



From abstainer to current drinker: a qualitative investigation of the process of alcohol use initiation among early adolescents in Thailand

Trakulwong Luecha^{a,b} , Bart Van Rompaey^b , and Lieve Peremans^{b,c,d} 

^aCommunity Nursing Group, Faculty of Nursing, Burapha University, Thailand; ^bDepartment of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Antwerp, Belgium; ^cDepartment of Primary and Interdisciplinary care, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Antwerp, Belgium; ^dMental Health and Wellbeing Research Group, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

ABSTRACT

Background: Recent evidence shows that young people started their first alcohol initiation when they were early adolescents (10–14 years of age), while there is still very little scientific understanding concerning the process of alcohol use of this age group. This study examined how adolescents in Thailand emerge to become drinkers.

Method: The semi-structured interview with 10–14-year-olds ($n=61$) in Chonburi, province of Thailand. Data were collected, and analysis followed the method of content analysis.

Results: Our analyzes revealed three steps of alcohol initiation among early adolescents: (a) the pre-stage; (b) the initiation; and (c) the self-adjustment stage. Parent, peer, and the taste of alcohol were noteworthy as the factors that promote young people to accept alcohol sipping and consumption as part of their life. Nevertheless, law, social norms, culture, parents, and health consequences discouraged young people from emerging alcohol initiation.

Conclusion: The preliminary evidence from this study recommends the interventions that address both individual-level and interpersonal circumstances as potentially being effective solutions to the provision of precautionary measures against underage alcohol use.

KEYWORDS

Alcohol; underage drinking; early adolescents; qualitative; Thailand