

PERCEPTION OF ALCOHOL BEVERAGES IMAGE AND EXPERIENCES OF DRINKING ALCOHOL BEVERAGES OF THAI UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

การรับรู้ภาพลักษณ์เครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์กับประสบการณ์การดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ของนิสิตนักศึกษาไทยในเขตกรุงเทพมหานคร

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Abstract

This research aimed to study the influence of the demographic characteristics as well as the perception of the alcohol image on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages of Thai students in Bangkok Metropolitan. The study used the quantitative research. Three hundred ninety out of 403 online questionnaires were completed and usable for the data analysis. Statistics used were the descriptive statistics; percentage, mean, standard deviation, and the referential statistics: binary logistic regression. The results showed that demographic characteristics which were the year of study and the recent GPA (grade point average) had the statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05. The perception of overall alcoholic image that had statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05 was the alcohol marketing's image on place.

Keywords: Perception, Alcohol beverages image, Experiences, Drinking alcohol beverages, Thai undergraduate students

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้จัดทำเพื่อศึกษาอิทธิพลของลักษณะประชากรศาสตร์และการรับรู้ภาพลักษณ์เครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ต่อประสบการณ์การดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ของนิสิตนักศึกษาไทยในเขตกรุงเทพมหานคร การศึกษาใช้การวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ โดยเลือกใช้เทคนิคการเก็บข้อมูลด้วยแบบสอบถามออนไลน์ตามความสะดวก ได้จำนวนแบบสอบถามตอบกลับรวมทั้งสิ้น 403 ชุด แต่มีแบบสอบถามที่ใช้ได้จริงเพียง 390 ชุด สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ประกอบด้วย สถิติพรรณนา ได้แก่ ค่าร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และสถิติอ้างอิง ได้แก่ การวิเคราะห์การถดถอยโลจิสติกส์แบบทวิ (Binary logistic regression) ผลการศึกษา พบว่า ลักษณะประชากรศาสตร์ ได้แก่ ชั้นปีที่ศึกษา และเกรดเฉลี่ยเทอมล่าสุดมีอิทธิพลต่อประสบการณ์การดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ 0.05 การรับรู้ภาพลักษณ์เครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์มีเพียงการรับรู้ภาพลักษณ์เครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ด้านการจัดจำหน่ายเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ที่มีอิทธิพลต่อประสบการณ์การดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ 0.05

คำสำคัญ: การรับรู้ ภาพลักษณ์เครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ ประสบการณ์ การดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ นิสิตนักศึกษาไทย

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Introduction

It is generally accepted that alcohol consumption is harmful to health and social effects in many ways. Alcohol beverages could act to destroy internal organs such as liver, kidneys, heart, bloodstream, and brain function effect, especially in the case of the drunken drivers who may not be able to control the vehicle and cause the subsequent accidents. Moreover, alcohol beverages consumption could also bring the obesity, high blood pressure, brain disorders (behavior, intelligence), risk of sexual behavior, causes of alcoholism when entering adulthood, a growing tendency for crime and so on, which lead to get arrested, prosecuted, and so on. There are more and more problems with alcohol beverages consumption as the number of alcohol consumers and alcohol consumption among youth is significantly higher. Center for Alcohol Studies in Thailand (2013) demonstrated that drinking of Thai youth aged 15-24 increased from 21.6 percent in 2001 to 23.7 percent in 2011 or an increase of 9.5 percent.

