

# To Explore the Relationship Between Drinking Behavior and Self-media Alcohol Advertising

## -- Taking the Adolescent Group as the Object of Investigation

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### Abstract

As the alcohol advertisement is the main marketing method of alcohol products, its lens language can satisfy, to some extent, the individual's desire to drink. Young people who are affected by alcohol advertisements in different media also show more frequent drinking behavior and earlier drinking age. Due to the influence of alcohol advertising on drinking behavior, Article twenty-three of the Advertising Law of the People's Republic of China regulates alcohol advertising. However, with the rapid development of self-media, the combination of alcohol advertising and self-media content has formed a kind of recessive alcohol advertising. In order to explore the influence of alcohol advertising on drinking behavior of adolescents, this paper investigated the relationship between alcohol advertising and drinking behavior of adolescents born after 2000 through questionnaire and variance test. Through the investigation, the drinking behavior of teenagers is closely related to their exposure to alcohol advertisements in self-media platforms, and with the increasing attention to self-media alcohol advertisements, the likelihood of alcohol consumption increases in the adolescent population. Finally, through the analysis of questionnaires and variance tests, the results show that with the increase of interest in self-media alcohol advertising, the drinking behavior of teenagers also increases. The research on the relationship between alcohol advertising in self-media and teenagers drinking behavior will help to standardize the rules of alcohol advertising on self-media platform and put forward some suggestions to further alleviate the current situation of high incidence of drinking behavior among youth groups in China.

### Keywords

Drinking behavior; Adolescent group; Alcohol advertising from the media.

### 1. Introduction

The prevention of drinking among young people has always been an important proposition for the healthy behavior of young people in China. In China, drinking among teenagers is still a serious problem. According to a 2013-2014 survey of teenagers in six major cities, "51 percent of secondary school students over 12 years of age have consumed alcohol, while 28 percent have started drinking before the age of 10" [1]. The rising proportion of young drinkers and the fact that people start drinking more earlier are the specific drinking problems of Chinese adolescents. Based on this high proportion of drinking, its harm cannot be ignored. A survey on the current situation of drinking behavior among secondary school students in China in China School Health clearly states that the acute consequences of drinking among teenagers will be reflected in various kinds of malignant behavior, such as car accidents, fights, drug abuse, etc.

Such influences are even more harmful to adolescents, a group that lacks control [2]. Therefore, how to control adolescent drinking behavior, curb the expansion of drinking at a young age, and postpone initial drinkers require both the state and society to work together and find answers. Besides the influence of family and environment, alcohol advertisement has become an important cause of the drinking behavior of teenagers. According to research conducted by Anderson Peter and Avalon de Bruijin, the adolescent drinking behavior occurrence and the frequency of alcohol advertisement exposed to teenagers has strong correlation. More exposure to alcohol advertising will increase the incidence of adolescent drinking behavior. Therefore, the restriction and control of alcohol advertising also closely links in the prevention of adolescent health behavior. With the development of Internet technology, a new form of self-media advertising appears. As a new type of advertising, self-media advertising has a stronger affinity with teenagers compared to traditional advertising on newspaper, TV and radio. With the help of short video on mobile terminal and other platforms, self-media advertising can be more accessible to youth groups and targeted publicity. Therefore, the combination of alcohol advertising and self-media makes such commercials more acceptable to teenagers and interferes with their drinking behavior to a greater extent. In view of the above-mentioned urgency to prevent adolescent drinking behavior and the impact of self-media drinking advertisements on adolescent groups, this report will explore the exact extent to which alcohol advertising from media platforms affects the drinking behavior of adolescent groups.

## 2. Literature Review

This article will carry on the processing and the analysis to the collected information based on the plan behavior theory. The theory is based on an evolution of the Theory of Reasonable Action (TRA), a theory developed by Martin Fishbein and Ajzen in 1980. TRA holds that an individual's behavior is influenced by his or her behavioral awareness, and that the intention of his or her behavior depends on his or her attitude and subjective norm. In exploring the relationship between self-media alcohol advertising and adolescents drinking behavior, we will take adolescents' attitude towards self-media alcohol advertising as an individual subjective attitude variable. The cognition of self-media alcohol advertisement to the peers and family members of teenagers is regarded as the subjective norm. Finally, the degree of behavioral cognition is examined from the perspective of whether adolescents have the desire to buy alcohol products after watching alcohol advertisements in media, and whether they have certain dialectical ability and control ability to alcohol advertisements in media.

