

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SPORTS AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract. There is little research in Thailand exploring the relationship between sports and alcohol consumption. Therefore, we aimed to determine preference for sports, participation in sports and exposure to alcohol advertising while watching or attending sporting events is associated with alcohol consumption to guide further policy interventions. We conducted a multi-stage stratified cluster sampling survey to select university students from all regions of Thailand. All students aged 17-25 years from the selected universities were invited to complete a self-administered questionnaire. Adjusted odds ratios (AOR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were obtained from multivariate logistic regression models to assess the independent effects of each variable on three outcomes: attitude toward alcohol, current drinking and binge drinking. A total of 1,279 students who included in the study, 70.6% were female. Eighty eight percent of study subjects stated they were exposed to alcohol advertising while watching or attending a sporting event. Students who participated in sport were more likely to drink alcohol (AOR=1.7; 95% CI: 1.24-2.28) and binge drink (AOR=1.6; 95% CI: 1.10-2.25) than students who did not participate in sport. Students who watch or attend sporting events and who participate in sports are exposed to alcohol advertising, and students who participate in sports are more likely to consume alcohol. Alcohol advertising at sporting or on television needs to be discussed and measures taken to reduce alcohol consumption. Further studies need to be conducted to determine which interventions are effective in reducing alcohol consumption in this population.

Keywords: sport participation, exposure to alcohol advertising in sport, alcohol consumption, university student

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