



Universiteit Utrecht

‘Everybody drinks, so you may too’

A qualitative study on the way parental social norms play a role in parents’ rules setting about alcohol use of their children.

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Abstract

During adolescence most youths start using substances. Because of the detrimental effects of alcohol use on adolescents, it is relevant to investigate which factors influence their drinking behaviour. This paper presents the findings of a qualitative study using Grounded Theory to discover how social norms influence parents' way of setting rules for their children's alcohol use. Existing data from a larger quasi-experimental study were used and additional interviews were conducted. The sample consists of 24 participants including parents with children from 10 to 18 years old who live in one municipality in the Netherlands. Data of the interviews were analysed with NVivo. Findings indicate that parents set rules for their children's alcohol use in a way that adheres to the prevailing social norms among parents about alcohol use. Parents (unconsciously) experience peer pressure to alter their rules, even if these rules do not comply to their own norms about substance use among children. This implicates that social norms among parents greatly influence the way parents set rules for the alcohol use of their children. This should be taken into account when policymakers opt for new intervention strategies to tackle underage drinking.

Keywords: adolescents, parents, social norms, alcohol use, rules setting

Samenvatting

Tijdens de adolescentie beginnen de meeste jongeren met het drinken van alcohol. Gezien de schadelijke effecten die alcohol heeft op adolescenten is het relevant om te onderzoeken welke factoren het alcoholgebruik van jongeren beïnvloeden. Deze kwalitatieve studie heeft op basis van Grounded Theory onderzocht hoe sociale normen invloed hebben op de manier waarop ouders regels stellen voor het alcoholgebruik van hun kinderen. Bestaande data van een grotere quasi-experimentele studie zijn gebruikt en daarnaast zijn er interviews afgenomen. De steekproef bestaat uit 24 participanten, bestaande uit ouders met kinderen van 10 tot 18 jaar die wonen in één gemeente in Nederland. De interviews zijn geanalyseerd met NVivo. De resultaten tonen aan dat ouders regels stellen op een manier die past bij de sociale normen over alcoholgebruik die gelden onder ouders. Ouders ervaren (onbewust) groepsdruk om hun regels aan te passen, zelfs als deze regels tegen hun ideeën over alcoholgebruik onder jongeren ingaan. Dit impliceert dat sociale normen onder ouders invloed hebben op de manier waarop ouders hun regels stellen voor het alcoholgebruik van hun kinderen. Hier moet rekening mee gehouden worden wanneer beleidsmakers kiezen voor nieuwe interventiestrategieën om alcoholgebruik onder minderjarigen aan te pakken.

Sleutelwoorden: adolescenten, ouders, sociale normen, alcoholgebruik, regels stellen

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Introduction

In adolescence most youths initiate the use of substances, such as drinking alcohol (De Looze et al., 2017). Though the number of drinking adolescents has decreased in recent years in most countries, also in the Netherlands, the frequency of adolescents drinking at an early age is still alarming. More than a quarter (26,2%) of the underaged youth in the Netherlands (<18 years) drink alcohol on a monthly basis (Stevens et al., 2018). On a more local level this number may even be higher; i.e. 42,8% of the 14-year olds living in the municipality of Edam-Volendam drank alcohol on a monthly basis (Koning & Van der Rijst, 2018), against 26,6% of the 14-year olds on average in the Netherlands (Stevens et al., 2018). Also, on average youth in this municipality initiate drinking at age 13 and sometimes even at age 12 (Koning & Van der Rijst, 2018), against 13,3 years old on average in the rest of the Netherlands (Stevens et al., 2018). Underaged drinking is associated with an increased risk of anxiety, suicidal behaviour, depression (Danzo et al., 2017) and more involvement in other risk behaviours, such as risky sexual (Green et al., 2017) or criminal behaviour (Hammerton et al., 2017). Furthermore, alcohol use during adolescence can have a negative impact on academic achievements and school attendance (Quigley, 2019). Therefore, prevention of early drinking among youths in the Netherlands is required, whereby utilizing a more local approach may match the needs of that specific context better.

One of the reasons to drink alcohol is because of social reasons; drinking at a party, when having friends over etcetera. The use of alcohol is mostly done within a social context, in the presence of others, where the norms of peers play an important role (Lee et al., 2007). For adolescents that is particularly the case, but also among parents the use of alcohol on social occasions is the norm (Britton & Bell, 2015). Not only parents' own drinking behaviour is influenced by norms of other parents, also the way parents deal with their children's drinking behaviour is likely to be influenced by norms of other parents (Melhuish et al., 2007). The role of parental social norms in how they socialize their children with respect to alcohol use is a largely under-investigated area, but it may provide important tools for prevention. Therefore, in this study, the way parental social norms play a role in parents' rules setting about their children's' alcohol use is investigated.

