



Tracing the Footsteps of Alcohol: The Impact of Legal-Illegal Consumption and Distribution on Health and Society Viewed from Anomie Theory

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Alcohol, Health, Illegal, Legal, Anomie Theory

Received : 5, September

Revised : 25, October

Accepted: 27, November

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the impact of alcohol consumption and legal-illegal distribution of alcohol on the health and social aspects of society. This research uses observation data, case studies and interviews. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach which uses empirical research. By viewing Merton's concept of anomie from the perspective of alcohol consumption, we can see how individuals and society respond to cultural pressures, social norms, and laws related to alcohol, as well as their impact on overall health and social dynamics. The policy implications found from this research can provide a basis for developing more effective intervention strategies in improving public health and welfare related to alcohol consumption and legal-illegal distribution. It is hoped that this research will contribute to further understanding of the complex dynamics between alcohol consumption, regulation, and its impact on health and society.

INTRODUCTION

Liquor, also known as alcoholic beverages, is made from ethanol or ethyl alcohol produced through the process of fermentation and distillation of carbohydrates. In accordance with the Third Amendment to Regulation of the Minister of Trade No. 32/M-DAG/PER/5/201 related to Regulation of the Minister of Trade No. 20/M-DAG/PER/4/2014 on the Control and Supervision of the Procurement, Distribution and Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (KEMENDAG, 2016). However, due to the complex nature of this process, most people started to ignore the regulations, leading to an increase in the number of places that sell liquor illegally. Alcohol has now become a way of life for some people in Indonesia. Despite its benefits when consumed at appropriate levels, alcohol can cause negative health impacts.

According to 2021 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), alcohol consumption by the population aged 15 years and above in Indonesia has decreased from 2017 to 2021. In 2021, alcohol consumption in Indonesia reached 0.36 liters per capita, a 7.7% decrease from the previous year which reached 0.39 liters per capita. By region, alcohol consumption by rural residents reached 0.6 liters per capita in 2021, a slight decrease from the previous year's 0.61 liters per capita. On the other hand, alcohol consumption in urban areas reached 0.18 liters per capita in the same year, a decline from 2020 when it reached 0.22 liters per capita. According to research conducted by (Mulyati, Iwa, & Hepilita, 2021), one of the main reasons for consuming alcohol is curiosity and influence from the surrounding environment, such as friends who often provide opportunities to try alcohol drinks or to feel accepted in certain groups. Alcohol is a psychoactive substance that can affect brain function and behavior. If an individual consumes large or excessive amounts of alcohol, it can affect their judgment, self-control and inhibitions. As a result, individuals affected by alcohol may be prone to impulsive or aggressive actions, which can fall into the category of criminal behavior (Fitriyah, 2016). Consuming alcohol can cause a variety of health problems, both briefly and over a longer period of time. These adverse effects involve disorders of the central nervous, cardiovascular and digestive systems, as well as potential risks to pregnancy. In addition, alcohol use can also create mental health complications. Excessive use can result in changes in behavior and thought patterns, which may lead to acts of violence and criminality, threatening not only the individual consuming alcohol, but also others. This risk is not only limited to situations of acute consumption or drunkenness, but also to individuals who chronically consume alcohol with a higher tolerance level, as well as to those who are already dependent on alcohol.

According to Bemmelen in research conducted by (Muliadi, 2012) crime is behavior that is contrary to social norms and can cause harm and discrepancies in the community that create anxiety. In the field of criminology, criminality is defined as behavior that deliberately violates legal norms, is carried out without reasons for self-defense or justification, and is recognized as a serious violation of the law (felony) or a misdemeanor (misdemenor) by the government. (Hagan, 2013). Based on research conducted by Nurulina & Pratisti (2013), 52.50% of respondents stated that the crime was committed with the aim of fulfilling

personal needs. A significant finding from the data was that 85% of the respondents were alcohol users. This situation contributes to the increase in crime rates and mental illness cases associated with alcohol consumption. This is due to the fact that alcohol consumption can reduce a person's ability to control themselves, thus increasing the tendency to commit crimes (Utami & Asih, 2021).

