

Qualitative Study of Alcohol Consumption Behavior among Adolescents in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol consumption among adolescents remains a public health concern due to its physical, psychological, and social impacts. This study aims to explore adolescent alcohol consumption behavior in Panjang Baru Sub-district, Pekalongan City, by examining the influence of social environment and self-esteem. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed. Informants consisted of adolescents aged 15–19 years as main informants, parents as supporting informants, and community leaders as triangulation informants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, and were analyzed thematically using source triangulation. The findings indicate that adolescent alcohol consumption is shaped by individual characteristics, low self-esteem, peer influence, permissive social environments, and weak family supervision. Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to consume alcohol as a means of social acceptance and coping with personal problems. Social learning processes through observation and imitation further reinforce this behavior. The study concludes that adolescent alcohol consumption results from the interaction of internal and external factors, highlighting the need for sustainable preventive efforts involving families, communities, and local governments.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a very important developmental phase in the human life cycle. At this stage, individuals experience a transition from childhood to adulthood, marked by simultaneous biological, psychological, and social changes. These changes are often accompanied by a search for identity, a desire for recognition, and a need to be accepted by the social environment. In the process of searching for identity, adolescents are vulnerable to various external influences, especially from their family, peers, and the surrounding community. If the process of guidance and supervision is not optimal, adolescents have the potential to engage in risky and deviant behavior, one of which is alcohol consumption.

Alcohol consumption among adolescents is a public health issue that remains a serious challenge both globally and nationally. Alcoholic beverages contain addictive substances that can have negative effects on the physical and psychological health and social lives of adolescents. During adolescence, the brain is still developing, so alcohol exposure can interfere with cognitive function, emotions, and decision-making. Furthermore, alcohol consumption at an early age is also associated with an increased risk of accidents, violence, aggressive behavior, and involvement in criminal acts.

In Indonesia, although the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages have been regulated through various policies and regulations, in reality, access to alcohol is still relatively easy, including for teenagers. This situation is exacerbated by weak supervision, suboptimal law enforcement, and social tolerance in some communities towards alcohol consumption. In certain cultural contexts, alcoholic beverages are even considered part of customs or symbols of social solidarity, so that alcohol consumption is no longer viewed as deviant behavior. This situation indirectly shapes adolescents' perception that alcohol consumption is normal and acceptable behavior.

Social environmental factors play a huge role in shaping adolescent behavior. Adolescents tend to learn and imitate the behavior they observe from those around them, whether it be family, peers, or community leaders. Social Learning Theory explains that individual behavior is formed through a process of observation, imitation, and social reinforcement. In the context of alcohol consumption, adolescents who frequently witness or interact with environments that are permissive towards alcohol are more likely to imitate such behavior. Peer pressure is also a dominant factor, with adolescents often consuming alcohol as a form of group solidarity or an attempt to gain social acceptance.

In addition to environmental factors, individual psychological aspects, particularly self-esteem, also influence adolescents' involvement in alcohol consumption. Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to be more easily influenced by social pressure and seek external validation. Alcohol consumption is often used as a means to temporarily boost confidence, forget personal problems, or cover up feelings of insecurity. Conversely, adolescents with more stable self-esteem generally have a better ability to resist negative influences and manage social pressure.

The phenomenon of alcohol consumption among teenagers is not only occurring in large urban areas, but has also spread to coastal areas and communities with specific social characteristics. One area facing this problem is Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City. Based on initial observations and information from the local community, it was found that alcohol consumption has become a social problem that is quite alarming, especially among teenagers. Alcohol consumption is often carried out in groups in certain locations with minimal supervision, such as beach areas and narrow alleys, both at night and during school hours.

The socioeconomic conditions of the community in Panjang Baru Village, where most people work in the fisheries and marine sector, have shaped the patterns of interaction and social norms that have developed. In some cases, alcohol consumption is considered normal, even normalized, in everyday life. Teenagers who grow up in such an environment are at high risk of being exposed to and imitating alcohol consumption behavior from an early age. If this situation is not addressed comprehensively, the long-term impact will be felt not only by individual teenagers but also by their families and the wider community.