Nowadays, although there may be a number of consumers who see through marketing strategies and marketing communication of the manufacturers and distributors, there are still people who are unaware of such marketing strategies and marketing communications, especially among teenagers including Thai undergraduate students who may not be the main target group of alcoholic beverages company and distributors because they do not have enough self-sufficient income to buy alcohol beverages freely. However, they are the crucial prospective targets who are in the juncture between youth and adulthood, especially in the freshmen and sophomore, those are beginning to gain more freedom of thought and behavior. Parents who used to be strict when they were in junior high school began to relax. Students have more activities outside of class and quite often activities create the opportunity for alcohol to play more important role. Many students are unaware of the manufacturers and distributors of alcohol beverages' marketing strategies and marketing communications due to the age and immature, endowed with generosity, fear of not being group member as well as having a brewery, pub, bar all around the campus. This may result in students being motivated easily, the perception of a variety of alcohol beverages' activities which the alcohol beverage manufacturers and distributors have positively presented. This may affect the level of alcohol beverage image in the consumer mindset to be at a good level, and more importantly, the attitude toward the alcohol beverage consumption itself may also be positive as well. Students may think that they can be self-controlled of alcohol beverage consumption. Nevertheless, there are also many students who have started drinking and addicted to alcohol beverages until they graduate and enter into the working life, leading to chronic alcoholism.

A study on the perception of alcohol beverage image and alcohol consumption behavior of Thai undergraduate students is therefore important to evaluate the situation of the image of the alcohol beverages which will lead to the development of the awareness campaigns of the relevant agencies, both public, private and non-profit organizations, to see through the manufacturers and distributors of the alcohol beverages' marketing strategy and marketing communications to create positive image of alcohol. Those campaigns that can effectively reduce the alcohol consumption and efficiently operate the campaigns' budget in the future.

The research, therefore, aimed to study the influence of the demographic characteristics as well as the perception of the alcohol image on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages of Thai students in Bangkok Metropolitan.

Literature Review

Several theories and research findings have been reviewed and synthesized to be the fundamental guideline for this study. Actually, human behavior occurred regarding to several factors and context. For the alcohol beverage consumption behavior, the first factor that could be relevant to human behavior is demographic factor. When looking at the demographic approach, Yubol Benjarongkij (1999) explained that demographic approach was the theory based on rationale which described that human behaviors occurred because of the drive from the external forces. It was the belief that people with different demographic qualification will behave differently. This approach was relevant to the social categories theory (Defleur, & Bell-Rokeach, 1996), which explained that the behavior of a person was related to the characteristics of the person or the demographics that can be described people as a group (individuals with similar behavior are often in the same group). Besides, individuals within broad subgroups (such as age, classes, sex, social, or educational class) reacted similarly to the same stimulus. These demographics would affect behavior, living and product and/ or service consumption in different way. The study, therefore, selected the demographic characteristics which were gender and education- the year of study, the recent GPA (grade point average) and the class attendance. Both factors were important in Thai society, which may be related to alcohol beverages consumption behavior. In Thai context, male is generally seen as a sturdy person who gets along and accepts with the alcohol beverages consumption. For the education aspect, students in the higher year will have more opportunity and socialization for the alcohol beverages consumption. Furthermore, the lower recent GPA and the class attendance may probably be the effect of the alcohol beverages consumption. These led to hypothesis 1: "demographic characteristics, i.e. gender and education, have an influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages of Thai students in Bangkok Metropolitan."

The next factor could be the perception of the alcohol beverages image. For the perception approach, Kast, & Rosenzweig (1985) identified that perception was the interpretation of the stimulus and individual's response to the stimulus differently depends on the experiences which caused individual behave differently. Each person chose to perceive only the information that meets his or her needs and preferences. Whereas for the image approach, Boulding (1956) explained that "image" was the knowledge of the person's feelings toward things, especially the self-made knowledge as well as subjective knowledge, which consisted of "facts and values that the person determines". Each person would accumulate the subjective knowledge about the things that have been experienced and believed as the true knowledge. People often got only some images or the broad nature of them because they cannot always know and understand everything. Thus, this may not be clear enough and then often interpret or give meaning to something on his/ her own. This subjective knowledge was complementary to the image of the things that were in the world according to the viewpoints and behaviors that the person expressed depended on the image of the thing in their brain. Kotler (2000) mentioned the image in term of marketing that it was the way people perceive the company or its products and was what

happened due to a number of factors under the control of the business. Image also referred to the picture occurred in the psyche of a person according to the will to the organization, institution, person, or operation. The images that arose in this mind may be the result of gaining the direct experience or the indirect experience with the person's perception. For corporate image, it referred to the overall image of an organization that an individual experienced or had impressive knowledge as well as feelings toward the agency or institution by organization's action or behavior, product management, and publicity which would also play a role in the corporate image. These brought to the two dimensions of the perceived image in this study, the corporate image and the marketing image and grounded the hypothesis 2: "the perception of the alcohol image on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages of Thai students in Bangkok Metropolitan."