In the context of "Alcohol Consumption and Legal-Illegal Distribution: Health and Society" this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the effects of alcohol consumption and legal-illegal distribution on the health and social aspects of society. Therefore, the focus of the research is not only on the health impacts arising directly from alcohol consumption, but also includes an analysis of the role of legal and illegal regulation and circulation in shaping the social dynamics of society related to alcohol consumption.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages can be classified into three main types: beer, wine, and distilled spirits. Beer is typically produced from grains, wine from grapes, while distilled spirits are made by distilling the alcohol content of fermented products such as wine or other fermented materials. The alcohol content in these beverages varies, with beer containing approximately 5% alcohol by volume (v/v), wine ranging between 12% and 15% (v/v), and distilled spirits containing between 30% and 40% (v/v). Alcoholic beverages are primarily composed of alcohol and water, with small amounts of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients such as proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Despite these minor nutritional components, alcoholic beverages are often referred to as "empty calories" because they provide energy but lack essential nutrients. One gram of alcohol provides approximately 7 kcal (~28 kJ) of energy, which is relatively high compared to carbohydrates and proteins, each of which provide about 4 kcal/g (Karunarathna, et al., 2024).

The production of alcohol, specifically ethyl alcohol or ethanol, involves the fermentation process carried out by yeast. This process breaks down sugars from plants and fruits into ethanol and carbon dioxide. Ethanol is a volatile, colorless liquid with a density lower than that of water (approximately 0.8 g/mL). Due to its hygroscopic nature, ethanol rarely achieves 100% purity, with 96% being the common highest purity. Its chemical structure consists of two carbon atoms, one of which is bonded to a hydroxyl group, forming a simple carbohydrate structure. The standard serving size of alcohol varies across countries. For example, a standard drink in the Netherlands contains approximately 10 grams of alcohol, while in the United Kingdom, it contains 8 grams, and in the United States, it contains around 14 grams. Measuring alcohol in terms of volume or grams of pure alcohol helps standardize studies and allows for more accurate comparisons (Karunarathna, et al., 2024).

The type of alcoholic beverage consumed may influence health outcomes. For instance, countries where red wine is predominantly consumed, such as France, exhibit lower cardiovascular mortality rates despite diets relatively high in saturated fats. This phenomenon, known as the French paradox, has been attributed to beneficial compounds found in red wine, such as polyphenols and

resveratrol, which have antioxidant properties and other health benefits. While these effects are supported by in vitro and animal studies, evidence in humans remains less conclusive. Epidemiological studies suggest that wine drinkers tend to follow healthier dietary and drinking patterns compared to those who consume other types of alcohol. The overall impact of alcohol on health appears to be significantly influenced by the quantity consumed. Moderate alcohol consumption may offer some health benefits, while excessive consumption leads to adverse health effects (Klatsky, 2015).

Anomie Theory

Building on Durkheim's concept of anomie, Merton (1957) was the first to discuss what sociologists now refer to as strain theory. For Merton, anomie arose from the gap between societal goals and the means available for individuals to achieve them. Merton observed that the U.S. had high crime rates and suggested that this was due to the strong influence of the American Dream – attaining wealth – on all Americans, even those for whom factors like race and class made significant financial success unlikely. Because of the importance placed on this cultural value, many resort to illegitimate ways to acquire wealth, turning to crime as a result. The tension between aspirations and the means to achieve them is what became known as “strain theory” (Nickerson, 2023).

Merton's perspective implies that the factors that promote social order and disorder (such as crime versus societal norms) are intertwined, and that cultural values with positive functions often also result in negative outcomes (Hagen & Daigle, 2018). Society's focus on financial success and material wealth, as represented by the "American Dream," can create pressure for those with limited chances of achieving that dream (Messner & Rosenfeld, 2012). The benefits of conforming are only accessible to those who pursue acceptable goals through approved methods. Any other mix of goals and means is considered deviant to some degree. Merton suggested that people at the lower levels of society could react to this strain in various ways. Different attitudes toward societal goals and varying access to the methods for achieving them lead to distinct forms of deviance.

