SHAPING RESPONSIBLE DRINKING

Discovering the road to responsible drinking behavior of students
A Collaborative Solution
THE SCOPE
Overview of the research

Target Group
- 6 fraternities
- 5 Dutch cities
- 11,000 students

Research Methods
- 1,122 unconscious belief tests
- 1,122 questionnaires
- 20 interviews
- 6 focus groups

Topics Researched

Questionnaire
- Alcohol consumption
- Attitudes
- Problems
- Social coping
- Motivation to change behavior

Unconscious Belief Test
- Unconscious associations of alcohol with positive effects (e.g., fun) or negative effects (e.g., depression)

Interview & Focus Group

Cause and Context of:
- Excessive drinking
- Responsible drinking
- Successful interventions
DRINKING DATA
Some numbers on drinking frequency

Excessive Drinking
Students drink excessively* between 1-2 days a week

Weekly Consumption
Female students: 24  
Male students: 49

Harmful Alcohol Consumption
93% of female students meet the criteria of harmful alcohol consumption  
99% of male students meet the criteria of harmful alcohol consumption  
Example: “not remembering events from drinking nights”

Alcohol Dependency
14% of female students meet the criteria of alcohol dependency  
31% of male students meet the criteria of alcohol dependency  
Example: “the feeling that you cannot stop drinking once started”

*WHO defines excessive drinking as consuming:  
For women, 4 or more drinks in 2 hours  
For men, 6 or more drinks in 2 hours
3 PROCESSES DISCOVERED
Influencing factors of drinking behavior

Individual Processes
The Student
- Belonging to the group is one of the main social motives to drink
- Feeling happier and more assertive are the most common (unconscious) positive beliefs about alcohol
- Drinking is normalized by the individual “No problem when I drink a lot because it's only during my college years”

Social Processes
The Group
- It's the norm to participate in drinking
  “If you do not drink, you get called out for being boring”
  “You can only not drink with a good excuse, for example exams or when you are sick”

Contextual Processes
The Organisation
- It's hard to keep track of money spent on alcohol given the monthly paying system “At the moment of drinking it feels for free”
- Beer is usually easily accessible (on tap) and cheaper than non-alcoholic drinks
- Social activities focus almost exclusively on alcohol
LET'S START SHAPING!
The 3 crucial elements

1. **Awareness**
   **Individual Processes**
   - Put up posters with a message about the positive effects of responsible drinking
   - Hand out coasters with provocative questions about (the effects) of alcohol consumption
   - Initiate yearly questionnaires on alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems and share the results in the newsletter
   - Hang banners and other marketing material to promote the consumption of 0.0% drinks *

2. **Alternative Activities**
   **Social Processes**
   - Organize sport events or chill nights not focused on drinking alcohol
   - Organize 0.0% parties

3. **Accessibility of non-alcoholic drinks**
   **Contextual Processes**
   - Make 0.0% beer available on tap *
   - Make water taps available

*Details of first pilot on the next page
THE FIRST PILOT
0.0% Party in the Introduction Week!

- Reached 10,000 students from multiple sororities and fraternities
- 0.0% banners, flyers and balloons for Awareness
- 0.0% party as an Alternative Activity
- 0.0% beer on the tap as a first step to Accessibility of non-alcoholic drinks
- 0.0% free beer tasting as part of Accessibility of non-alcoholic drinks
- “The 0.0% party was a great success, and everybody was happy to join in on a 0.0% beer”
  - Board Member (ASC/AVSV)

THE PROJECT

Purpose Accelerator

In the Purpose Accelerator young researchers of the THRIVE PhD Academy work together with businesses to solve a concrete societal issue. In the first 5 months, the PhD candidates conduct research within a large multi-actor network. During the remaining 5 months, both the participating organisations and the PhD candidates work closely together to transform the research results into concrete solutions.

THRIVE PhD Academy

The THRIVE PhD Academy is a community of young ambitious researchers who express a desire to go beyond their own research and boost their societal impact. The belief that current societal and ecological challenges demand a revision of the role of the academic community forms the basis of the THRIVE PhD Academy.

The Researchers

Drs. Maral Darouei is an organizational psychologist at Leiden University. Darouei’s research examines numerous areas related to sustainable careers, such as employee performance, health and happiness*. 

Drs. Inez Koopman is a medical doctor and neuroscientist at the University Medical Center of Utrecht, investigating inflammation after brain hemorrhage to identify new therapies.

Dr. Vanessa de Luca is a moral philosopher at the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy. Her research revolves around the motivational and enhancing roles of emotions in human moral agency.

Drs. Else de Vries, psychologist and epidemiologist, investigates the influential role of fathers in child development at the Institute of Education and Child Studies at Leiden University.

*Questions and remarks about this research project can be addressed to hartstra@thriveinstitute.nl or m.darouei@law.leidenuniv.nl

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