

Academics and Alcohol Consumption: A Study of College Students

Charlotte R. Kanyuh, author

Dr. Victoria Simpson Beck, Criminal Justice, faculty mentor

Charlotte R. Kanyuh is currently a senior at UW Oshkosh, with double majors in criminal justice and political science. She serves as a campus community advisor through Residence Life and as a secretary for the Criminal Justice Honors Society and Society of Political Science Students. She has presented her research at both regional and national conferences.

Dr. Victoria Simpson Beck holds a Ph.D. in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati and is a professor of criminal justice at UW Oshkosh. She has served as president of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association. Her research has appeared in a variety of academic journals and has focused on issues related to laws and sexual victimization, rape myths and video games, eyewitness identification, and criminal justice education. Her research on video games has been noted in the *Washington Post*, and her research on sex offenders has been highlighted in *CityBeat*.

Abstract

Alcohol consumption is a large part of the social lives of many university students. Prior research examining the relationship between alcohol use and academic performance of students has been inconclusive. This study explored the relationship between attitudes toward academics and alcohol using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), with a sample of 606 University of Wisconsin Oshkosh students. The results indicated that student attitudes toward academics do not provide a strong control on student alcohol consumption. However, parents' attitudes toward drinking exert an influence on drinking behavior as does the drinking behavior of peers.

Alcohol Use and Academics: Exploring Attitudes, Norms, Intentions and Behavior

Studies examining the use of alcohol on university campuses suggest that approximately 81 percent of college students have tried alcohol (Johnston et al. 2014) and 65 to 73 percent of university students drank alcohol within the past 30 days (Johnston et al. 2014; Nelson et al. 2009). Further, data from the 2012 Monitoring the Future survey suggests that college students consume alcohol at a rate greater than their non-college peers, and that this trend has been consistent over time, as indicated in figure 1.

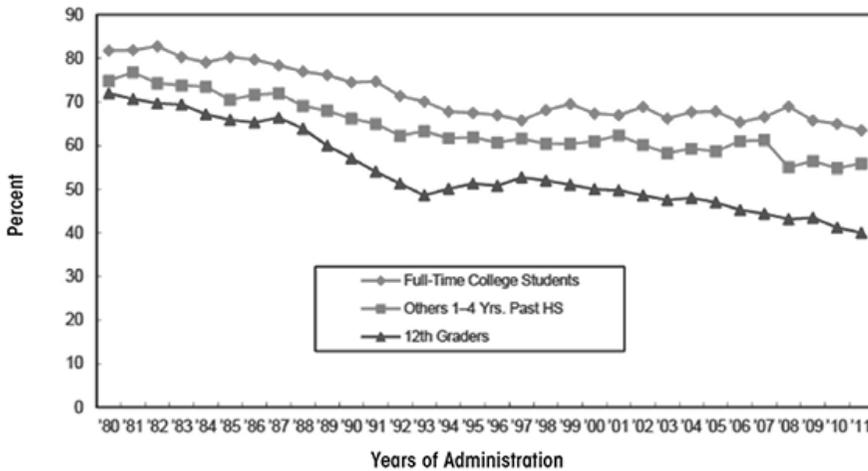


Figure 1. Alcohol: Trends in 30-day prevalence among college students, others (non-college peers 1–4 years beyond high school) and 12th graders. *Source:* Johnston et al., “Monitoring the Future.”

Perhaps somewhat more troubling is the research indicating that college students are also more likely to engage in heavy episodic or binge drinking. According to recent research, two out of every three college students participate in heavy episodic drinking, which has been defined as five or more drinks on one occasion (NIAAA, 2004 and 2007), and approximately 45.3 percent of university students engage in this behavior during their first year on campus (Wechsler et al. 2002). Data from the Monitoring the Future survey further indicates that college students maintain a higher rate of binge drinking compared to their non-college peers, as portrayed in figure 2 (Johnston et al. 2014).