1. Conformity: people pursue societal goals through legitimate means. Even if a conformist doesn't always achieve the goal, they maintain enough belief in the system to follow approved methods. For instance, a student attending school to build a professional career is conforming by aligning with the cultural value of success through accepted means (Inderbitzen, Bates, & Gainey, 2016).
2. Innovation: the individual shares society's goals but uses illegitimate means to achieve them. Thieves, for example, aim for wealth but engage in illegal activities such as drug dealing or embezzlement, making them innovators.
3. Ritualism: individuals give up hope of achieving society's approved goals but continue following the accepted means. A middle manager who knows they won't advance yet remains in their role is an example of a ritualist.

4. Retreatism: individuals, like dropouts or hermits, reject both societal goals and the accepted means of obtaining them, choosing to live outside conventional norms. Drug addicts or people like Chris McCandless – who rejected capitalism, hitchhiked to Alaska, and died while trying to live off the land – represent retreatists (Krakauer, 2018).
5. Rebellion: this category falls outside Merton's system. Rebels aim to replace society's goals with their own and devise alternative ways to achieve them. The most striking examples are terrorist organizations, which pursue political objectives through violent means (Inderbitzen, Bates, & Gainey, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive approach that uses empirical research. This qualitative research is a research method that aims to understand human or social phenomena by compiling in-depth and complex descriptions, so as to produce accurate data. This research uses a type of literature study, which involves collecting and utilizing relevant information related to the problem being studied. While the type of empirical legal research aims to invite researchers to not only focus on normative legal aspects, such as those listed in law books. This research avoids a technical approach that considers legal regulations as mechanical instructions that only produce certain outputs through mechanical processes. While a prescriptive approach is natural, given the normative "ought" nature of law, this perspective shifts towards an understanding that law, from a social science perspective, is not just limited to legal norms and their operating techniques. Rather, law is considered a social phenomenon related to human behavior in the context of unique and interesting social life. Therefore, this research is not only prescriptive, but also descriptive (Sonata, 2014). In addition, researchers can also explore information from similar research or research that has been done before. This literature study is also related to theoretical studies that are interrelated with values, culture, and norms that are developing (Victor I. Reus, et al., 2018).

Based on the type of research that has been conducted, the data collection methods used in this study include document analysis, observation, interviews, and documentation. The application of these techniques is crucial to gather and summarize information obtained from the field, with the intention of describing social realities and perspectives contained in the context of the social environment. This approach involves understanding concepts, behaviors, and perceptions (Nilamsari, 2014).

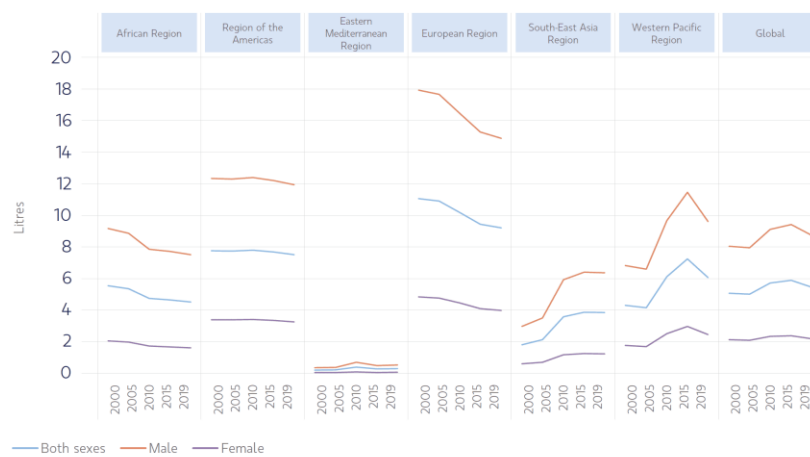
The researcher adopted the Anomie Theory approach by Robert K. Merton in 1938. This theory explains how individuals respond to the tension between social goals (cultural goals) and the means available to achieve them (cultural means). There are five steps of adaptation included in the theory namely Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism, Rebellion (Merton, 1938). According to Merton, there are five phases of individual social adaptation. The first phase is conformity, which includes adapting by following the norms and goals set by society. The second stage is innovation, where individuals adopt goals that are accepted by society but use methods that are prohibited. The third