Methodology

The study used the quantitative research. Online questionnaires via the networking and convenience sampling were used for the data collection. 390 out of 403 questionnaires were completed and usable. The questionnaire was consisted of three parts: demographic data, the alcohol beverage's corporate and marketing image data and the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages data. The questions about the alcohol beverage's corporate and marketing image were asked for respondents to answer in the Likert scale while the question about the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages used two choices answer: yes and no. Questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability. 30 pretest questionnaires showed the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for alcohol beverage 0.962, corporate image 0.881 and marketing image 0.959. The statistics used for the data analysis were the descriptive statistics; percentage, mean, standard deviation, and the referential statistics which were binary logistic regression.

Findings

The descriptive statistics demonstrated that most respondents were female between the ages of 18-26 years and GPA between 3.01-3.50. 330 Respondents had an experience of drinking alcohol beverages. More detail described as follows. Respondents who were Thai undergraduate students in Bangkok Metropolitan perceived the overall image of the alcohol beverages at the moderate level. The perception of the alcohol beverages marketing's image was at the moderately moderate as shown in Table 1. The interesting finding of the highest perception of alcohol beverages marketing image was the place image at the good level.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Image

Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Image	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation*
- Corporate Image	3.12	0.84	Moderate
- Marketing image	3.32	0.79	Upper moderate
- Product image	3.39	0.90	Upper moderate
- Price Image	3.12	1.06	Moderate
- Place Image	3.67	0.92	Good
- Promotion Image	3.11	0.89	Moderate
Overall	3.22	0.75	Moderate

* 1.00-1.80 = least, 1.81-2.60 = low, 2.61-3.40 = moderate, 3.41-4.20 = good and 4.21-5.00 = most

The alcohol beverages corporate image toward the stability of the alcohol beverages organization was mostly perceived at the upper moderate shown in Table 2. While the most perceived alcohol beverages marketing's image was the product which was the credibility, the reputation of the brand of the alcohol beverages at the good level shown in Table 3. For the highest perception of the alcohol beverages marketing's image on price was the appropriate price of the alcohol beverages compared to the quality at the moderate level. The highest perception of the alcohol beverages marketing's image on place was the convenient way to buy alcohol beverages at the good level. For the highest perception of alcohol beverages marketing's image on promotion was the interest of alcohol beverages advertising as well as the consistent publicity of the alcohol beverages at the moderate level.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Corporate Image

Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Corporate Image	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
- The stability of the alcohol beverages organization	3.36	1.04	Upper moderate
- The trustworthiness of the alcohol beverages organization	3.34	1.06	Upper moderate
- The advancement of the alcohol beverages organization	3.32	1.06	Upper moderate
- The reputation of alcohol beverages company executives	3.21	1.11	Moderate
- The performance of employees or representatives of alcohol beverages organizations	2.98	1.03	Moderate
- Human relations of alcohol beverages company employees	2.97	1.07	Moderate
- Alcohol beverages organization ethics	2.89	1.09	Moderate
- Corporate social responsibility of alcohol beverages	2.88	1.15	Moderate

* 1.00-1.80 = least, 1.81-2.60 = low, 2.61-3.40 = moderate, 3.41-4.20 = good and 4.21-5.00 = most