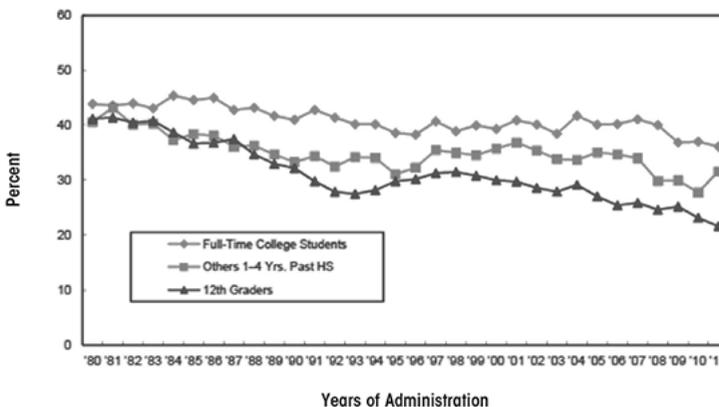


Figure 2. Alcohol: Trends in two-week prevalence of consuming five or more drinks among college students, others (non-college peers 1–4 years beyond high school) and 12th graders. *Source:* Johnston et al., “Monitoring the Future.”

As indicated in figure 2, there has been little change in binge drinking among college students over time. As displayed in figure 2, college binge drinking rates have not fluctuated much throughout the years. In 1993, 40 percent of college students admitted to binge drinking. This percentage only slightly decreased to 37 percent in 2012. These numbers are also reflected in non-university students with 32 percent of 12th graders participating in 2006. However, the 12th grade population of binge drinkers decreased significantly in 2011, with 22 percent admitting to binge drinking. This number rose slightly to 24 percent in 2012. If a university-level student is a member in Greek life, there is an even higher likelihood that the person participates in binge drinking. Finally, research has indicated that there is still a “substantial” difference in drinking behaviors by gender, with males reporting higher rates of daily alcohol consumption and heavy alcohol consumption, although this trend has been narrowing over time. Unfortunately, college students continue to have a noticeably and comparatively higher rate of alcohol consumption and binge drinking, despite overall declines in both behaviors during the past few years (Johnston et al. 2014).

To be sure, both light and heavy consumption of alcohol may produce many discernible and adverse effects on individuals. Students and non-students may be motivated to consume alcohol in order to subdue unpleasant emotions or to feel more socially accepted; however, there are a plethora of negative consequences (Berkowitz and Perkins 1986). For example, due to the reduction of inhibitions, individuals consuming alcohol may lack the judgment to cease any action that may hurt themselves or others. Perhaps one of the most prominent ramifications of alcohol use on an interpersonal level is sexual assault. In a study conducted by Frintner and Rubinson (1993), 68 percent of the 1,500 female sexual assault victims who participated in the survey proclaimed that those who victimized them were under the influence of alcohol. Examples of less substantial alcoholic induced actions that harm others include destruction of property, public disturbance, and disorderly conduct (Perkins 2002). Of course, alcohol consumption may also cause alcoholism, injury to self, loss of memory, and other physical and mental impairments.

A decrease in academic performance is another repercussion of alcohol consumption. As discussed by Presley, Meilman, and Leichliter (2002), a study completed by the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey found that nearly 28 percent of the 41,581 respondents indicated that they had missed a class due to alcohol or other drug-related reasons. In a similar study, nearly one-third of the 584 student respondents reported that they had missed course tests because of their alcohol use (Perkins 1992). Powell, Williams, and Wechsler (2002) found that as the average number of drinks consumed by college freshman increased, the probability of alcohol-related absences from university classes increased by 8–9 percent for first-year students. Additionally, that same study concluded that the probability of a freshman falling behind in academics increased 5 percent as a result of alcohol consumption (Powell, Williams, and Wechsler 2002). Further, Orford, Waller, and Peto (1974) assessed drinking and academic patterns by gender. The research found that nearly 12 percent of males and nearly 9 percent of females reported missing a class due to alcohol-related reasons (Orford, Waller, and Peto 1974).