stage is ritualism, where an individual begins to abandon cultural goals but still adheres to societal norms. The fourth stage is retreatism, which involves self-isolation when one rejects the accepted goals. The fifth stage is rebellion, which arises when an individual refuses to follow the established rules.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Alcohol Consumption Rate Data

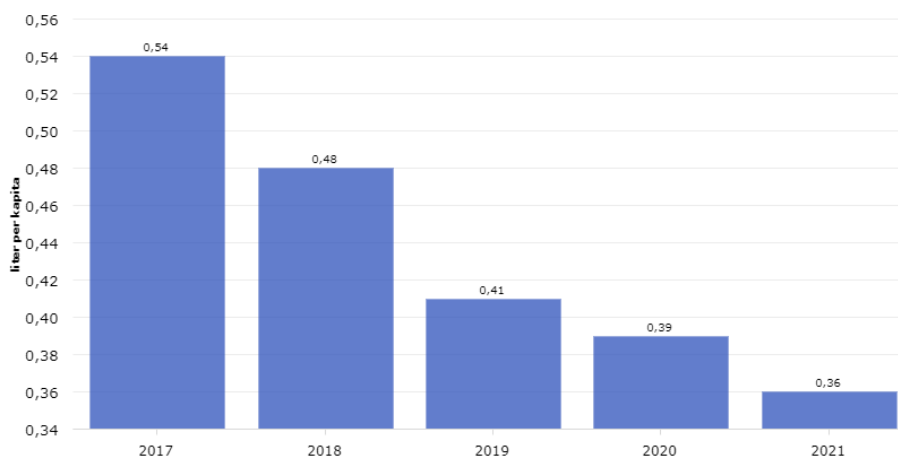
According to Movendi International (2023), total per capita consumption (15+ years) has been falling globally since 2015, following an overall increase in 2005-2010 and a plateau in 2010-2015 (Movendi, 2023). The European and African regions experienced sizable declines in per capita consumption of 17% and 18% respectively between 2000 and 2019, there was stagnation in the Americas and large increases in per capita consumption in Southeast and West Asia of 112% and 40% respectively (WHO, 2023).



Sumber: *World Health Statistics, 2023*

Figure 1. Total Alcohol Consumption Per Capita (age 15 years and above), WHO Region and Global, 2000-2019

In general, per capita alcohol consumption by men in 2019 was higher than that by women, at around 8.7 liters (UI: 7.7-9.9) compared to 2.2 liters (UI: 1.9-2.5). The largest gaps between the sexes appeared to be in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (with a female ratio of 8.1) and Southeast Asia Region (with a female ratio of 5.1), while the lowest ratios were recorded in the Americas Region (3.7) and Europe Region (3.7). The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) reported that alcohol consumption by Indonesians aged 15 years and above decreased from 2017 to 2021. In 2021, the average per capita alcohol consumption reached 0.36 liters, a decrease of 7.7% compared to the previous year which reached 0.39 liters per capita. Regionally, alcohol consumption in rural areas in 2021 reached 0.6 liters per capita, a slight decrease from the previous year's 0.61 liters per capita. On the other hand, urban alcohol consumption in the previous year was recorded at 0.18 liters per capita, a decline compared to 2020 when it reached 0.22 liters per capita. (Rizaty, 2022).



