

Introduction

Binge drinking

- Risks associated with alcohol consumption relate to patterns of consumption¹
- Canadian university students frequently report engaging in binge drinking – i.e., 4+/5+ drinks per sitting for women and men, respectively^{1,2}
- Students in Atlantic Canada drink more than students in any other region of Canada³

Alcohol policy

- Alcohol policy = any policy which pertains to the use of alcohol
- Alcohol policy is often implemented to alter levels of drinking in a given population⁴
- No published studies have addressed the scope of alcohol policies in Nova Scotian Universities

Research Questions

- What alcohol policies exist in the universities selected for this study?
- What are the components of these policies?
- What are the similarities and differences in policies across universities?

Methods

- Followed the five steps of Arksey and O'Malley's 2005 framework for scoping reviews:
 1. Identify the research question
 2. Identify relevant literature
 3. Literature selection
 4. Charting the data
 5. Collate, summarize and report the results⁵
- The constant comparison analysis method was used to develop key themes and sub-themes⁶

Results

School:	Explicit Statement(s) of:		Restrictions on:							Procedures for:		
	Goals	Prevention or harm reduction	Advertising	Drinking in residence	Methods of consumption		Open alcohol	Pricing	Sponsorship	Time and Day	Non-compliance	On Campus/ Off campus events
					Games	Pub crawls						
Acadia	✓			✓			✓			✓	✓	✓
CBU	✓										✓	
DAL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
MSVU	✓			✓							✓	
SMU	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
St. FX	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓

Figure 1: Themes and sub-themes addressed in university alcohol policies

- 6 universities were included: Acadia University, Cape Breton University (CBU), Dalhousie University (DAL), Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU), St. Mary's University (SMU), and St. Francis Xavier University (St. FX)
- Universities with less than 2000 students were excluded
- 13 policy documents were identified and selected
 - 5 alcohol policies, 4 residence policies, 2 codes of conduct, and 2 judicial policies and procedures for non-academic infractions

Key Themes

- **Explicit statements:** All universities included explicit statements of goals, and two universities included explicit statements of prevention and/or harm reduction in their policies
- **Restrictions:** 5 universities had policies which placed restrictions on alcohol consumption, alcohol distribution and sales, and/or sponsorship by alcohol industry
- **Procedures:** All universities had procedures for non-compliance to policies, and 4 universities had procedures for holding events where alcohol will be distributed or sold

Discussion

- Every university selected for this study had alcohol policies in place, despite there being no requirement for such policies
- Policies varied greatly across universities
 - Components of policies
 - Level of detail
- Not all universities included restrictions in their policies

Limitations

- Only drew upon publicly available policies, may not be representative of current policies

Implications for Health Promotion

- Understanding the current scope of alcohol policies and differences in policies across universities can inform policy development and improvement

Suggestions for Future Research

- Explore compliance to policies, and enforcement of policies
- Evaluate effectiveness of policies in reducing alcohol related harms

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. Lois Jackson and Dr. Sherry Stewart, as well as Dr. Kara Thompson, Dr. Karen Gallant, Dr. Brad Meisner, my friends and family, and my honours classmates for their guidance and support of this project.

References

1. Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (NSDHW) (2011). *Alcohol indicators report 2011*. [PDF document] Retrieved from: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/alcohol-indicators-report-2011.pdf>
2. American College Health Association (ACHA) (2016). *American College Health Association - National College Health Assessment II: Canadian Reference Group Executive Summary Spring 2016*. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association
3. Adlaf, E. M., Demers, A., & Gliksman, L. (2005). *Canadian campus survey 2004* [PDF document]. Retrieved from: http://www.camh.ca/en/research/research_areas/social-epidemiology/Documents/CCS_2004_report.pdf
4. Rehm, J., & Greenfield, T. K. (2008). Public alcohol policy: current directions and new opportunities. *Clinical Pharmacology Theory*, 83(4), 640-643.
5. Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19-32.
6. Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), 3-21.