

Where, when, and why do young adults binge drink? Insights to guide alcohol policy development in Hong Kong

Alvin H. Wong, Sian M. Griffiths, Eliza Y.L. Cheung, Roger
Tse, Jean H. Kim

JC School of Public Health and Primary Care, Faculty of Medicine,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Global Alcohol Policy Conference 2013
October 8th, 2013



Table of Contents

- I. Background
 - Drinking among young adults in HK and impact
 - Alcohol policy in Hong Kong
 - Objectives of study
- II. Findings
 - Quantitative population survey
 - Focus group discussions
- III. Implications for policy and interventions



Alcohol-related policy in Hong Kong

- Hong Kong
 - 2008: Repeal of alcohol tariffs and excise tax for most alcoholic beverages
 - Boom in the alcohol industry, particularly in wine trading
 - Year-on-year growths of 80%, 45%, and 73% (2008-2011)
 - Largest wine auction centre in the world



(Source: Financial Secretary HKSAR, 2011)



Alcohol-related policy in Hong Kong

- Licensing
 - Hong Kong: Liquor Licensing Board
 - Provides alcohol trade licenses to food/retail establishments + 24-hour outlets
 - Conditional licenses:
 - Restrictions on serving/trading hours for all but 24-hour outlets, and number of persons allowed in venue grounds.
 - Dependent on geographic location, nature of the venue (outdoor/indoor)



Alcohol-related policy in Hong Kong

- Restricted advertising only on certain hours of television programming
- No restrictions on indirect marketing, i.e., sponsorships of sporting/music events, posters, drink specials



CHIVAS
LIVE WITH CHIVALRY
芝華士真友情音樂會

糖兄妹

日期：2011年11月4日（星期五）
時間：晚上10時30分
地點：Element
尖沙咀寶勒巷17-19號地舖
查詢及訂座電話：3595 0680
6049 6608 (謝先生)

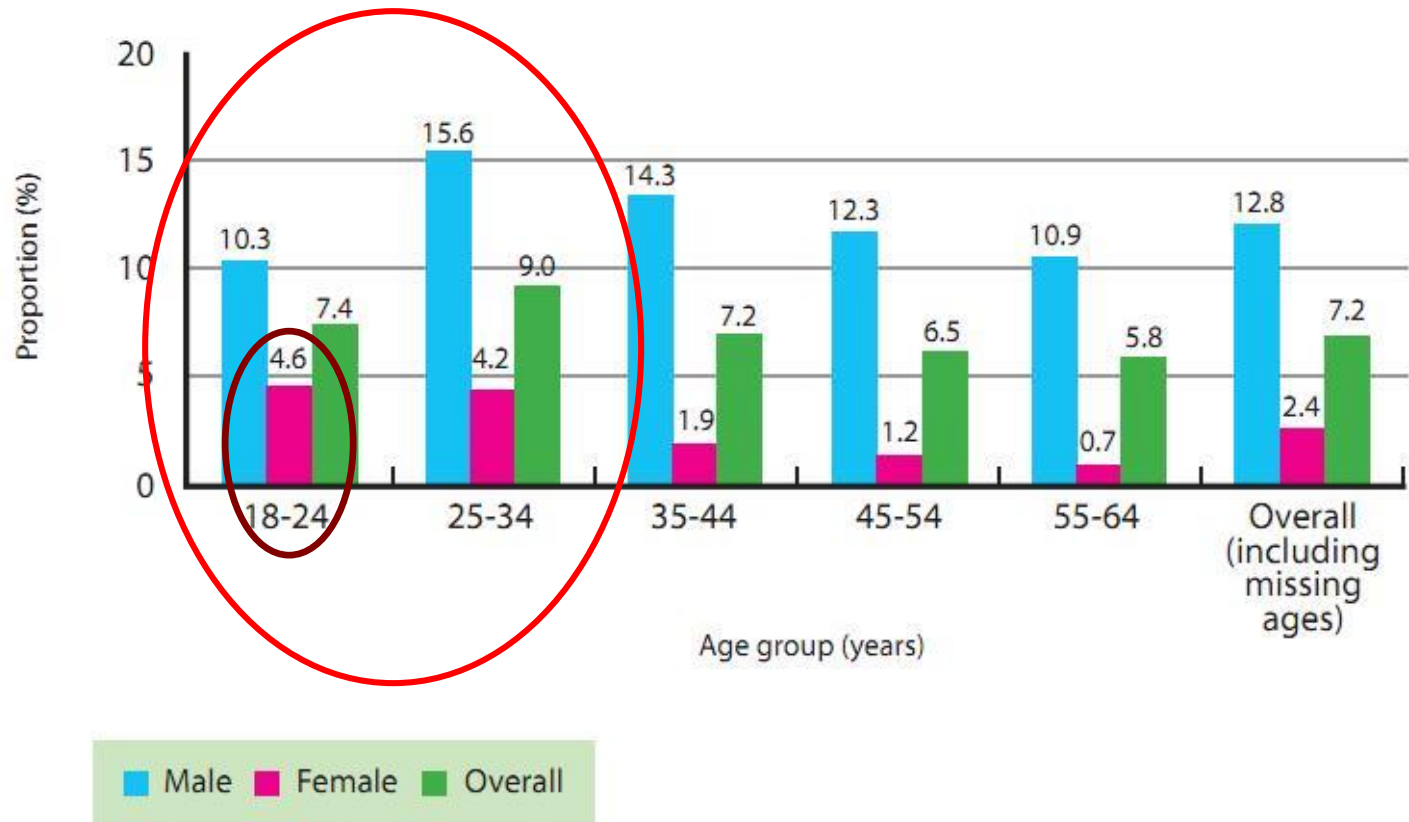
<http://www.facebook.com/ChivasHK>
www.chivas.com
Enjoy Chivas Responsibly