Behavioural decisions are, among other things, determined by the assessment as to whether others also engage in a particular behaviour; i.e. social norms (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). A social norm is what people in a group believe to be a typical and appropriate action in that group. A social norm is held in place by the reciprocal expectations of the individuals

in that group and is therefore hard to change. Social norms are representations of acceptable group conduct and can be viewed as cultural products since they include values, customs and traditions (Mackie & Moneti, 2014). Thus, social norms are embedded in our society, influence human behaviours, and therefore also likely parents' socialisation practices.

One often used theory to understand the role of social norms in human behaviour, is the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This theory states that behaviour is based on the attitudes an individual has towards a specific behaviour and on the perceived social or normative beliefs about the appropriateness of a behaviour, also referred to as subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). A subjective norm is the perceived social pressure to engage or not engage in a specific behaviour (McKenzie et al., 2017). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) state that individuals will either adhere to the prevailing social norms or will succumb to the social pressure. Applying this theory to the social norms of parents around setting alcohol-specific rules, this would indicate that the difference in level of strict rule setting about alcohol use of their child is influenced by the social pressure that parents experience to adhere to the existing norms in society.

Van der Vorst et al. (2006) supported this by demonstrating that the social norms of parents about drinking among youth is of influence on the rules parents set regarding alcohol use. They asked 428 families consisting of two parents and two adolescent children to fill out an extensive questionnaire about their alcohol consumption, their rules about alcohol and their norms about alcohol. The results showed that if parents believed that other parents approve of drinking alcohol, they will let it affect their own attitudes towards their child's alcohol consumption by becoming more tolerant themselves. Van der Vorst et al. (2006) found that parents with more liberal attitudes towards their child's alcohol use also tend to set less strict rules about the drinking of their children. Thus, attitudes towards the alcohol consumption of their children seem to be important predictors for parents' behaviours.

The results of Van der Vorst et al. (2006) are supported by other empirical studies showing that there is an association between perceived norms and parent's own norms about the alcohol use of their children (Mrug & McCay, 2013; Napper et al., 2014). However, Linkenbach et al. (2003) found that parents may not have an accurate understanding of other parents' behaviours. Parents typically underestimate how often other parents discuss rules and expectations about alcohol use with their children. Furthermore, LaBrie et al. (2011) found that parents often overestimate the extent to which other parents approve of their child's alcohol consumption. As a result, parents will adjust their norms and become more tolerant of

their child's alcohol use, which in turn can lead to premature and increased alcohol consumption (LaBrie et al., 2011).

This can be supported by the study of Rimal and Real (2005), which found that individuals can enact a behaviour because they believe that people who are close to them expect them to do so or because not enacting this behaviour would lead to social sanctions. Parents may overestimate the approval of other parents (LaBrie et al., 2011) and may adjust their norms and behaviour, because they believe other parents expect them to do so – and not adjusting their behaviour could lead to the social exclusion of their child. Thus, social norms also seem to play a role in parents' behaviour in relation to other parents.

The study of Melhuish et al. (2007) demonstrated that parental interactions with other parents and the norms of the group influenced the behaviour of parents related to home learning activities. However, besides not having an accurate understanding of other parents' behaviour, parents may also underestimate the effects of peers on their own decisions. According to Nolan et al. (2008) and Cialdini (2005) people rarely attribute their actions to knowledge of the behaviour of others. This could indicate that parents underestimate the extent to which they are influenced by other parents; also when it comes to making decisions about the alcohol use of their children. Thus, parental social norms on the alcohol use of their children seem to be of influence when it comes to parental rules setting for their children's' alcohol consumption, yet parents may not always be aware of that.

Though current available research has demonstrated that parental social norms are relevant in the understanding of parents' parenting practices and subsequent adolescents' drinking, little is known about how these norms are formed and how parents experience the existence of these norms and influence of other parents, particularly on their own behaviour. As far as we know, no studies are available that have applied a qualitative design in the study of parental norms. This knowledge is highly relevant as it helps us to understand why parents do and do not set certain rules and how parental social norms play a role herein. This provides imperative implications for prevention programs targeting parents. The aim of this study is to investigate the role of parental social norms in parents' rules setting for the alcohol use of their children.

Methods

The overall study design was qualitative using a Grounded Theory (Bowen, 2006; Walker & Myrick, 2006). This involves constructing a theory through data collection and analysis. This

approach was selected because there is some research done on parental norms, but little to no theory to support this (Williams, 2007). A qualitative research method is chosen, because it is relevant to go deeper into the perceptions and interpretations of the participants (the parents). Besides that, it is easier to make participants feel at ease in a face-to-face conversation than in a questionnaire (Doorewaard et al., 2015).