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023

Figure 2. Alcohol Consumption by Population 15 Years and Over (2017-2021)

Despite the decline in alcohol use in Indonesia, data shows that there are still many cases caused by alcohol consumption. According to a report by CNN Indonesia 2020, in the last three years, there were 223 cases related to alcohol. The Head of the Information Bureau, Brigadier General Awi Setiyono, stated that alcohol is often a driving factor in criminal acts, such as in some controversial cases such as rape, where the perpetrator or suspect is often found to be positive for alcohol (CNN, 2020). That was not the only incident that occurred in Makassar on Thursday, March 02, 2023. Three people have died and five are currently hospitalized. The eight individuals mixed 96% alcohol, which they obtained from leftover hand sanitizer mix during the pandemic. The incident was uncovered after the police received reports of people dying in hospital due to binge drinking. During the investigation, police found video footage showing a binge drinker abusing a colleague, who was later identified as one of the deceased victims. The perpetrator forced the victim to consume the mixed liquor. Therefore, the perpetrator will be faced with Article 204 of the Criminal Code regarding the Penalty for Producers of Oplosan Alcohol, with a maximum penalty of 10 years or a fine of up to Rp. 20,000,000,000.00 (twenty billion rupiah), as well as violating the Health Law (Arman, 2023).

Legal and Illegal Alcohol Distribution

Rapid global development encourages individuals to adapt their lifestyles to the competitive global economy. Globalization encourages developed countries to compete in building sophisticated economies, triggering fierce competition among citizens seeking to meet their needs. In an effort to achieve profits as quickly as possible, many people are driven to engage in various economic activities, such as trading and selling. However, some individuals, in order to achieve their economic goals, are tempted to resort to unfair methods, as seen in the phenomenon of liquor sales. Complex regulations, such as licensing and high retribution payments, may encourage some people to seek shortcuts and disregard prevailing norms. Such crimes, including illegal liquor sales, fraud

in the sale of alcoholic beverages, and violations of age restrictions on buyers, are actually criminal acts that are detrimental to the peace and tranquility of society (Kandow, 2013).

Alcoholic beverages are a type of consumption that requires strict control over their distribution, and they are likely to cause issues, both on a personal level and in the social sphere. Alcoholic beverages are often linked to criminal activities because the alcoholic substances in them can influence the behavior of the individuals who consume them, which can be spontaneous and uncontrollable by the mind, thus increasing the risk of criminal acts (Garpenessy, 2007). Legitimate alcoholic beverages are products that are legally produced and sold in accordance with applicable regulations, and are recorded in the official statistics of the country of production, consumption, or both. In contrast, unrecorded alcoholic beverages refer to alcohol products that do not pay taxes in the consumer's country, as their production and distribution do not involve formal channels and are conducted without government supervision (Dewi, 2020).

The distribution of alcoholic beverages can be classified into two main categories: legal and illegal. Within a country's legal and regulatory framework, there is a significant difference between legal and illegal alcohol distribution.

a. Legal Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages

1. Production and Distribution

- License and Permit: Legal manufacturers and distributors of alcoholic beverages must obtain official licenses and permits from local government agencies.

- Production Regulations: There are strict regulations governing the production process, quality, and safety aspects of alcoholic beverages.

2. Sales and Consumption

- Sales in Public Locations: The legal sale of alcoholic beverages is restricted to certain places, such as licensed alcohol stores, restaurants, bars, and shopping malls.

- Age Limit: Consumers who purchase and consume alcoholic beverages must abide by the age limit set by law.

3. Taxes and Financial Regulations

- Taxes: A special tax system is imposed on alcoholic beverages, which contributes to government revenue.

- Price Regulation: Some countries implement price regulations on alcoholic beverages to prevent abuse and ensure safe access.

b. Illegal Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages

1. Smuggling and Illegal Production

- Unlicensed: Illegal alcoholic beverages are produced and smuggled without official government authorization.

- Hazardous Ingredients: Hazardous or unsafe ingredients may be used in illegal production, increasing health risks.