LIVE WITH CHIVALRY



Local situation of heavy alcohol use

Figure 7: Prevalence of binge drinking by sex and age group, 2010, Hong Kong



Source: Behavioural Risk Factor Survey (2010)

Note: Binge drinking here is defined as 4+ standard drinks for men and women in a single occasion



Alcohol and Young Adults

- Alcohol-related harms related to Hong Kong young adults:
 - Unsafe sex
 - Unintentional injuries



(Source: WHO, 2011; CHP, 2011)



Applicability of Best Practices in Hong Kong

- No existing research providing an in-depth perspective on youth drinking culture in Hong Kong
 - Hong Kong vs. US/UK/New Zealand
 - **Would best practices suggested be applicable to the Hong Kong youth drinking culture?**



(Source: Griffiths et al., 2006)

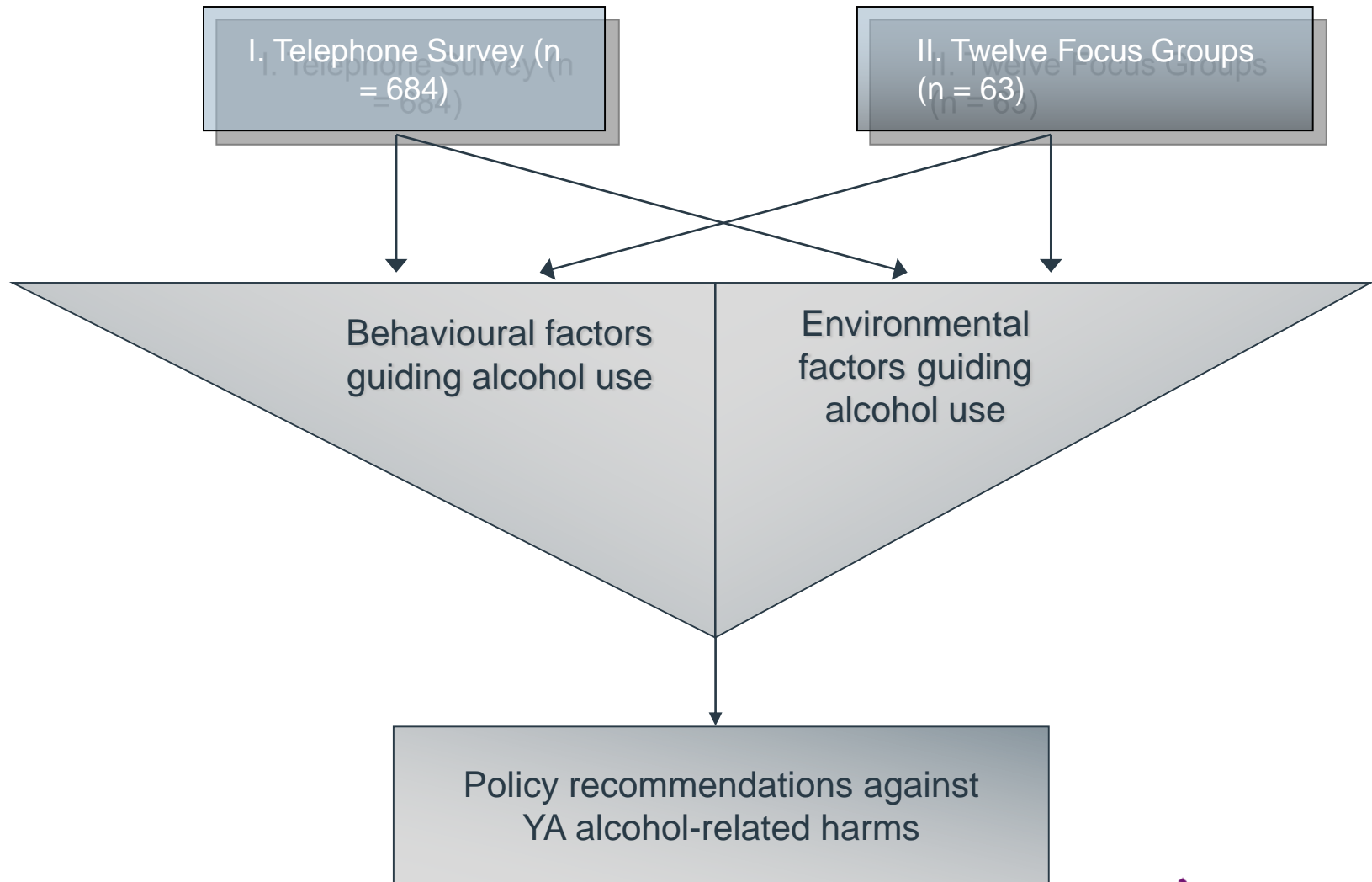


Research question

- What are the behavioural and environmental factors that guide young adult drinking culture in Hong Kong, and what are their implications for potentially implementing the best practices of alcohol policy?

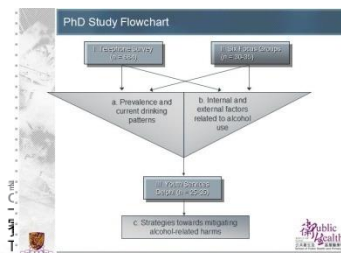


Mixed-methods approach



Part 1: Population survey

- I. Quantitative survey of factors associated with drinking and related behaviors of Hong Kong's young adults
 - Method: Population-wide telephone survey
 - Respondents: Hong Kong Chinese residents and one-way visa holders
 - Sample size: Total $n = 4,800$; young adults (18-25) = 684



Part 1: Population survey

- Ever, current (past-year), weekly and binge drinking
