

The Patterns and Causes of Drinking Among Students in a Private University*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe and understand patterns and causes of drinking of university students by using phenomenological qualitative design. Data were collected among 30 participants derived from snow ball technique through an in-depth interview under ethical considerations. Qualitative content analysis, in which articulation and clarification of the meaning and transferability in the "text" was used, was applied and the results revealed that the participants usually drank alcohol 1-4 times/week and the amount of consumption varied from drinking for better physical health to intoxication level. 'Cocktail Frozen' was the most popular form for participants' drinking and the main reason was to re-joy their lives. Places for drinking were usually located at the nearby university and dormitory. There were four causes involving participants' drinking including gender, psychological problems, parents' drinking, and peer pressure. It was concluded that the knowledge and understanding about patterns and causes of drinking among the university students will enable health care providers to initiate health promotion programs to quit drinking effectively.

Keywords: *Phenomenological qualitative design, snow ball technique, in-depth interview, ethical consideration, intoxication level, 'Cocktail Frozen'.*

1. Introduction

Drinking is the crucial health problem, especially among adolescents in the university, because drinking more than recommended is the possible cause of mental and physical impairments (O'Brien *et al.* 2008; Shalala 2000; NIAAA 2006a, 2006b, 2007). Furthermore, drinking is a major cause of accidents and death among youth worldwide. Alcohol abuse is linked to sexual assaults, date rapes of teens and college students, and makes them have unprotected sex, which increases the

risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS and Sexual Transmitted Diseases.

In addition, a study showed that alcohol consumption by adolescents resulted in possibly permanent brain damage and impairment of the intellectual development as well as poor learning outcomes (Reynolds *et al.* 2003) Young drinkers who were overweight or obese showed elevated liver enzymes even with moderate levels of drinking. Besides, drinking alcohol can affect the growth and the endocrine system because (Dees *et al.* 2001) "drinking alcohol during this period of rapid growth and development may upset the critical hormonal balance necessary for normal development of organs, muscles, and bones. Studies in animals also show that consuming alcohol during puberty adversely affects the maturation of the reproductive system." Over three-quarters of people aged 21-24 years were stated by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA 2007) as

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