Procedure and participants

Data were collected as part of a larger quasi-experimental study on the effectiveness of a community intervention study targeting onset of drinking. Within this study, a co-creation approach was applied where also parents took part in. Parents of children aged 10-18 were recruited to participate in the study through different channels such as think-thank meetings in light of the intervention study and the snowball method. This resulted in a list of potential participants including 34 parents. In February 2020, 13 parents were interviewed face-to-face. However, after the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the study was stopped. In February and March 2021, the study was restarted again in a slightly different way. 15 parents of the original potential participants list were contacted via email. Eight parents responded and were interviewed via online tools. Two parents were not interested in an interview and the other five parents did not respond to the email. Furthermore, two employees of the municipality of Edam-Volendam were approached via email and were interviewed as well. One more parent was recruited for an interview with the snowball method. Thus, 11 parents were interviewed in February and March. The duration of the interviews varied from 30 to 50 minutes. When interpreting the data of the online conducted interviews, it should be taken into account that the participants are not interviewed face-to-face, which may lead to more superficial answers, as it is more difficult to establish a relationship of trust in an online setting (Doorewaard et al., 2015).

Prior to conducting the interviews, the participants received an information letter and informed consent-form via email (see appendix 3 & 4) which explained the study and the course of the interview. The informed-consent form (see appendix 4) was signed online by the participant and the researcher.

In total, 24 semi-structured interviews were conducted among parents aged 41-59 (m age = 46.8, SD = 4.9). The population of this study consists of parents with 10 to 18 year old children who live in the municipality Edam-Volendam, the Netherlands. A diverse sample, consisting of parents living in different villages of the municipality Edam-Volendam, was

used to increase the validity of the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Participant number	Parent	Children (age)	Residence
1	Mother	(13/16/18)	Volendam
2	Mother	1 son (20)	Volendam
3	Father	1 son (19) 1 daughter (18)	Oosthuizen
4	Mother	1 daughter (13)	Edam
5	Mother	1 daughter (12) 1 son (8)	Volendam
6	Mother	2 daughters (15/18)	Volendam
7	Father	2 daughters (15/18)	Volendam
8	Mother	2 sons (15/18) 1 daughter (21)	Edam
9	Mother	2 sons (17/24) 1 daughter (23)	Volendam
10	Mother	1 son (15)	Volendam
11	Mother	2 daughters (12/15)	Volendam
12	Father	2 sons (17/18)	Volendam
13	Mother	2 sons (15/18)	Edam
14	Father	2 sons (12/22)	Volendam
15	Mother	3 sons (6/10/15)	Edam
16	Mother	3 sons (2/14/16)	Volendam
17	Father	2 sons (22/29) 1 daughter (18)	Edam
18	Mother	2 daughters (13/16)	Volendam
19	Father	2 daughters (12/15)	Volendam
20	Mother	2 daughters (8/11) 1 son (14)	Volendam
21	Father	1 daughter (11) 1 son (13)	Volendam
22	Mother	2 daughters (11/15)	Edam
23	Father	1 son (13) 1 daughter (12)	Volendam
24	Mother	1 daughter (9) 1 son (12)	Volendam

Topics

The interviews were based on two topics: the role of parents in the alcohol use of their children and COVID-19. The role of parents in the alcohol use of their children comprised of the following subjects: parents' own upbringing and their upbringing pertaining to the way

other parent's raise their children. Parents' own upbringing included questions such as *'What is the role of parents in the alcohol use of young people?'* and *'To what extent and in what way do you deal with the (future) alcohol use of you children?'*

Parent's own upbringing in relation to others included questions such as *'To what extent do you feel like your upbringing (e.g. alcohol rules) is influenced by other parents?'*.

The first three interviews served as a pilot. Based on this pilot, the topic list was refined and elaborated slightly in order to be able to formulate an answer to the research question.

For an overview of the topic list, see appendix 5.

Data analysis

After conducting the interviews, the audio-taped data were transcribed verbatim and personal details of participants were processed anonymously. The data is stored according to the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences data storage protocol of Utrecht University.

After transcribing the data, it was analysed following the different phases of data analysis of the Grounded Theory (Walker & Myrick, 2006). The initial step was open coding, then axial coding and finally selective coding. The coding was done with analysis program NVivo.

The codes are based on the empirical and theoretical overview and the topic list (see appendix 5). While coding the data, emerging codes were taken into account. Based on the coded interviews and the grounded theory, an answer to the research question of this study was given.

Results

During the first phase of coding, the following codes emerged: *drinking culture*, *involvement of the parents in the alcohol use of their child*, and *contact with other parents*. In the phase of axial coding, *drinking culture* was divided into *parents drink themselves* and *children are allowed to drink from parents*. *Involvement of the parents* was divided into *communication with children* and *involved and not involved*. *Contact with other parents* was broken down into *negative* and *positive*, and *peer pressure*. While coding the transcripts, it was noticed that parents often mentioned that they are afraid their child will be socially excluded if they are not allowed to drink. This can be interpreted as parental fear of missing out (FoMO) and is taken into account as an emerging code. For an overview of the codes, see appendix 6. The results are based on these codes and will be outlined in this section.