2. Unmonitored Sales and Distribution
 - Illicit Sales: Unrecorded alcoholic beverages are often sold on the black market or in places that are not supervised by authorities.
 - License Abuse: Some parties may use fake licenses or tamper with the licensing system to distribute unrecorded alcoholic beverages.
3. Health and Social Impacts:
 - Health Risks: Unrecorded alcoholic beverages can pose serious health risks due to the lack of oversight of their ingredients and production processes.
 - Crime and Insecurity: Illicit distribution can be linked to criminal activities and can create insecurity in the community.

Countering the illegal and legal circulation of alcoholic beverages involves efforts from government authorities, law enforcement, and public education to reduce its negative impact. The issue of policy can be regulated in the progress of the Third Amendment Law to the Regulation of the Minister of Trade No. 32/M-DAG/PER/5/201 related to the Regulation of the Minister of Trade No. 20/M-DAG/PER/4/2014 on the Control and Supervision of the Procurement, Distribution and Sale of Alcoholic Beverages. The exclusion of liquor such as traditional drinks that must be present at the event or already have a license to distribute and sell, but the existence of these laws already indicates that the policies formed by the government are basically a conformity to society or cultural goals about drunkenness or liquor that is actually rejected by society and it is an approval from the government. The government accepts the rejection of alcohol and also uses legal means through the law in Indonesia, therefore agreeing to make a policy.

Community Health and Social Impacts

Humans require the fulfillment of basic needs, including clothing, shelter, food and drink. Drinks not only serve to quench thirst, but also have a role in fulfilling mental satisfaction, medicinal aspects, and triggering certain responses or goals. Alcoholic beverages, which are often consumed, contain addictive substances such as alcohol. According to Presidential Regulation No. 74/2013, alcoholic beverages are products resulting from the fermentation of agricultural materials containing carbohydrates and producing ethanol (C₂H₅OH). The high ethanol content in these drinks can cause a decrease in the level of consciousness in the person who consumes it (Sukiman, Syarifuddin, & Willem, 2019). Most adults have started consuming alcoholic beverages and nowadays, even teenagers are trying these risky drinks.

Alcohol has become a common part of social interaction in urban areas, especially in celebrating parties, events, entertainment venues, or as a way to express solidarity and group identity (Noor, Mat, Dhiaudin, & Arifin, 2018). As symptoms can vary from mild to severe, alcoholism can cause significant impacts on various aspects of one's health, including mental, physical, social, and spiritual health. According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), alcohol dependence is considered a mental health disorder as it can lead to permanent changes in brain function. As many as 41% of suicides are linked to

excessive alcohol use, while 23% of individuals who intentionally harm themselves tend to have alcohol dependence. A study in the UK stated that 85% of patients undergoing treatment for alcohol dependence also experienced mental disorders, including 81% who experienced affective and/or anxiety disorders (with 34% experiencing major depression, 47% mild depression and 32% anxiety). Meanwhile, 53% had personality disorders, and only 19% had psychotic disorders. The problem of alcohol abuse is increasingly widespread in many parts of the world (Victor I. Reus, et al., 2018). Not only does it affect the person who consumes, but it will also affect the surrounding community, because people who are emotionally intoxicated will be uncontrollable which affects the peace and security of the surrounding environment.

An individual's interest in trying alcoholic beverages certainly has influencing factors. In the study, the researcher conducted an interview with one of the individuals who was addicted to alcohol from an adolescent age. The informant has started to try drinking alcohol since the first grade of junior high school, to be precise in 2017. Based on the interview with the informant, the main factor that encouraged him to try alcohol was the influence of the friendship environment.

"I remember consuming alcohol in the first grade of junior high school in 2017, at first I was invited by my seniors in junior high school, my seniors brought alcohol to the hangout after that I was told to try it. The name of young people is curious about the taste, so I tried it over and over again until I finally got addicted". Adolescents in the first grade of junior high school are still said to be individuals who are searching for their identity. The effects of drinking alcoholic beverages that are too excessive can cause harm to the surrounding community such as committing crimes, many people feel disturbed by this and many also see this as very bad. In the interviews conducted by the researchers, the interviewee argued that:

"I'm kind of ignorant and don't really think about it, because I drink and I'm addicted but I'm not criminal and so I don't respond to it".