For the specific relationship between alcohol advertising and drinking behavior of teenagers, there is a big gap between Chinese and International research. In the field of domestic research, the researchers rarely discuss the effect of alcohol advertising on drinking behavior in adolescent groups but mainly focuses on the specific effects of alcohol consumption itself. In the field of the rationality of alcohol advertising, Qiu Renzong from the Institute of Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is the first to turn the discussion to the ethical evaluation between alcohol advertising and teenagers drinking behavior, and expressed his concern about alcohol advertising as a problem for teen drinking [3].

In the related research abroad, studies on the relationship between alcohol drinking behavior and alcohol advertising. It has been studied by many authors, and has a deep research in the field of adolescent drinking behavior pattern, alcohol advertising and adolescent behavior [4]. Researchers such as Peter Anderson and Avalon de Bruijin collated information on alcohol advertising and drinking behavior among adolescents at different stages of development, after extensive research in several countries, the authors correlated the earlier drinking age of adolescents with the persistence of drinking behavior and exposure to alcohol advertising [5].

Lesley A Smith and David R Foxcroft, surveyed more than 13,000 young people aged 10 to 26 and found a significant increase in alcohol consumption after watching alcohol related advertising and promotional messages on media. David Jernigan and Jonathan Noel pooled a series of studies over a period of time looking at the relationship between alcohol advertising and adolescents drinking behavior [6]. They further demonstrated that the marketing level of alcohol advertising is positively correlated with the drinking situation of teenagers. So far, a number of studies have shown an association between alcohol advertising and alcohol consumption among adolescents.

However, even though alcohol advertising in traditional media has to some extent been restricted by the advertising law, the hidden alcohol advertising in various emerging self-media platforms has not been effectively controlled. Different from the traditional type of advertising, the self-media advertising, by virtue of the acceptability of its content expression and the youth of its content expression, enables the self-media advertising to produce more youth than the traditional type of advertising, such as newspapers, radio content, television advertising and other stronger appeal and influence [7]. At the same time, compared with the directness of advertising expression in traditional media, the advertising content in the form of self-media is more covert. Combined with video and picture, the advertising nature of commercials on self-media is sometimes difficult to be noticed, thus casting a better advertising effect. With the gradual development of such advertising, the alcohol products also enjoy a better advertising effect through self-media form, and thus makes strong the influence of alcohol on teenagers [8].

According to the 44th Report on China Internet Network Development Statistics released by CNNIC, until June 2019, the number of online shoppers in China had reached 639 million. Such a huge online shopping crowd should also be served by mature internet advertising system. Without a clear understanding of the negative impact of potential self-media alcohol advertising on the adolescent population and the related effective prevention measures, it is likely that such alcohol advertising will further exacerbate the impact on the drinking behavior of the adolescent population.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Hypothesis of Data Acquisition

Based on the theory of planned behavior, this paper proposes the following hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: adolescents are more likely to be exposed to self-media alcohol advertising in the current Internet environment

Hypothesis 2: adolescents' attention to self-media alcohol advertisements is positively correlated with adolescents' drinking behavior

Hypothesis 3: there is a positive correlation between adolescents' interest in self-media alcohol advertisements and adolescents' drinking behavior

The survey is based on Ike Azan's theory of planned behavior (TRA), in which the subjective behavior of individuals is influenced by the behavior attitude, subjective norms and intuitive behavior of the actors. In the process of inducing adolescents' own drinking behavior, their exposure to alcohol advertisements in self-media platform content has also become a major cause. Based on the current Internet environment, self-media platforms and software, as a new trend in the development of cyberspace, are highly popular among young people. In addition, the alcohol advertisements in self-media platform also increase the possibility of contact with the teenagers, which affects the teenagers' subjective behavior towards alcohol products.