Drinking culture

The interviews demonstrate that the municipality of Edam-Volendam has a culture in which the use of alcohol is strongly embedded. Lee et al. (2007) found that the use of alcohol is mostly done within a social context. This is also the case in the municipality of Edam-Volendam. All participants indicated that alcohol consumption is common on most social occasions and two participants (8%) mentioned that shared alcohol use is sometimes even the base for friendships. This applies to both parents and children. 20 parents (83%) indicated in their interviews that they regularly drink alcohol themselves and that their underaged children are allowed to drink as well. The parents gave various reasons for approving their children's alcohol use.

Reasons for permitting alcohol consumption of underaged children

Parents provide three reasons for permitting alcohol use of their offspring. First of all, all parents mentioned that they do not want their children to drink secretly or behind the back of their parents. They aspire an open relationship with their child and like to be aware of what their child is doing; also with regard to their alcohol use.

'He is allowed to drink. Het can take two beers with him and I know that sometimes he drinks four beers, but sometimes also none. By keeping the conversation open, he also tells me how much he drinks. There is no secrecy. I keep the conversation going with him.' – Participant 8¹

Secondly, twelve parents (50%) said that they want to be in control of their children's alcohol use. Parents perceived that not allowing their children to drink could result in their children drinking large quantities of alcohol. By allowing a few drinks, parents said they hope to control their children's alcohol use.

The third and main reason mentioned by all parents to allow their underaged children to drink, is the fear of their offspring being excluded from their group of friends. This finding was not expected based on the empirical and theoretical overview and can therefore be seen as an emerging code. The municipality of Edam-Volendam has a strong group culture with large

¹ *'Hij mag van mij drinken. En dan echt in de zin van hij mag 2 biertjes meenemen. En ehm, ik weet dat het er soms 4 worden. Ik weet ook dat het soms niet één wordt, want dan komen ze braaf er mee terug. Maar door dat gesprek steeds met hem open te houden. En ook elke keer, hij geeft ook zelf aan hoeveel hij er drinkt. Dus het is geen geheimzinnigheid onderling, hou ik het gesprek gaande met hem.'* – Participant 8

group of friends that last a lifetime (Eliasar & Helsloot, 2017). Being excluded from your group of friends may therefore be a fear for all parents.

'You don't say no to your child. Because then it doesn't belong to the group.' – Participant 3²

Interaction between parents

The fear of the child's exclusion from his group of friends is mostly fuelled by the contact that parents have with other parents. Most parents (88%) indicated that they sometimes discuss upbringing-related questions with other parents when they see each other at social occasions. Furthermore, parents also mentioned that they sometimes call each other to discuss dilemma's or other parenting issues. During these forms of contact parents mentioned that they tell each other that they are organizing parties at home for their children which results in parents feeling pressured to organize a party at their homes as well. Not organizing a party could lead to your child being unpopular, which could in turn lead to social exclusion. Five parents (21%) admitted in the interviews that they sometimes feel peer pressure from other parents to organize a party or to alter their rules regarding the alcohol consumption of their children.

'What that mother did, well, she also experienced peer pressure from those parents to push that child back into the friend group. So one evening, she invited the girls over at her place and everything was allowed there. To compensate for it.' – Participant 4³

Parental norms

The study of Van der Vorst et al. (2006) found that if parents believe that other parents approve of drinking alcohol, they will let it affect their own attitudes and subsequent behaviour towards their child's alcohol use. In the interviews, 20 parents (83%) mentioned that they give their child alcohol or let their child go out later than initially planned, while not actually wanting to do this. Parents do this because other parents allow their children to stay out late and drink too. They mentioned that they alter their behaviour because of the peer pressure they experience from other parents. However, as mentioned before, parents typically overestimate the extent to which other parents approve of their child's alcohol consumption

² *'Nee zeggen tegen je kind doe je dus niet. Want dan hoort het niet bij de groep.'* – Participant 3

³ *'Wat die moeder deed, he om, nou ja die ervaarde dan ook die groepsdruk van die ouders, om dat kind weer terug te schuiven in dat ploegje. Ja dus een avond, he, dus dan eh, de meiden dan toch maar daar bij jou thuis uitnodigen, en daar mag dan alles. Om het te compenseren.'* – Participant 4

(LaBrie et al., 2011). This also seems to be the case for the interviewed parents, as all parents mentioned that they do not want their underaged child to drink, but do approve of it because they believe other parents allow their children too. Nineteen parents (79%) mentioned to alter their rules, because they believe other parents also approve of their child's alcohol consumption. This is supported by the study of Linkenbach et al. (2003), which found that parents often do not have an accurate understanding of other parents behaviour. In this way, the social norm of approving your child's alcohol use is held in place by the false reciprocal expectations of parents (Mackie & Moneti, 2014).