When reviewing prior research on the impact of student alcohol consumption on grade point average (GPA), much of the research reveals the same results with a

few exceptions. A number of studies acknowledge that there seems to be an inverse relationship between GPA and student alcohol consumption, in that as alcohol consumption increases, a student's GPA decreases (Musgrave-Marquart, Bromley, and Dalley 1997; Vaughan, Corbin, and Fromme 2009; Butler, Spencer, and Dodge 2011; Porter and Pryor 2007; Engs, Hanson, and Diebold 1994). Indeed, one such study, containing a large sample size of 41,598 respondents, indicated that students who reported having heavier drinking periods were more likely to have lower GPAs (Porter and Prior 2007). Findings from another study concluded that students who had GPAs of 4.0 consumed about one-third the amount of alcohol compared to those with GPAs of 2.0 (Engs, Hanson, and Diebold 1994). Although much research supports the relationship between academic performance and alcohol consumption, some research suggests that the relationship is influenced by other factors. Finally, Aertgeerts and Buntinx (2002) argue that there is no relationship between alcohol consumption and academic performance. They contend that other factors are to blame for the lack of academic achievement among university students, such as parental academic achievement and participation in other law-breaking behaviors (Aertgeerts and Buntinx 2002).

Theoretical Context: Theory of Planned Behavior

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), individual attitudes work with subjective norms and control factors to produce an effect on the intention to act in a certain way, which in turn influences behavior (Ajzen 1985). A model of the theory is presented in figure 3.

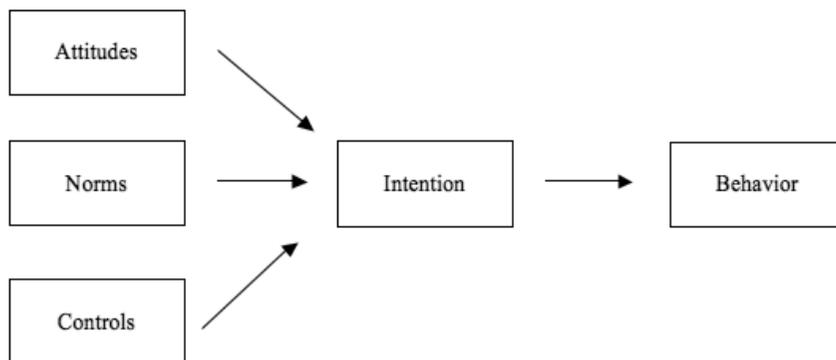


Figure 3. The Theory of Planned Behavior.

Note: Adapted from Ajzen 1991.

Prior research maintains that the TPB provides an “effective model when explaining college students’ reasons and motivations for drinking alcohol” (Glassman et al. 2010, 174). As discussed in Glassman et al. (2010):

Attitude Toward the Behavior represents a person's beliefs or feelings concerning a behavior. Subjective Norm involves the extent to which one believes key referents would approve or disapprove of them engaging in the behavior of interest. Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) includes self-efficacy, as well as barriers and facilitators which may inhibit or support a behavior. Finally, Behavioral Intention consists of one's plan or perceived likelihood of performing a behavior. (173)

To assess the TPB in predicting heavy episodic drinking, Collins and Carey (2007) conducted a test using a sample of 131 college students. Collins and Carey (2007) incorporated prior heavy episodic and self-efficacy with drinking attitudes, subjective norms and drinking refusal in order to predict intention, which in turn predicts future heavy episodic drinking. The results of their study indicated that although subjective norms were not significant, self-efficacy and attitudes toward heavy episodic drinking did significantly predict intention to engage in heavy episodic drinking and past heavy episodic drinking predicted future heavy episodic drinking. Nonetheless, the authors contend a TPB model excluding past heavy episodic drinking behavior among college drinkers may provide a better prediction of future behavior, as it provides a better fit to the structural model and is more theory driven.

Although Collins and Carey (2007) did not find subjective norms to be predictive of behavior, Glassman et al. (2010) did with their study of 3,000 students. In their study exploring whether college students' motivations to consume alcohol on game day (based on alcohol consumption rates) could be predicted through the use of the TPB, Glassman et al. (2010) found that attitudes and norms about drinking could predict intention to drink. However, control factors that may facilitate or impede drinking were not a consistent predictor of intention and behavior (Glassman et al. 2010).