- Gender, age (18-20, 21-25), education level, marital status, working status
- Examination of alcohol use based on the Expectancy Theory
- Hypotheses pertaining to Expectancy Theory:
 - For young adults in Hong Kong, positive alcohol expectancies are positively associated with alcohol use and heavy use.
 - Negative expectancies are inversely associated with alcohol use and heavy use.



(Source: Zamboanga, 2006)



Part 1: Population survey

Table 5a. Demographic actors associated with past-month binge drinking Hong Kong young adults 18-25 (n=684)

	%	OR _{unadj}	Drinking-related factors only OR _{mv}	Full model: Demographic + drinking factors OR _{adjusted}
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	14.2	1.00	NA	1.00
Female	6.2	0.41 (0.23-0.72)**		0.40 (0.23-0.71)**
<i>Age</i>				
18-20	8.7	1.00	NA	--
21-25	11.2	1.32 (0.78-2.23)		
<i>Education</i>				
Lower secondary and below	13.1	1.00	NA	--
Secondary F6-F7/Vocational school	7.8	0.55 (0.25-1.25)		
Tertiary non-bachelor's degree	9.5	0.70 (0.33-1.46)		
Bachelor's degree and above	9.8	0.72 (0.40-1.31)		
<i>Working status</i>				
Student	6.3	1.00	NA	1.00
Full-/part-time job	13.7	2.37 (1.35-4.16)**		2.37 (1.33-4.24)**
Waiting for employment	16.0	2.85 (1.18-6.87)*		3.19 (1.26-8.05)*

NS: Not significant, NA: Not Applicable, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001



Part 1: Population survey

Table 5b. Drinking-related factors associated with past-month binge drinking Hong Kong young adults 18-25 (n=684)