'Of course there is the risk that if your child belongs to a group, he will not belong there anymore. In that way, I understand parents in Volendam. They sometimes say yes when they mean no, because you do not want your child to be excluded.' –

Participant 19⁴

Thirteen parents (54%) indicated that they would like to confront other parents when they give alcohol to their underaged children, but often won't do this because this would lead to negative reactions and may even have negative effects for their children's position in their group of friends.

'There are few opportunities for dialogue with parents. Parents think it is senseless. (...) But it is just um... difficult to make arrangements with parents.' – Participant 23⁵

Besides that, fifteen parents (63%) mentioned in the interviews that they usually do not know the parents of their child's friends since they started high school. In primary school, parents saw and talked to each other when bringing their child to school. This is not the case anymore when their children are in high school, which makes it harder to be in touch with other parents.

However, seven parents (29%) did manage to get to know some of the parents of their child's friends. They exchanged telephone numbers and communicate with each other via Whatsapp-groups. They discuss how other parents think about and deal with their children's alcohol use.

⁴ *'Het risico loop je natuurlijk wel, dat als je kind in een groep hoort, dat ie er niet meer bij hoort. Wat dat betreft snap ik ouders in Volendam ook wel, dat ze soms ja zeggen als ze nee bedoelen. Want je wilt niet dat je kind aan de zijlijn komt te staan.'* – Participant 19

⁵ *'Er zijn weinig mogelijkheden tot dialoog met ouders. Ouders vinden het onzinnig. (...). Maar het is gewoon eh. Moeilijk om afspraken te maken met ouders.'* – Participant 23

Discussion

In this qualitative study we investigated whether parental social norms play a role in parents' rules setting for the alcohol use of their children. It was demonstrated that social norms (unconsciously) influence parents in their way of setting rules about the alcohol use of their children. Parents described that the municipality of Edam-Volendam has a culture in which the use of alcohol is strongly embedded. Most parents regularly drink alcohol themselves on social occasions and many of their underage children are allowed to drink as well. The parents gave various reasons for approving their children's alcohol use: parents do not want their child to drink secretly and they also want to be in control of the alcohol use of their offspring. However, the most striking reason parents mentioned for approving the alcohol use of their underage children is the fear of their child being excluded from their group of friends. This can be interpreted as a form of fear of missing out (FoMO) of the parents. Przybylski et al. (2013) defined FoMO as "a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent". Not being allowed to drink may result in exclusion from your group of friends, which could in turn lead to feelings of loneliness of the child (Arslan, 2021; Bryan et al., 2017). To prevent this, parents allow their children to drink.

Furthermore, some parents indicated that they would like to confront other parents with the alcohol consumption of their children, but hesitated doing so because of the fear of their child being socially excluded (i.e. FoMO). They do not dare to confront other parents, since this may have detrimental effects for the social contacts of their child. This shows that parental FoMO of their child's social exclusion may influence parents' way of setting rules (Przybylski et al., 2013; Melhuish et al., 2007).

The municipality of Edam-Volendam has an authentic own culture with a strong sense of social cohesion (Cachet et al., 2001). The bond and identification with the village and the local community seems to be strong among the residents of the municipality (Eliasar & Helsloot, 2017). There is a strong group culture with large group of friends that often last a lifetime. These groups may be influenced by social norms and peer pressure (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Being excluded from your group of friends may therefore be a realistic fear. The results of the current study show that parental FoMO drives parents to alter their rules about their child's alcohol use. Thus, parental FoMO and parental social norms seem to play a substantial role in the behaviour of parents (Colgate & Ginns, 2016; Melhuish et al., 2007; Przybylski et al., 2013).

Following from the results, there is a striking contradiction in the answers that the parents gave and the behaviour that they indicated to engage in. Only a few parents indicated explicitly to actually alter their rules regarding the alcohol consumption of their child based on the pressure they experience from other parents. This is interesting because nearly all of them indicated to do things in general, not alcohol-specific parenting related, because of the opinion of others. This contradiction can be explained by the studies of Nolan et al. (2008) and Cialdini (2005), which found that people often underestimate the effects of peers on their own decisions and behaviours. Parents may underestimate the extent to which they are influenced by other parents in the way they set rules for their children about alcohol use or are very unaware of this.

Parents' behaviour regarding their children's alcohol consumption in general can be attributed to the prevailing social norms about underaged drinking among parents. Parents approve of their children's alcohol consumption, because other parents allow their children to stay out late and drink too. It can be concluded that parents alter their behaviour because of the peer pressure they experience from other parents. This is supported by the Theory of Reasoned Action of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) which states that individuals will either adhere to the prevailing social norms or will succumb to the social pressure. Applying this theory to parental social norms around setting alcohol-specific rules, it indicates that the difference in level of rule setting about alcohol use is influenced by the social pressure that parents experience to adhere to the existing norms in society.