The circulation of alcoholic beverages is very rapid, both legally and illegally. But because alcohol has a very bad effect on teenagers, teenagers cannot buy alcohol where they should because of the age barrier. So where can teenagers or minors buy alcoholic beverages?

"It depends if you want to buy lkcal drinks, you usually buy them at the herbal medicine seller's place, if you want to buy outside drinks, you usually buy them through friends or online".

Environmental factors were the main factor in the interviewee trying alcoholic beverages. The informant also said "If I have a lot of tasks, problems with my parents or girlfriend, I turn to alcohol to relax for a while" (Interview with the informant, October 2023).

Based on the interviews above, it can be concluded that individuals who are influenced to consume alcohol have several influencing factors, namely the social sphere where there is a process of mutual influence between individuals to try consuming alcohol. Secondly, the age that is still easily influenced is the age that is looking for an identity to be seen by the environment where the individual is. Third, the current circulation of alcohol, both illegal and legal, is

easily accessible to the individual. Fourth, individuals consume alcohol as an escape from internal or external problems that the individual is facing.

Relation to Robert K. Merton's Anomie Theory

The relationship between alcohol consumption and legal-illegal distribution with health and society can be linked to the concept of anomie proposed by Robert K. Merton. Merton identifies five stages of individual social adaptation, which can provide insight into how individuals and societies cope with cultural pressures and demands. There are five steps of adaptation in this theory, which can be linked to the relationship between alcohol consumption and legal-illegal distribution with health and society, namely:

- a. Conformity is associated with Alcohol consumption that conforms to the legal norms and rules set by society is a form of conformity. Individuals who comply with legal and social restrictions on alcohol consumption are considered to be well-adjusted.
- b. Innovation occurs when an individual adopts an uncommon or possibly illegal way of consuming alcohol, but may perceive it as an innovative solution to social or health pressures. For example, considering certain alcohol use as a solution to stress, even though it may involve methods that are not legally recommended.
- c. Ritualism relates to maintaining existing social rules and norms without regard to cultural goals. In this context, an individual may adhere to legal limits on alcohol consumption regardless of health norms or social aspirations.
- d. Retreatism occurs when an individual consumes alcohol without regard to cultural or legal norms, and at the same time, rejects social or health responsibilities. This could include isolation from society or avoidance of daily responsibilities.
- e. Rebellion can occur when individuals or community groups reject the norms governing alcohol consumption and fight for change. This could include social movements or actions to replace existing norms with new ones, perhaps with health arguments or different social values.

By looking at Merton's concept of anomie theory from the perspective of alcohol consumption, we can see how individuals and societies respond to cultural, social norms and legal pressures related to alcohol, as well as their impact on overall health and social dynamics.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Alcohol consumption behavior and legal-illegal circulation can be interpreted as a reaction to the imbalance between desired social goals and the availability of means to achieve them. Merton's anomie theory states that individuals tend to seek ways to achieve idealized social goals. However, if access to legal means is limited, they may turn to illegal means. In the context of alcohol consumption, people may use alcohol as a way to cope with social pressure or economic imbalance, especially if legal alternatives are insufficient. From a public health perspective, excessive alcohol consumption can lead to

various health problems. Meanwhile, illicit trafficking can have a negative impact on the social structure and security of the community. Therefore, addressing this issue involves not only preventing excessive alcohol consumption, but also focusing on improving access to adequate legal means to achieve social goals. In doing so, community policies and interventions should consider the context of Merton's strain theory by providing better alternatives. It is also important to ensure that the legal means necessary to achieve social goals are accessible to all levels of society.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Every research certainly has limitations. Limitations in the sense of research limitations that affect the researcher's ability to explore the data being studied, the limitations of available data, or external factors of the research such as time and resource limitations. So that further research is needed for the perfection of this research.

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