acts a control measure.

Other initiatives to curb to underage drinking family-based initiatives where parents play the role of guiding their children in associating with friends who have sound morals. They should also motivate them to avoid their friends who taking alcohol. While at school, children should be educated and made to understand all issues and dangers related to alcohol consumption. This makes to be responsible about their lives and be able to make decisions that are helpful (Wagner et al 1999). Various should also be enforced and stringent rules and regulations given to all mall and shops that sell alcohol to the underage.

7. 0 Ethical issues

The process of carrying out a research with the ultimate aim of ensuring that credible results are provided is a key issue in this study. The participants should always be assured that their identity will never be revealed and this is the only way of ensuring that accurate data is collected. The interviewees should also not be forced to participate in the research. Bribes should be used as a way of luring individuals to participate because it taints the credibility of the whole exercise (Wagner et al 1999). Other ethical issues while carrying out a research of this nature includes following all professional guidelines, informing all participants on the consequences of participating in research, and their safety.

8. 0 Conclusion

Inasmuch as alcohol is a readily available commodity within the society, effort should be made to ensure that it is sold to the right customers. Despite the fact that the sale of alcohol contributes a lot in the country's GDP, it is necessary to ensure that the overall health status of the society is not jeopardized. This calls for every member of the society and parent in particular to be extremely careful in ensuring that their children do not fall in the trap of being alcoholics. From the research, it is conclusive to say that the society is extremely lenient when it comes to matters relating to underage drinking. This as a wake up call that has to be addressed urgently before things gets out of hand. Achieving this cause however requires all members of the society to play their roles diligently.

9. 0 References

- Lagressa, D. Boyd, G. Faden, V. & Witt, E. (2005). Alcohol Problems in Adolescents and Young Adults: Epidemiology. Neurobiology. Prevention and Treatment. (Recent developments in alcoholism).
- Scott B. (2006). Alcohol. (Introducing Issues with Opposing Viewpoints). 2006.
- Wagner, E. Brown, S. & Monti, P. (1999). Innovations in adolescent substance abuse intervention. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research 23: 236–249.
- Wagner, E. & Waldron, H. eds. (2001). Innovations in Adolescent Substance Abuse Intervention. Oxford, England: Elsevier Science, 2001.

[www. niaaa. nih. gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)