Furthermore, parents typically overestimate the extent to which other parents approve of their child's alcohol consumption (LaBrie et al., 2011). All parents mentioned that they do not want their underaged child to drink. However, most interviewed parents do alter their rules, because they believe other parents do approve of their child's alcohol consumption. This is stimulated by the contact parents have with each other. For example, hearing about parties that other parents organised at home triggers parents to host a party themselves, even if this goes against their own point of view. This is supported by the study of Linkenbach et al. (2003), which found that parents often do not have an accurate understanding of other parents behaviour. In this way, the social norm of approving your child's alcohol use is held in place by the false reciprocal expectations of parents (Mackie & Moneti, 2014). Thus, the contact that parents have with each other fuels the fear of their child being socially excluded and may indirectly influence the way they set rules for their children (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005; Melhuish et al., 2007).

Thus, parents seem to be strongly, but mostly unconsciously, influenced by the social norms about alcohol that prevail among parents. As a result, it influences their way of setting rules for their children's alcohol use: they allow their children to drink, even if they do not actually support this. All parents seem to feel pressured by social norms, but they do not oppose to it. Succumbing to the social pressure seems like the easy way for them, even if this goes against their own ideas and opinions about the alcohol use of their children.

This can be explained by the cognitive dissonance theory of Festinger (1957). A cognitive dissonance is a clash between two cognitions. It is a state in which people feel uncomfortable and to reduce this discomfort, one of the cognitions must be changed (Festinger, 1957).

Applying this to the current study means that there is a cognitive dissonance between parents' opposition to underage drinking and the knowledge of their child being socially excluded if they do not approve of their alcohol use.

The results from the study of Glatz et al. (2012) show that in order to eliminate the dissonance, parents changed their attitudes towards their child's alcohol use. Parents became more tolerant of underage drinking rather than trying to change their child's behaviour.

Thus, parents may approve of their child's alcohol use and may mitigate their rules about alcohol to eliminate the cognitive dissonance and to reduce the discomfort that comes along with it.

Limitations

Next to the strengths of this study, i.e. measuring an understudied yet relevant aspect in the socialization of adolescents, this study has a few limitations that should be taking into account. First of all, 24 parents were interviewed for this study, which is a relatively large sample, but quasi-experimental studies in general cannot easily be generalized to other groups of parents, nor to other municipalities. The municipality of Edam-Volendam has an authentic own culture with strong formation of groups (Eliasar & Helsloot, 2017). This culture may deviate from other municipalities. Therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions about the generalizability of the results. Yet, current findings in combination with previous research do point at the importance of investigating the role of other parents in the formation of parental norms and their subsequent behaviour. More research into parental norms of other cultures needs to be done in order to determine whether the results of this study can be generalized.

Furthermore, the participants that were interviewed for this study may not be very representative. The parents that agreed to do an interview seemed like parents that already were much involved in the upbringing of their child. They wanted to make a change in the

underaged drinking among youths in the municipality of Edam-Volendam. These parents may not be necessarily part of the conservation of the prevailing social norms among parents, but even among these parents peer pressure and social norms seem to play a role in their way of setting rules for the alcohol use of their children. The parents who play a bigger role in this were maybe not very interested and open for an interview. This could have influenced the results of this study. For further research more parents need to be interviewed to further investigate parental social norms and peer pressure among parents.

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Appendix 1: Interdisciplinarity

Several (sub) disciplines of the social sciences will be used within this study, because this study focuses on a complex social interaction between an individual and his or her environment. An interdisciplinary approach is therefore necessary in order to give a well substantiated answer to the research question. Insights from the disciplines of orthopedagogy and social psychology will contribute to a better understanding of the research topic, because this enables viewing the social context from multiple perspectives.

This study will make use of the principles of social psychology. Social psychology is focused on group conduct and the way this is influenced by individuals and expectations people have of each other. The current study investigates the prevailing social norms about alcohol use among parents and the way these norms are influenced by other parents and influence the behaviour of parents. This can be supported with the principles of social psychology.

Besides that, the alcohol consumption of underaged youth and its problematic consequences is a subject that is related to the discipline of Pedagogical Sciences, and in particular to the subdiscipline of orthopedagogy. Orthopedagogy focuses specifically on the needs and the care of children and adolescents who have problems in their developmental path or education. Underaged drinking has consequences on the development of the children and the way parents set rules for the alcohol consumption of their children connects to this.

Besides making use of different disciplines of the social sciences, the current study is also interdisciplinary according to the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner (1992). This theory focuses on the context of the child's environment and development. As a child develops, the interaction within these environments becomes more complex (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). The current study is focused on the microsystem and macrosystem of this theory.

The microsystem is the child's most immediate environment. It is a pattern of social roles, activities and relations experienced by the child. Parents are part of this system. This study explores the relationship between parents and the child and the way parents interact with their children.

The macrosystem consists of cultural beliefs, societal norms and values etc. This is also a relevant system for the current research. Parental social norms may influence the way rules are set for their children and are therefore interesting to take into account.