In addition, with the frequency of such exposure, it is possible for the adolescent population to increase the likelihood of alcohol consumption by influencing the individual's intuitive

behavior in the same way as exposure to traditional alcohol advertising. Finally, for such a kind of self-media alcohol advertising content, the teenagers themselves still have a gap between the degree of acceptance, according to the individual for the acceptance of such advertising content, there may also be differences in the degree of influence of alcohol advertising from the media.

### 3.2. Methods of Data Acquisition

In this survey, METHOD OF QUESTIONNAIRE COLLECTION is adopted. The Survey Questionnaire was distributed to the respondents to fill out, mainly consisted of The "millennials" who were born around 2000. This research disseminates questionnaires via online platforms. Then, the authors collect data and carries on the analysis.

#### (1) Analysis of variance

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), also known as the "Analysis of Variance", is developed by R. A. Fisher it for the significance test of mean differences between two or more samples. Due to the influence of various factors, the data obtained in the study fluctuated. The causes of fluctuations can be divided into two categories: one is uncontrollable random factors, and the other is controllable factors imposed in the study that have influence on outcome.

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1. Data Analysis

In total, 213 questionnaires were sent out and 187 valid questionnaires were collected, with a recovery rate of 87.8%. The results showed that 68.55% of the teenagers had drunk alcohol before the age of 18, 59.15% of the teenagers agreed that they had strong self-control ability, and 87.79% of the teenagers had seen alcohol advertisements in self-media. 59.16% of teenagers agreed that self-media alcohol advertising was more attractive to traditional media alcohol advertising. 55.4% of teenagers believed that they would have a desire to drink after watching alcohol advertisement in self-media. 45.54% of the teenagers thought that the recessive promotion in the alcohol advertisement from the self-media would have a negative effect on the teenagers. 61.98% of the young people believed that alcohol advertising in self-media should be effectively regulated. This shows that alcohol advertising in self-media does have a greater impact on young people and needs further analysis and discussion.

### 4.2. Research Findings

#### 4.2.1. Test Results for Study Hypothesis 1

Through the analysis of variance by SPSS, the following figure can be obtained.

According to the figure, among the nine social media platforms, the percentage of people who viewed alcohol ads from media via short video play software/ platforms was the highest (26.29%), and the lowest percentage of people who viewed alcohol ads from media is via Zhihu (21.6%), and the number of teenagers who had seen self-media alcohol advertisements through Weibo (20.66%) and Xiaohongshu (21.6%) was also high. Most/ The majority of teenagers have seen alcohol ads in the media through these nine platforms.

The results show that, Weibo ( $F=14.465$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), Wechat ( $F=24.405$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), TikTok ( $F=17.088$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), Video player ( $F=21.492$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), Little Red Book ( $F=21.183$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), YouTube ( $F=27.000$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), ZhiHu ( $F=15.333$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), Streaming Software ( $F=14.527$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ), Others ( $F=29.023$ ,  $p=0.000<0.001$ ),

Therefore, it is proved that adolescents are more likely to be exposed to self-media alcohol advertising in the current Internet environment.

Platform	Strongly agree	Neutrality	Strongly disagree	F	P
1. Weibo	20.66%	23.47%	13.15%	14.465	0.000
2. WeChat	18.78%	22.54%	16.9%	24.405	0.000
3. Short Video Platforms	26.29%	23.94%	11.74%	17.088	0.000
4. Video Players	15.02%	23%	14.08%	21.429	0.000
5. Xiaohongshu	21.6%	21.13%	16.9%	21.183	0.000
6. YouTube	16.9%	25.35%	15.96%	27.000	0.000
7. Zhihu	23.47%	22.07%	21.6%	15.333	0.000
8. Live streaming platforms	20.66%	22.54%	20.66%	14.527	0.000
9. 其他 9. Others	18.78%	27.7%	16.43%	29.023	0.000
p<0.1      p<0.05      p<0.001 P < 0.1 p < 0.05 p < 0.001					

**Figure 1.** Analyze the data results of respondents watching we-media alcohol advertisements through various social platforms

#### 4.2.2. Discussion

According to the results of the survey, among the various well-known self-media platforms listed in this survey, the vast majority of respondents from the youth group reported that there is a higher exposure to self-media alcohol advertising, and therefore it can be concluded that, in the current network environment, there is a greater likelihood for the adolescent groups to contact with the relevant alcohol advertising content on the Internet.