The primary purpose of this study was to provide a further examination of the relationship between academics and alcohol within the context of the TPB. Based on this theoretical model, it is hypothesized that attitudes toward academics will provide a control on intention to drink, which in turn will influence actual drinking behavior.

Methodology

As stated in the prior section, the primary purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between alcohol consumption and attitudes toward academics. This will be done through the use of the Ajzen (1985) Theory of Planned Behavior and data taken from a 2012 university survey.

Study Design

This study was based on secondary data previously collected from a 2012 drug and alcohol use survey of students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This particular campus was selected based on accessibility and proximity (a convenience sample).¹ Since the data to be collected included sensitive information, Qualtrics (a web-based survey tool) was used because it only tracks the IP address and provides anonymous responses. Additionally, Qualtrics offers an option to address the problem of "ballot stuffing" by installing a cookie to prevent a computer from accessing the survey a second time. Through campus email, students were asked to voluntarily participate in a 10–20 minute survey on behaviors and attitudes associated with alcohol and drug

use, as well as attitudes related to school activities. The survey contained 38 questions; however, only 26 of the 38 questions were utilized for the current study.

Sample

Based on a 5 percent margin of error and 95 percent confidence level, a sample of 385 students was needed for the initial study. However, to address the problems of non-response bias, a random sample of 770 students was selected and 606 students responded, which provides robust data for analyses. Descriptive statistics on the sample, in comparison to the population from which the sample was drawn, is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Gender and race measures.

| Characteristic | Number in Population | Percent of Population | Number of Survey Respondents | Percent of Survey Respondents |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Gender | | | | |
| Male | 5,581 | 39.7 | 200 | 33.8 |
| Female | 8,478 | 60.3 | 392 | 66.2 |
| Race | | | | |
| White | 12,202 | 86.8 | 548 | 94.8 |
| Non-White | 1,857 | 13.2 | 30 | 5.2 |

This study used information culled from secondary data to test whether student attitudes toward academics will provide a control on intention to drink, which in turn will influence actual drinking behavior. The study also provided a test of the TPB, using the variables depicted in figure 4. Although the use of secondary data in research presents advantages in terms of costs, time, and the ability to generate new discoveries one inherent problem with secondary data, of any type, is that the data do not always provide the best measures of concepts for new study, as they were not designed to measure those concepts. Nonetheless, the variables used in the current study replicate or approximate the variables used in prior research on this topic.