Taken all this into account, it can be concluded that the current study has an interdisciplinary approach.

Appendix 2: Contract research project (RIT)

Research Project Agreement

Student: Anouk Rademaker
Graduation variant: RIT/ Master's in Youth Studies
Supervising lecturer: Ina Koning
Tel: 06-83054774
Faculty: Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences
Second assessor: Tom ter Bogt

Internship information

Institution: Municipality Edam-Volendam
Address: W. van der Knoopdreef 1
Postcode and Town/City: 1132 KN Volendam
External supervisor Léonie Boor
Starting and ending dates: 01/02/2021 – 30/06/2021

Agreements

Submission date for work plan/research proposal: February 18th
Period during which the lecturer will review the final product and any interim products: 18-06-2021 – 02-07-2021
Number of working days/working hours per week: 20 hours per week
Topic: The way parental social norms influence parents in their way of setting rules for the alcohol use of their children.

Agreements concerning papers to be submitted in the interim:

The client (host institution or faculty/programme) will provide the facilities needed in order to conduct the assignment properly.

If applicable:

Form and frequency of supervision within the host institution:

Weekly online meetings at the start of the week

Number of conferences between the supervising lecturer and the supervisor within the host institution:

Once at the start of the internship, once during the internship for feedback and once at the end for evaluation.

Prescriptions concerning the confidentiality of information:

The participants signed an informed consent form and all the data will be transcribed anonymously. Recorded interviews will be deleted once they are transcribed.

Ownership of the research data, in the event of deviation from the rule:

Anouk Rademaker & Ina Koning

Right to publish based on the research data:

Anouk Rademaker

Signed as approved,

Location/date: Utrecht, 04-02-2021

Signature of the student: AMR.

Signature of the supervising lecturer: []

Signature of the Course Coordinator []

Appendix 3: Information letter



Universiteit Utrecht

Informatiebrief participanten

19-02-2021

Onderzoek naar sociale normen over alcoholgebruik van kinderen onder ouders

Beste participant,

In deze brief krijgt u meer informatie over deelname aan het onderzoek “sociale normen over alcoholgebruik van kinderen onder ouders” zodat u kunt besluiten of u wel of niet wil deelnemen aan het onderzoek.

Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd door Anouk Rademaker, masterstudente Youth Studies aan de Universiteit Utrecht (UU), en wordt gedaan in opdracht van de UU. Het onderzoek wordt in samenwerking met de Gemeente Edam-Volendam uitgevoerd, maar is niet gefinancierd. De onderzoeker is daarom onafhankelijk.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is het bestuderen van sociale normen over het alcoholgebruik van kinderen onder ouders. Hiervoor worden er ongeveer 25 interviews afgenomen met ouders uit de gemeente Edam-Volendam om zo een antwoord te kunnen formuleren op de onderzoeksvraag.

De interviews worden afgenomen met vrijwilligheid van deelname en toestemming van de participant. Het interview wordt opgenomen, zodat de onderzoeker dit terug kan luisteren en kan uitwerken. Na het uitwerken worden de opnames verwijderd.

Een interview zal ongeveer één uur in beslag nemen en bestaat uit een reeks vragen van de onderzoeker aan de participant. Hierbij heeft de participant het recht om het interview op elk moment te stoppen, te pauzeren of een vraag niet te beantwoorden zonder opgave van redenen.

De gegevens van de participanten worden zorgvuldig behandeld. Dat betekent dat de gegevens anoniem worden verwerkt en dat niemand in het uiteindelijke verslag op voor derden herkenbare wijze zal worden beschreven. Daarnaast worden de geanonimiseerde antwoorden van de participant verwerkt volgens het facultaire protocol voor dataopslag van de UU. Dit houdt in dat de gegevens veilig worden opgeslagen en dat het voor derden niet mogelijk is om de antwoorden te herleiden naar de participant. De participanten krijgen geen vergoeding voor deelname aan het onderzoek.

Indien u wilt deelnemen aan het onderzoek wil ik u verzoeken het bijgevoegde toestemmingsformulier in te vullen, te ondertekenen en aan mij te retourneren.

Bij voorbaat dank.

Anouk Rademaker
Master Youth Studies
Universiteit Utrecht

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a.rademaker@edam-volendam.nl

a.m.rademaker@uu.nl

Appendix 4: Informed-consent form

Toestemmingsverklaring (informed consent)

voor deelname aan wetenschappelijk onderzoek

“Onderzoek naar de sociale normen over alcoholgebruik van kinderen onder ouders”

- Ik ben geïnformeerd over het onderzoek. Ik heb de schriftelijke informatie gelezen. Ik heb de mogelijkheid gekregen om vragen te stellen over het onderzoek. Ik heb gelegenheid gekregen om over mijn deelname aan het onderzoek na te denken en die is geheel vrijwillig. Ik heb het recht om te allen tijde de toestemming die ik verleen weer in te trekken en mijn deelname aan het onderzoek stop te zetten zonder opgave van redenen. Door dit document te ondertekenen geeft u te kennen dat u akkoord gaat met uw deelname aan dit onderzoek. Ook na ondertekening kunt u nog altijd afzien van uw medewerking. Uw deelname wordt echter zeer op prijs gesteld!