Due to the continuous development of Internet technology, self-media advertising has replaced traditional advertising as the main channel of advertising/ promotion. As a kind of advertisement which is strictly controlled by advertising law, alcohol advertisement is restricted in traditional media platforms, such as TV and newspaper, and it is difficult to attract young people. As a result, since self-media platforms don't not have such strict limits on alcohol advertising while having more young user group, they have become the new field where alcohol advertising is spreading.

As the main user group of the self-media platform, the youth group has also become the main target group of fine advertisement. By means of more modern advertising means, such as short video, soft sell and so on, self-media alcohol advertising accurately target the users and better hit the interests of the youth groups.

In view of the easy access of young people to alcohol advertising through self-media, the first task should be to improve the standards and regulations of advertising industry, and to limit and manage alcohol advertising on self-media platforms. At the same time, a real-time and effective punishment mechanism for advertising on self-media platforms, which are intended to guide the consumption of young people and clearly target the young people as the main target of advertising, should be established and forced.

#### 4.2.3. Test Results for Study Hypothesis 2

Through the analysis of variance by SPSS, the following figure can be obtained.

It is believed that the occurrence of adolescent drinking behavior is closely related to the frequency of exposure to alcohol advertisements by adolescents

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.840	4	5.960	4.788	.001
Within Groups	258.930	208	1.245		
Total	282.770	212			

**Figure 2.** The relationship between the occurrence of adolescent drinking behavior with the frequency of exposure to alcohol advertisements

Questions	Agree	Strongly agree
Self-media alcohol advertising will make the adolescent groups drink more frequently and early	38.5%	25.35%
There is a close relationship between the incidence of drinking behavior and the frequency of alcohol advertising	23%	18.78%

  

Questions	Yes	No
Have you ever been attracted by alcohol ads in the self-media and actively searched for relevant content	87.79%	12.21%

**Figure 3.** The results of questionnaires based on the specific questions

According to the above figure, 67.14% of the teenagers have been attracted by alcohol advertisements in the media and searched for relevant content voluntarily, and 60.85% of the teenagers believe that the alcohol advertising in the media will cause the teenagers to show more drinking behavior and the drinking age to be earlier. 41.78% of adolescents considered that the incidence of alcohol consumption among adolescents was strongly correlated with the frequency of adolescents exposure to alcohol advertising.

The results show that there was a significant correlation between alcohol consumption and the frequency of alcohol advertising ( $f = 4.788, p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, it is proved that there is a strong correlation between the incidence of drinking behavior and the frequency of alcohol advertising. In other words, the adolescents who are exposed to more alcohol advertising are more likely to engage in drinking.

**4.2.4. Discussion**

Through the investigation of adolescents exposure to self-media alcohol advertising and the analysis of the occurrence of their drinking behavior, we conclude that with the increase of adolescents exposure to self-media alcohol advertising, their drinking behavior is more likely to occur.

As a matter of fact, there are many researches on the relationship between alcohol advertising and drinking behavior of teenagers. In this survey, the authors also compared the relationship between self-media content and drinking behavior of adolescents, which are relatively

neglected by the management system, and concluded that when contacting with the alcohol advertisements on self-media platforms, the likelihood of adolescents engaging in drinking behavior also tends to increase as when they are exposed to traditional alcohol advertising. At the same time, the alcohol advertising on self-media platforms is also different from that on traditional platforms. Through the methods of content design, cooperation with well-known self-media platform operators, and covert placement with self-media platform content, its advertising content has greater appeal than traditional alcohol advertising, resulting an increase viscosity among teenagers.

To this, platform manager should undertake better to platform content, especially for some of the more hidden from the media alcohol advertising. Nowadays, the vast majority of alcohol advertising from the media have a clever design. It no longer contains obvious advertising words but carry out more covert promotion through the lifestyle, behavior hints and other channels. For such behaviors, platforms should carefully discernment, or make alcohol advertising rules, so that the hidden advertising can be obvious. Then, the user viscosity of such alcohol advertising can be reduced among teenagers.