	%	OR _{unadj}	Drinking-related factors only OR _{mv}	Full model: Demographic + drinking factors OR _{adjusted}
<i>Drinking as advantage for work</i>				
No comment/disagree	7.9	1.00	--	--
Agree	12.4	1.65 (0.99-2.76)		
<i>Social benefits of drinking</i>				
Lowest Tier (≤ 25%)	2.9	1.00	1.00	1.00
Middle Tier (> 25% & ≤ 52%)	11.0	4.12 (1.74-9.73)**	4.76 (1.91-11.84)**	3.93 (1.64-9.40)**
Highest Tier (> 52 & ≤ 100%)	17.5	7.08 (3.08-16.25)***	7.91 (3.25-19.23)***	6.67 (2.87-15.49)***
<i>Attractiveness of drinkers</i>				
Lowest Tier (≤ 19%)	6.5	1.00	NS	--
Middle Tier (> 19% & ≤ 25%)	10.0	1.59 (0.81-3.14)		
Highest Tier (> 25% & ≤ 100%)	16.8	2.91 (1.37-6.16)**		
<i>Individual benefits of drinking</i>				
Lowest Tier (≤ 56%)	5.6	1.00	NS	--
Middle Tier (> 56% & ≤ 75.3%)	9.9	1.86 (0.89-3.88)		
Highest Tier (> 75.3% & ≤ 100%)	14.5	2.86 (1.44-5.68)**		

NS: Not significant, NA: Not Applicable, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001



Part 1: Population survey

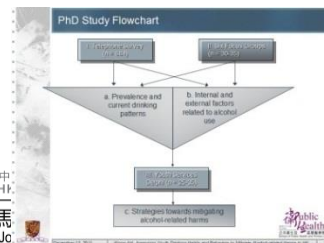
- Positive expectancies - predictors of ever drinking, past-year drinking, and/or binge drinking.
- Negative expectancies did not exhibit significant associations.
- Social benefits of drinking were identified as a strong predictor of binge drinking among young adults
- Gender differences in both ever-drinking and binge drinking.



Part 2: Focus group

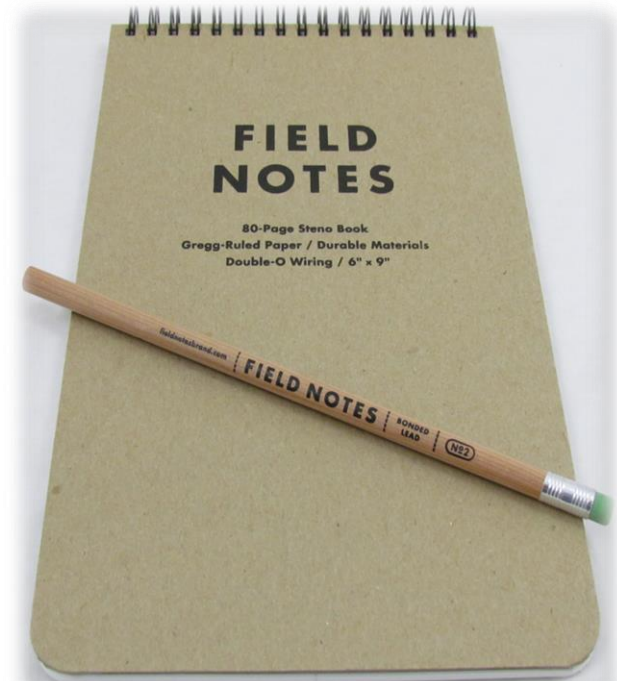
II. Qualitative study exploring the drinking patterns and settings of HK's young adults

- Method: Focus groups (Twelve groups of five to six respondents, n = 63) with two interviewers
- Sample: Purposive sampling of homogeneous focus groups (drinkers and non-drinkers) consisting of the following groups:
 - Tertiary school students;
 - White collar and professional young adults; and
 - young adults working in a non-professional occupation.