Ik stem ermee in om aan het onderzoek deel te nemen:

Naam:

Geboortedatum:

Handtekening:

Datum:

Indien u dit wenst kunt u het uiteindelijke onderzoeksverslag ontvangen.

Hieronder aankruisen wat van toepassing is:

- Ik wil het complete onderzoeksverslag ontvangen.
 Ik wil geen verslag van het onderzoek ontvangen .

Indien u het eerste of tweede hokje heeft aangekruist: hoe wilt u het document ontvangen?

- Per post, op het volgende huisadres:
 Per e-mail, op het volgende e-mailadres:

De ondergetekende, verantwoordelijk onderzoeker, verklaart bij dezen dat de hierboven genoemde persoon mondeling en schriftelijk is geïnformeerd over het hierboven genoemde onderzoek.

Naam: Anouk Rademaker

Functie: studente / onderzoeker

Handtekening:



Datum: 19/02/2021

Appendix 5: Topic list

1. Introductie

- Voorstellen
- Doel van onderzoek
- Opname
- Anonimiteit
- Wat vindt u van LEF?
- Heeft u nog vragen voor we beginnen?

2. Achtergrondvragen

- Woonplaats / leeftijd
- Hoeveel kinderen? Leeftijd?

3. Rol van ouders in alcoholgebruik jongeren

a) Eigen opvoeding

- Wat is volgens u de rol van ouders in het alcoholgebruik van jongeren?
- Mag ik vragen in hoeverre en op welke manier u zich bezig houdt met het (toekomstige) alcoholgebruik van uw kind(eren)? (opvoeding)
- Als u het gesprek aan gaat met uw kind, wat is dan de aanleiding hiervoor? Preventief of achteraf? Hoe verliep dit gesprek? Kan je een voorbeeld noemen van zo'n gesprek?
- In hoeverre stelt u regels t.a.v. alcoholgebruik? Hoe stelt u deze regels?
- Bespreekt u deze regels met andere ouders?
- Wat zijn de regels t.a.v. alcoholgebruik binnen uw huis?
- Stelt u deze regels in overleg met uw kinderen of zelf?
- Wat vinden uw kinderen van deze regels? Gaat u hierover in gesprek?
- Wat doet u als uw kind toch alcohol (zou drinken) drinkt?

b) Eigen opvoeding irt andere ouders

- Hoe ervaart u uw opvoedgedrag / ideeën ten opzichte van andere ouders?
 - o Zelfde / anders? Wat vind u hiervan?
 - o Contact met andere ouders hierover?
- In hoeverre heeft u het idee dat uw opvoeding (bijv. regels t.a.v. alcohol) wordt beïnvloedt door andere ouders?
- In hoeverre en op welke manier ervaart u groepsdruk van andere ouders/omgeving in uw opvoeding van uw kind?

4. Corona

- Waar loop je tegenaan met opvoeden in coronatijd?
- Zijn er verschillen in je gedrag (regels t.a.v. alcohol) ten opzichte van voor corona?
- Voor jongeren is corona lastig, maar wat vind jij lastig als ouder?
- Merk je een toename in alcoholgebruik?
- Merk je dat je kind stemmingswisselingen heeft?
- Merk je dat je kind verslonst?
- Merk je dat je kind somber is?
- Merk je dat je kind zich verveelt?
- Heb je er moeite mee om je kind te benaderen?
- Heb je er moeite mee je kind bezig/gemotiveerd te houden?
- Wat heeft u er aan gedaan om de verveling niet te laten toeslaan?

5. Afronding

- Dit waren alle vragen. Heeft u zelf nog vragen, opmerkingen of toevoegingen?

Appendix 6: Codes

Nodes		
Name		Files
<input type="checkbox"/> Angst voor eenzaamheid kind		
<input type="checkbox"/> Betrokkenheid ouders		
<input type="checkbox"/> Goede communicatie met kind		
<input type="checkbox"/> Niet betrokken		
<input type="checkbox"/> Ouders willen hulp		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wel betrokken		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact met andere ouders		
<input type="checkbox"/> Groepsdruk		
<input type="checkbox"/> Negatief		
<input type="checkbox"/> Positief		
<input type="checkbox"/> Drankcultuur		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cultuur		
<input type="checkbox"/> Kinderen mogen drinken van ouders		
<input type="checkbox"/> Ouders drinken zelf		
<input type="checkbox"/> Zitjes		
<input type="checkbox"/> Karakter van het kind		