#### 4.2.5. Test Results of Study Hypothesis 3

Through the analysis of variance by SPSS, the following figure can be obtained:

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	99.647	1	99.647	85.256	.000
Within Groups	246.616	211	1.169		
Total	346.263	212			
Between Groups	43.594	1	43.594	40.400	.000
Within Groups	227.683	211	1.079		
Total	271.277	212			

**Figure 4.** The attitude of different groups toward alcohol advertising in the self-media

Questions	Interested	Not interested
My attitude towards alcohol advertising in the self-media	45.01%	25.82%
The attitude of my friends of the same age toward self-media alcohol advertising	48.83%	17.37%

**Figure 5.** The results of questionnaires based on the specific questions

As can be seen from the above figure, 45.01% of the teenagers are interested in self-media alcohol advertisement, 25.82% of the teenagers are not interested in self-media alcohol advertisement, 48.83% of the same age friends are interested in self-media alcohol advertisement, and 17.37% of their peers are not interested in self-media alcohol advertisement. The results show that, there was a significant correlation between my attitude ( $F = 85.256, p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ) and that of my friends of the same age ( $f = 40.400, p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). Therefore, it is assumed that adolescents interest in self-media alcohol ads is positively correlated with adolescents drinking behavior, that is, adolescents who are more interested in self-media alcohol ads are more likely to engage in drinking behavior.

#### 4.2.6. Discussion

In the course of the investigation, we also examined whether adolescents own attitudes toward advertising content influenced their alcohol consumption behavior after exposure to alcohol advertising. According to the findings, the increased interest in alcohol advertising in the media did lead to an increase in the likelihood of alcohol consumption.

For this, the reason under this phenomenon is that the current self-media platform content does have a greater appeal for the youth groups. As the main platform of teenagers social and entertainment, teenagers have a high degree of trust in the contents of this kind of platform. Moreover, alcohol is a commodity young people can hardly get. Teenagers are naturally curious about it and are more likely to be exposed to and interested in alcohol advertising, in order to engage in drinking in this trend of interest.

Based on such inducing factors, governments should start with the education of the youth group. By means of lectures and related courses in schools, schools can explain to the young people all kinds of harm that drinking behavior may bring to the young people, introduce the related marketing strategies of self-media platforms to the students, and explain the improper content and behavior hidden in self-media alcohol advertisement, to help young people to establish a correct and reasonable concept of alcohol advertising from the media. advertisement, to help young people to establish a correct and reasonable concept of alcohol advertising from the media.

### 5. Conclusion

In recent years, the drinking behavior of teenagers has shown an increasing trend, which is closely related to the precocious degree, environment and peer pressure. And the contact with alcohol advertising content, is also a major reason for the increase in drinking behavior of youth groups. Compared with the traditional media, the new media platform has the characteristics of high efficiency, rich and diverse information content, strong interactivity and so on, which is better to meet the needs of the audience, and is more advantageous to the advertisement itself to precisely target the audience, even to attract potential users, therefore, it has become one of the hot issues that the teenagers are influenced by the alcohol advertisements in the media. However, through the analysis of the results of the questionnaire, we found that 87.79% of the teenagers had seen alcohol advertisements in the media and 68.55% of the teenagers had drunk alcohol before the age of 18, it follows that alcohol advertising in the media does lead to an earlier drinking age for teenagers. In order to prevent the negative effects of such advertisements on young people to continue to expand, more perfect laws and regulations must be introduced, and cause enough attention to society.

Because of the impact of the epidemic, the survey can not take data on a larger scale, so the data itself is relatively inadequate. However, the survey also collected data and samples that could support the content of the survey through the distribution and Snowball Sampling of the online questionnaire platform. In this paper, we focus on the study of drinking behavior of teenagers from the perspective of alcohol advertising on the media platform, by means of questionnaires and statistical analysis of data, the relationship between alcohol advertising content and drinking behavior of adolescents was investigated and analyzed in this paper. And innovative for the media alcohol advertising platform management requirements and expectations of youth groups in the media platform in the content contact, advertising choice and other content has a more innovative ideas.

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