

Alcohol consumption in uk



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Case Study 5- The case of a young binge drinker

Introduction

Alcohol consumption in the UK has increased rapidly in recent years, not just among young people but across society. In this report we will focus on:

1. Consumer behaviour theories explaining Melanie's binge drinking.
2. Recollect reference groups who influence Melanie's attitudes.
3. Discuss Government strategies and campaigns such as the Portman Group.

The alcohol industry provides employment to over a million people, so the government is reluctant to ban the product. However, the case study recognises there is a huge implication with high alcohol consumption resulting in dysfunctional behaviour ranging from psychological and social harm to damaged lives and deaths. An increase in alcohol consumption has been driven by vast promotional and marketing campaigns with the UK alcohol industry spending £800m annually. Studies have shown that half of the University students in the UK regularly binge drink.

Consumer Behaviour Theories

Alcohol Abuse: A World Wide Perspective:

High alcohol consumption is prominent in the UK, Ireland, Denmark, Russia and a few other European countries. Whereas, North African nations have the least consumption.

Alcohol consumption has become more acceptable in “ Western” societies, while it's outlawed in places like Arabia. Alcohol has different meanings in different societies. E. g. Islam prohibits the consumption of alcohol

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alternatively, wine is savoured by Christians and no celebration can be complete without popping open a bottle of champagne in the West.

Some examples of excessive binge drinking in the UK involve Stacey Rhymes, a 24 year old who died after drinking herself to death on cut price bottles of wine. Philip Laing, a student from Sheffield Hallam University, who is sentenced to community service after urinating on a war memorial, on a Carnage bar crawl.

Portman Group and Drinkaware

The Portman Group is supported by the UK's leading drink producers and is concerned solely with the social responsibility issues surrounding alcohol. Their role is to encourage and challenge drink producers to promote their products responsibly.

Drinkaware was established to improve the public awareness and understanding of responsible drinking and to change the nations drinking behaviour for the better. They do this through innovative campaigns online, in print and communities worldwide.

Conclusion

Behavioural theories suggest that Melanie's consistent binge drinking is due to the positive attitudes that she possesses in addition to seeking the positive effects that it has upon her. Melanie's reference groups haven't persuaded her to drink responsibly and she still believes her reason about being a student once, justifies everything. We believe that the Portman Group and Drinkaware. co. uk plus the various government strategies are effective in influencing the drinking habits of our own peer group. The

advertisements reach consumers on an emotional level allowing them to empathise with the situations that the vast majority of us have been present in. Furthermore, drinks producers have begun to promote their drinks more responsibly.

Though we believe these campaigns are effective there are challenges faced by marketers. For example consumers vary in their commitment in attitudes towards alcohol. Those attitudes that have become internalized and part of the person's value system are difficult to change due to the fact that they are important to the individual, for example Melanie has a usual routine of going out with her friends and being an accepted member of the group.