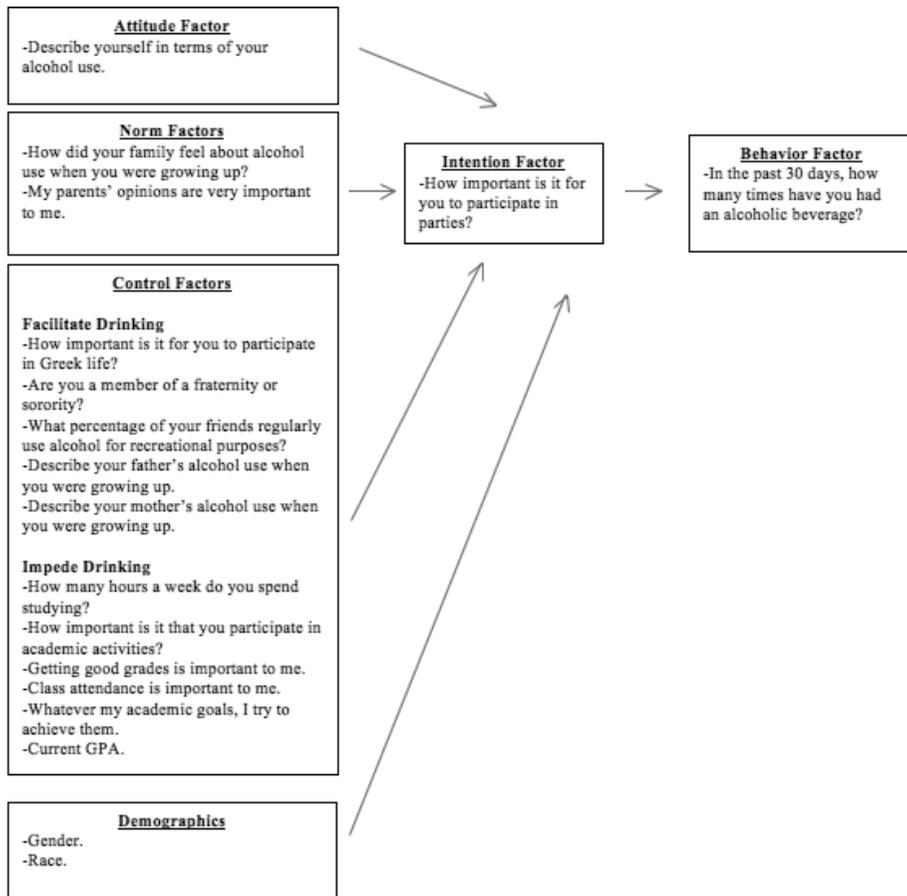


Figure 4. Theory of Planned Behavior with study variables.

Independent Variables

Attitudes factor. *Attitudes* refer to self-appraisal of behavior (Ajzen 1991) and are important in predicting drinking quantity and frequency (Leigh 1989). In this study, one survey question was used to measure the evaluation of one's own drinking behavior: Please describe yourself in terms of current alcohol use (1) an abstainer; (2) an abstainer from problem drinking; (3) an infrequent drinker; (4) a light drinker; (5) a moderate drinker; (6) a heavy drinker; or (7) a problem drinker.

Subjective norms factor. The *subjective norm* is a target person's perception of others' evaluations of the target person performing a behavior (Ajzen 1991). According to Collins and Carey (2007), "this construct may be broken down into two components: (1) perception of others' evaluations (also referred to as normative beliefs) of drinking behavior and (2) the importance of the others' opinions to the target

person (representing motivation to comply with perceived norms)” (498). One survey question was used to measure the perception of others’ evaluation of drinking behavior: How did your family feel about alcohol use when you were growing up? Did they (a) disapprove, (b) accept light drinking, (c) there was disagreement in the family or (d) accepted heavy drinking. Another question within the same survey was used to measure the importance of others’ opinions to the target person by asking respondents to rate the importance of their parents’ opinions on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being “strongly agree” and 5 being “strongly disagree.”

Behavioral controls. *Control beliefs* refer to factors that someone may believe aid in promoting or impeding a specific behavior (Ajzen 2002). Five survey questions provided a measure of behavior controls that facilitate drinking: respondents were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 (very important) to 4 (not at all important) how important it is (1) to participate in fraternity/sorority parties; and (2) to be a member of a fraternity/sorority. For this variable, respondents were also asked to (3) estimate the percentage of their friends who “regularly” use alcohol for recreational purposes and to describe her/his (4) mother’s alcohol use while growing up and (5) father’s alcohol use while growing up.

Six survey questions provided a measure of behaviors that may impede drinking, with a focus on academics. Respondents were asked to rank on a five-point scale, with 1 being “strongly agree” and 5 being “strongly disagree”: (1) getting good grades is important; (2) participating in academic activities is important; (3) attending class is important; and (4) achieving academic goals is important. Respondents were also asked to: convey (5) the number of hours spent studying per week; and (6) their current GPA.

Mediating Variable

Intention factor. According to the TPB, intentions lead to motivational factors that influence behavior (Ajzen 1991). Thus, in the partial model, the intention to act is a dependent variable. Therefore, this study anticipates that subjective norms and behavioral controls will predict intention and intention should then predict behavior (Ajzen 1991). This variable was measured by the survey question: On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being “very important” and 4 being “not at all important,” how important is it for you to participate in parties?

Dependent Variable

Behavior factor. In the full model, the behavior factor becomes the dependent variable. The individual’s drinking behavior was measured by the survey question: In the past 30 days how many drinks have you consumed?