Part 2: Focus group

- Topic guide - Questions guided by Flay's Theory of Triadic Influence:
 - Daily lifestyle occasions that lead to drinking;
 - Drink settings and beverages;
 - Cues to drink alcohol;
 - Personal reasons for drinking;
 - Perceptions on image of beverages;
 - Benefits and harms of drinking.
 - Health education strategies
- Analysis – framework analysis approach
 - Coding and themes based on literature review of young adults drinking



Core individual reasons for young adults drinking

- Release from traditional norms of restraint (a Jekyll-and-Hyde effect): from a conservative image to one that is open-minded and honest
- Drinking as a means to cope with negative states from everyday life
- Drinking to increase one's quality of being sociable by getting "high" or becoming more confident
- Drinking to conform to peer norms in a social circle (to gain membership into the circle)
- Drinking for fear of losing face: continuously reciprocal competition to engage in, in order to gain or maintain face so as not to look weak



Reinforcing factors for drinking

- Male/female differences in drinking context
 - Males are usually those who initiate drinking regardless of occasion
 - Females are more susceptible towards coerced drinking
- Convenience and comfort of drinking venues
 - Drinking venues - top places to go when they are looking to gather and socialize
- Marketing
 - Not directly linked to drinking decisions
 - Images portrayed however are directly linked to core reasons (sociability, fun)
 - Promotions (ladies' night) and drink packages
- Local drinking games



Discussion

- Young adult drinking image is dictated by one's external presentation
 - Drinking brings out images of demonstrating maturation, sociability, dominance, and respect.
 - Traditional concept of face
 - Fear of social exclusion
 - Local drinking games: an enabler towards binge drinking combining pathological gambling and continuous alcohol use



Discussion

- The act of drinking itself is not the main attractive draw for young adults.
 - “Drinking to get drunk” vs. “drinking as a tool”



Study 2: Discussion

- Tool of convenience: Elements of drinking (especially drink settings) bring people closer together.
 - Crowded living space in Hong Kong – most young adults live at home with parents
 - Possible gathering spots outside of bars and lounges (restaurants, cafes) place limits on how long one can stay.
- Tool of socialization: social facilitation and tribal membership
 - Boosts confidence
 - Less rigid rules among circles on traditionally accepted demeanor
 - Maladaptive coping



Policy implications

- A unique set of variables center around policy and interventions, particularly on access
 - Availability of drinking game tools – Possible?
 - Availability of on-premise drink settings
 - Regulations through licensing
 - Serving hours
 - Limiting hours of patronage
 - Eliminating packages and discounts
 - Physical convenience off-premise
 - Image of drinking as an accessible commodity
 - Behind the counter sales (similar to cigarette sales)
 - Restrict purchasing hours of alcohol



Future Directions

- Further examination of youth drinking culture
 - In-depth interviews with binge drinkers
- Gauge of what alcohol-related key stakeholders perceive as appropriate alcohol policy for Hong Kong
 - Possible impact on young adults and the development of their drinking practices
 - Feasibility in implementing such policy in the local setting



Reference

- Department of Health (HKSAR). Promoting Health in Hong Kong: A Strategic Framework for Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. http://www.dh.gov.hk/english/pub_rec/pub_rec_ar/pdf/ncd/ENG%20whole%20DOC%2016-10-08.pdf [accessed December 4, 2010].
- Department of Health (HKSAR). Action Plan to Reduce Alcohol-related Harm in Hong Kong. http://www.dh.gov.hk/english/pub_rec/pub_rec_ar/pdf/ncd_ap2/action_plan_whole_document_e.pdf [accessed December 2, 2011].
- Ezzati M, Lopez AD, Rodgers A, Vander Hoorn S, Murray CJL. Selected major risk factors and global and regional burden of disease. *Lancet* 2002; **360**:1347-1360.
- Financial Secretary, HKSAR. The 2011-2012 Budget Speech: Fostering Economic Diversification – Wine Trading and Distribution. <http://www.budget.gov.hk/2011/eng/budget43.html> [accessed April 13, 2011].
- Griffiths S, Lau S, Chow JKW, et al. Alcohol use among entrants to a Hong Kong university. *Alcohol Alcohol* 2006; **41**:560-565.
- Kim JH, Lee S, Chow J, et al. Prevalence and the factors associated with binge drinking, alcohol abuse, and alcohol dependence: a population-based study of chinese adults in Hong Kong. *Alcohol Alcohol* 2008; **43**: 360-370.
- World Health Organization. Global status report on alcohol and health (2011). http://www.who.int/entity/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/msbgsruprofiles.pdf [accessed March 10, 2011].
- Zamboanga BL. From the eyes of the beholder: alcohol expectancies and valuations as predictors of hazardous drinking behaviors among female college students. *Am J Drug Alcohol Abuse* 2006;**32**:599-605.



Thank you!



Email: alvinwonghc@cuhk.edu.hk

Phone: +852 2252-8705