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Marketing Image

Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Marketing Image	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Product			
- The trustworthiness, the reputation of the brand of alcohol beverages.	3.63	1.13	Good
- The appropriateness of the size of the alcohol beverages packaging	3.51	1.04	Good
- The variety of products, the flavors of alcohol beverages	3.44	1.11	Good
- The shape of the of alcohol beverages' packaging to facilitate consumption	3.47	1.02	Good
- The improvement and development of new alcohol beverages products that can meet the needs of consumers	3.31	1.04	Upper moderate
- Display of production date and expiration date	3.21	1.15	Moderate
- A clear ingredient notification of alcohol beverages	3.14	1.11	Moderate

Table 3: (continued)

Perception of the Alcohol Beverages Marketing Image	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Price			
- The price fairness of alcohol beverages compared to quality.	3.18	1.11	Moderate
- The suitability of the price of alcohol beverages compared to quantity.	3.13	1.11	Moderate
- The value for money of alcohol beverages.	3.04	1.14	Moderate
Place			
- The convenience of buying alcohol beverages.	3.76	1.13	Good
- The sufficiency of alcohol beverages distribution channel	3.63	1.06	Good
- The variety of alcohol beverages distribution channel	3.62	1.11	Good
Promotion			
- The interest of alcohol beverages' advertising	3.21	1.06	Moderate
- The regularity of alcohol beverages' publicity	3.21	1.02	Moderate
- The variety of alcohol beverages' advertising through various media.	3.19	1.03	Moderate
- The novelty of the event/ marketing activities of alcohol beverages	3.16	1.10	Moderate
- The interest of alcohol beverages' sales promotion activities	3.10	1.08	Moderate
- The variety of alcohol beverages' sales promotion activities	3.07	1.09	Moderate
- The assistance or advice of alcohol beverages sales representative	2.84	1.08	Moderate

* 1.00-1.80 = least, 1.81-2.60 = low, 2.61-3.40 = moderate, 3.41-4.20 = good and 4.21-5.00 = most

For the inferential statistics testing, the binary logistic regression analysis had been used to test hypothesis 1 and showed that demographic characteristics which were the year of study and the recent GPA had the statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05 as shown in Table 4. The finding can be interpreted that the year of study and the recent GPA scores can predict the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages. Respondents who were in the one level higher year of study had increased 1.5 times more opportunity to experience the alcohol beverages drinking behavior. Moreover, respondents who had one level higher of the recent GPA had an approximately 37 percentage ($1-0.634*100$) of decreasing opportunity to experience the alcohol beverages drinking behavior. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was partially accepted at the significant level 0.05. This may be possible since students in the higher year of study students have had a chance to join various university activities such as greeting new students, thanks to the senior and others. Most of the activities are often the subject of alcohol beverages consumption. Thus, the experience of drinking alcohol beverages is more likely. The result was consistent with the study of "Alcohol Consumption Behavior and Perception of Alcohol Drinking Behavior's Effect of Private University Students in the Western Bangkok Metropolitan Region" (Luksana Inklub, et al, 2008) which found that gender and grade

point average had statistically significance a relationship with the alcoholic drinking behavior at the level of 0.05. However, the finding was not consistent with the results of the study by Rattiya Buasorn, & Chet Rachadapannatikul (2012) on "Alcohol Consumption Behaviors of Undergraduate Students in the Bangkok Metropolitan", which showed that the demographic factors which were age, year of study, grade point average, living style, monthly income, knowledge of alcohol beverages, and family relationships had no relationship with the alcohol consumption behaviors.

Table 4: Summary of Binary Logistic Regression Analysis for Demographic Characteristics Predicting the Experiences of Drinking Alcohol Beverages

Demographic Characteristics	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
- Gender	-.565	.342	2.728	1	.099	.568	.291	1.111
- Year of study	.405	.130	9.685	1	.002	1.499	1.162	1.934
- The recent GPA	-.456	.185	6.086	1	.014	.634	.441	.911
- The class attendance	-.101	.166	.368	1	.544	.904	.653	1.252
Constant	4.172	1.252	11.103	1	.001	64.851		

Chi-square (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients) Model = 20.862, df = 4, Sig. = .000

Chi-square (Hosmer and Lemeshow Test) = 6.061, df = 7, Sig. = .533

-2 Log likelihood = 314.010, Cox, & Snell R^2 = 0.052, Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke R^2) = .090