Demographic Variables

Although sex and race are not included in the theory, they were added in this study to explore any differences that may occur across these two groups. Because there were only 30 respondents reporting a race other than white, we created a dichotomous variable for race (white and non-white) in order to improve the ability to detect any racial differences.

Results

To explore the relationship between alcohol consumption and academics, this study conducted an ANOVA, a statistical test (table 2). In the first model, the influence of attitudes, norms, and control behaviors on intention was explored. The model was significant ($p = .000$), with 41.1 percent of the variation in intention explained by several significant variables. The attitude variable (describe yourself in terms of your current alcohol use) produced a significant ($p = .000$) effect on intention. For the control variable, two of three variables measuring facilitating drinking were significant: importance of participating in a fraternity/sorority ($p = .000$); and what percentage of your friends regularly drink ($p = .000$). As for the control behaviors that impeded drinking, only one academic variable was significant: getting good grades is important to me ($p = .008$). The demographic variable of gender ($p = .008$) was significant, indicating that it was more important to females to participate in parties. Race was not significantly related to intent to drink.

Table 2. Model 1: Attitudes, norms, and control behaviors regressed on intention to drink.

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 3.899 | .573 | | 6.810 | .000 |
| How did your family feel about alcohol use when you were growing up? | -.061 | .059 | -.054 | -1.035 | .302 |
| My parents' opinion is very important to me. | .089 | .051 | .087 | 1.754 | .081 |
| How important is it for you to participate in Greek life? | .300 | .081 | .259 | 3.711 | .000 |
| Are you a member of a fraternity or sorority? | -.103 | .222 | -.033 | -.467 | .641 |
| What percentage of your friends regularly use alcohol for recreational purposes? | -.007 | .002 | -.199 | -3.977 | .000 |
| Describe your father's alcohol use when you were growing up. | .034 | .032 | .054 | 1.069 | .286 |
| Describe your mother's alcohol use when you were growing up. | -.044 | .042 | -.053 | -1.050 | .295 |
| How many hours a week do you spend studying? | -.023 | .036 | -.033 | -.640 | .523 |
| How important is it for you to participate in academic activities? | -.022 | .085 | -.013 | -.256 | .798 |
| Getting good grades is important to me. | -.229 | .086 | -.147 | -2.673 | .008 |
| Whatever my academic goals, I try to achieve them. | .088 | .098 | .056 | .896 | .371 |
| Class attendance is important to me. | .016 | .066 | .013 | .237 | .813 |
| Current GPA. | -.002 | .021 | -.005 | -.091 | .927 |
| Race. | -.378 | .284 | -.063 | -1.331 | .184 |
| Gender. | .257 | .096 | .135 | 2.670 | .008 |
| Describe yourself in terms of current alcohol use. | -.277 | .034 | -.415 | -8.050 | .000 |

Note: Dependent Variable: How important is it for you to participate in parties?

Additionally, as indicated in table 2, the norm variables (attitudes of parents and how important parents' attitudes were to respondent) did not produce a significant effect on intentions to drink.

In the full model (table 3), intention was treated as an independent variable and the influences of attitudes, norms, behavioral controls, and intention on behavior were explored. The adjusted R² was .518 and the model was significant ($p = .000$), perhaps indicating that this model was slightly stronger than the previous model in explaining drinking behavior. In this model, attitude was significantly related to behavior ($p = .000$). Unlike the first model, norms were also significantly related to behavior: (1) parents' attitudes toward alcohol use ($p = .024$); and (2) the importance of parents' attitudes to the respondent ($p = .039$). The only control variable that was significant ($p = .004$) in this model was: What percentage of your friends regularly use alcohol for recreational purposes? The academic control variables in this model were not significant.

As for the demographic variables of gender and race, both were significantly related to alcohol consumption. Whites had significantly ($p = .015$) more alcoholic drinks in the past 30 days when compared to non-whites. Males had significantly ($p = .013$) more drinks in the past 30 days when compared to females. Gender was also significantly related to how important it was to participate in parties, with females being significantly ($p = .008$) more likely than males to have the intent to participate in parties.

Table 3. Model 2: Attitudes, norms, control, and intention regressed on behavior.

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 4.656 | 3.110 | | 1.497 | .135 |
| How did your family feel about alcohol use when you were growing up? | .672 | .296 | .108 | 2.266 | .024 |
| My parents' opinion is very important to me. | .534 | .258 | .093 | 2.071 | .039 |
| How important is it for you to participate in Greek life? | .279 | .416 | .043 | .670 | .504 |
| Are you a member of a fraternity or sorority? | -2.183 | 1.114 | -.124 | -1.960 | .051 |
| What percentage of your friends regularly use alcohol for recreational purposes? | .026 | .009 | .134 | 2.877 | .004 |
| Describe your father's alcohol use when you were growing up. | -.298 | .164 | -.083 | -1.811 | .071 |
| Describe your mother's alcohol use when you were growing up. | -.043 | .211 | -.009 | -.206 | .837 |
| How many hours a week do you spend studying? | .142 | .184 | .036 | .773 | .440 |
| How important is it for you to participate in academic activities? | -.310 | .425 | -.033 | -.729 | .467 |
| Getting good grades is important to me. | .177 | .436 | .020 | .406 | .685 |
| Whatever my academic goals, I try to achieve them. | -.552 | .495 | -.063 | -1.115 | .266 |
| Class attendance is important to me. | .332 | .333 | .051 | .997 | .320 |
| Current GPA. | -.117 | .107 | -.049 | -1.088 | .277 |
| Race. | -3.512 | 1.433 | -.105 | -2.450 | .015 |
| Gender. | -1.228 | .489 | -.116 | -2.509 | .013 |
| Describe yourself in terms of your current alcohol use. | 1.998 | .194 | .536 | 10.317 | .000 |
| How important is it for you to participate in parties? | -.425 | .302 | -.076 | -1.407 | .161 |

Note: Dependent Variable: In the past 30 days how many times have you had an alcoholic beverage?

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to provide an examination of the relationship between academics and alcohol within the context of the TPB. Only one of the academic variables produced an influence on intent to drink, and none of the academic variables provided a control on drinking behavior. Thus, it appears that a concern for good grades may have only a limited influence on intent to drink. Overall, the academic variables do not inhibit drinking behavior. Of all the control variables, only three were significantly predictive of intent to drink: *importance of participating in Greek life*, *percentage of friends who drink*, and *importance of getting good grades*. The only one that was predictive of drinking behavior was the percentage of friends who drink. Some researchers have suggested that the influence of control factors in this model may be over-estimated and the importance of attitudes may be under-estimated (Kraft et al. 2005); the current study may provide support for this contention.

Similar to Collins and Carey (2007), the current study did not find a significant relationship between norms and intent to drink. However, the norms of parental attitudes toward drinking and the importance of those attitudes to the individual did directly influence drinking behavior. This finding suggests that students may come to campus with preconceived ideas of appropriate drinking behavior, developed during early socialization through family interactions. While familial norms may have a positive or negative influence on reducing drinking behavior, peer relationships might exert a stronger influence, especially when students live on campus away from the influence of the home environment. As found in this study, one of the consistently strong relationships was the influence of the percentage of friends who regularly drink alcohol on the intent to drink and on an increase in consumption of alcohol. Therefore, perhaps one way to reduce drinking on college campuses is to implement programs that provide sober (non-alcoholic) parties for students and their friends to attend, as an alternative to drinking parties and to reduce the pressure to drink. One example of a national initiative to promote non-drinking parties on college campuses is Party.0. This initiative was implemented at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh in 2012, but to the knowledge of the researchers there have been no evaluations of the program's impact on rates of alcohol consumption on campus. Additionally, alcohol reduction strategies might be particularly impactful if promoted within Greek life, as indicated in this study and prior research.