For testing hypothesis 2, the binary logistic regression analysis showed that the perception of overall alcohol beverages image that had statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05 was the alcohol beverages marketing's image on place as shown in Table 5. The finding can be interpreted that the place image of alcohol beverages can predict the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages. Respondents who perceived the place image of alcohol beverages higher one level had increased 1.55 times more opportunity to experience the alcohol beverages drinking behavior. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was partially accepted. This was probably due to the importance of the perception of place image of alcohol beverages, whether a variety of alcohol distribution channels, the convenience of buying alcohol beverages, or the adequacy of alcohol distribution channels, which was the highest perception of alcohol beverages marketing image at the good level (as shown in Table 1) and also generally accepted that the perception of place image of alcohol beverage could affect the experience of alcohol beverages consumption. The result was in line with the study conducted by Kankanit Polchaeng (2012) on "Factors Influencing the Alcohol Consumption of Undergraduate Students in Bangkok Metropolis", which found that factor influencing the alcohol consumption the most was the distribution channel.

Table 5: Summary of Binary Logistic Regression Analysis for the Perception of Alcohol Beverages Image Predicting the Experiences of Drinking Alcohol Beverages

Perception of Alcohol Beverages Image	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
- Corporate Image	.436	.241	3.279	1	.070	1.546	.965	2.478
- Product Image	-.173	.268	.419	1	.518	.841	.497	1.422
- Price Image	-.153	.207	.547	1	.459	.858	.572	1.287
- Place Image	.437	.216	4.098	1	.043	1.548	1.014	2.363
- Promotion Image	.176	.236	.556	1	.456	1.193	.751	1.894
Constant	-.630	.596	1.117	1	.290	.532		

Chi-square (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients) Model = 16.891, df = 5, Sig. = .005

Chi-square (Hosmer and Lemeshow Test) = 6.058, df = 8, Sig. = .641

-2 Log likelihood = 317.981, Cox, & Snell $R^2 = 0.042$, Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke R^2) = .074

Conclusions

The research aimed to study the influence of the demographic characteristics as well as the perception of the alcohol image on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages of Thai students in Bangkok Metropolitan. The study used the quantitative research. Online questionnaires via the networking and convenience sampling were used for the data collection. 390 out of 403 questionnaires were completed and usable. The results showed that demographic characteristics which were the year of study and the recent GPA had the statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05. The perception of overall alcohol beverages image that had statistically significant influence on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages at the level of 0.05 was the alcohol marketing's image on place. Both hypotheses were partially accepted. The study demonstrated that there were some significant influences of the demographic characteristics as well as the perception of the alcohol image on the experiences of drinking alcohol beverages. These findings could benefit people involved in alcohol beverages policy to prevent the alcohol problems. In particular, the management in the educational institutions could be aware of the level of the perception of alcohol beverages image which could lead to the alcohol consumption behavior of Thai students in Bangkok as well as Thailand. The results of the study and the knowledge gained could be used to formulate a policy agenda to prevent the increasing rate of Thai youth's alcohol consumption.

The study faced some difficulties, especially during the data collection. By using online survey was easy to reach the samples due to the smart phone was the general technology for Thai students, but to have them participate was the very difficult task. Samples were quite reluctant to participate regarding the length of the questionnaire, or the inconvenient time and place. Although they may have intention to participate later when they were able, most of them forgot. Future study may explore on other factors expected to be involved in youth's alcohol drinking behaviors such as alcohol beverages

consumption behavior of family members, values of alcohol drinking in the society, and etc. The more factors the study can cover, the better implication and feasible policy will be in terms of the concreteness and pertinent.

Acknowledgements

The research for this paper was financially supported by Faculty of Social Sciences, Srinakarinwirot University, grant no.675/ 2558. In developing this article, I have fully received morale support from family and friends. I also thank the informants for their kindness information and everyone who involved in any process of this study until it came out to be this article.

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