Another variable that was consistent across the models in predicting intent to drink and actual drinking behavior was the attitude factor. The individual's evaluation of his/her own attitude toward drinking did predict intent to drink and actual drinking behavior. Changing attitudes toward drinking may prove to be a difficult task, at least in the state of Wisconsin. According to recent research findings, Wisconsin is the "heaviest-drinking state in the country," and three main factors have been cited as contributing to the problem: availability of alcohol, acceptability of alcohol, and affordability (Blado 2015). Although it may be difficult to change attitudes about drinking, it is not necessarily impossible. For example, at one point in time, smoking cigarettes was a much more acceptable and even glamorized behavior. Perhaps adopting strategies used to reduce smoking in the general population, such as imposing a "sin tax," could work toward reducing alcohol consumption.

Intention to drink was not a significant predictor of behavior. This result could be due to the fact that the secondary data did not provide a good measure of intention to drink, or it could mean that the model, as a whole, does not provide a good prediction of drinking behavior. Perhaps the factors of attitude, norms, and control exert a stronger direct influence on behavior and intention can be eliminated from the model, especially since intention was not significantly related to behavior.

While TPB does not include personality, emotions, and demographic variables, Ajzen (1985) states that these variables may be included in the theory if they affect beliefs that influence the attitude toward the act, which in this study would be drinking. Since gender and racial socialization may influence how individuals evaluate their own behavior, these two variables were included in the study. Gender influenced both the intent to drink and drinking behavior. Females were more likely to indicate that participating in parties was important, but males were more likely to consume greater amounts of alcohol. The findings regarding gender difference in alcohol consumption were consistent with prior research on this relationship (Johnston et al. 2014). There was no significant relationship between race and the intent to drink, but there was a significant relationship between race and consumption of alcohol, with whites consuming more alcohol than non-whites.

Conclusions

Although we did not find a strong relationship between academics and alcohol consumption, this was not surprising since other researchers have also come to the same conclusion (Aertgeerts and Buntinx 2002). However, the findings in our study could also be related to the fact that we used secondary data and the variables were not specifically intended for the current study, which is one limitation of this study. It should be noted that we did find an inverse relationship between GPA and the importance of participating in parties and GPA and the number of alcoholic beverages consumed in the past 30 days. Although the relationships were not significant, the finding in the study regarding the inverse relationship is consistent with prior research on these variables (Musgrave-Marquart, Bromley, and Dalley 1997; Vaughan, Corbin, and Fromme 2009; Butler, Spencer, and Dodge 2011; Porter and Pryor 2007; Engs, Hanson, and Diebold 1994). Noting the consistency in the findings of an inverse relationship between GPA and alcohol consumption, perhaps implementing programs addressing poor academic performance could have an impact on alcohol consumption. If a student's GPA is improved, he or she may have more to risk by engaging in drinking behavior.

Another limitation to the current study is that the primary data was collected from students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, which is located in the state with the highest rate of alcohol consumption. Wisconsin's drinking culture may have influenced the outcome of the study. Future research on this theory, with a focus on academic variables, should keep in mind the cultural context of drinking in the targeted population.

A final limitation to this study is the racial demographics of the student population on the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus. The majority of students are white and, consequently, the majority of sample respondents were white. Future research on this topic might want to target a more racially integrated campus.

Despite the foregoing study limitations, the results in this study add to the existing literature in several ways. First, this study is unique as it explored whether attitudes toward academics may help to inhibit drinking behavior, while past studies primarily focused on the impact of drinking and academic outcomes. This study also provided a further test of the TPB and resulted in confirming some critiques of the theory. Finally, this study highlights the influence of peer behavior on individual behavior and suggests that campus activities providing alternatives to the drinking culture should be explored in order to promote non-drinking behaviors and encourage interactions with peers who do not place such a high emphasis on consuming alcohol. In addition to providing alternative non-alcoholic events on campus, the larger community might explore solutions to the broader drinking culture, such as making alcoholic beverages more expensive (creating a “sin tax” on alcohol).

Note

1. The survey was administered by Dr. Rose and Dr. Beck, in the Department of Criminal Justice to: (1) establish a set of data for students to use in their statistics and methods course, in order to teach students how to run statistical analyses, test criminological theories, and write APA style research papers; (2) provide the University with trend information on student alcohol- and drug-related behaviors and attitudes; and (3) to be used in a forthcoming book.

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