The high number of adolescents in Panjang Baru Village actually represents a huge potential in supporting regional development through the demographic bonus. However, this potential can turn into a social burden if adolescents are not guided towards healthy and productive behavior. Alcohol consumption among adolescents has the potential to hinder the development of human resources, reduce productivity, and increase health and social burdens in the future. Therefore, this behavior needs to be understood in depth so that prevention and mitigation efforts can be carried out in a targeted manner.

A qualitative approach is considered relevant for exploring the phenomenon of alcohol consumption among adolescents more comprehensively. Through this approach, researchers can understand the experiences, perceptions, and meanings that adolescents attach to alcohol consumption behavior, as well as the social and psychological factors behind it. By integrating Social Learning Theory and Self-Esteem Theory, this study seeks to explain how the interaction between internal and external factors shapes alcohol consumption behavior among adolescents.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that alcohol consumption among adolescents is a multidimensional problem involving individual, family, social environment, and community structure aspects. Therefore, research on alcohol consumption among adolescents in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City, is important. The results of this study are expected to provide an in-depth picture of the factors that influence this behavior and serve as a basis for formulating prevention and intervention strategies that involve families, communities, and local governments on an ongoing basis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescents and Deviant Behavior

Adolescence is a period of development marked by significant physical, psychological, and social changes. During this phase, adolescents begin to build their identity, increase their independence, and seek recognition from their social environment. This process is often accompanied by increased curiosity and a tendency to try new things, including risky behaviors. If not balanced with good self-control and adequate environmental support, adolescents are at risk of engaging in deviant behavior. One form of deviant behavior commonly found among adolescents is alcohol consumption.

Deviant behavior in adolescents can be understood as actions that contradict social norms, cultural values, and applicable laws. Alcohol consumption by adolescents falls into the category of deviant behavior because it is done at an age that is not legally permitted and has the potential to cause short-term and long-term negative effects. Several studies show that this behavior is often influenced by environmental factors, social pressure, and the individual's psychological condition.

Alcohol Consumption Among Teenagers

Alcoholic beverages contain psychoactive and addictive alcohol, which can affect the central nervous system. In adolescents, alcohol consumption can interfere with brain development, impair cognitive function, and increase impulsive and aggressive behavior. In addition to physical effects, alcohol consumption also affects adolescents' mental health, increasing the risk of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Previous studies have shown that alcohol consumption among adolescents does not occur in isolation, but is influenced by a combination of individual and social factors. An environment that is permissive towards alcohol, easy access to alcoholic beverages, and weak family supervision are factors that are often found in related studies. In addition, peer influence plays a dominant role in encouraging adolescents to try to maintain alcohol consumption behavior.

Social Learning Theory and Self-Esteem Theory

Social Learning Theory explains that individual behavior is shaped through social learning processes, namely by observing and imitating the behavior of others who are considered role models. In the context of alcohol consumption, adolescents tend to imitate the behavior of their peers or social environment that normalizes alcohol consumption. When such behavior receives social reinforcement, such as group acceptance or a sense of belonging, the tendency to repeat such behavior becomes even stronger.

In addition to environmental factors, Self-Esteem Theory emphasizes the role of self-esteem in shaping adolescent behavior. Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to be more easily influenced by social pressure and seek recognition through risky behaviors, including alcohol consumption. Conversely, high self-esteem acts as a protective factor that helps adolescents resist negative influences from their environment.

Synthesis of Previous Research

Based on previous research studies, it can be concluded that alcohol consumption behavior among adolescents is the result of a complex interaction between psychological and social environmental factors. The integration of Social Learning Theory and Self-Esteem Theory provides a strong conceptual framework for understanding how this behavior is formed and maintained. Therefore, this literature review serves as an important basis for analyzing alcohol consumption behavior among adolescents in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City, in greater depth.

METHODOLOGY

Research Types and Approaches

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of alcohol consumption behavior among adolescents, including their subjective experiences, perceptions, and the meaning they attach to this behavior. This approach allows researchers to explore social phenomena holistically in their natural context without manipulating the research variables.

Descriptive research is used to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the phenomenon of alcohol consumption among adolescents and the factors behind it. With this approach, researchers attempt to capture social reality as it is based on the informants' perspectives.

Research Location and Time

This study was conducted in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City. This location was chosen because, based on initial observations and information from the local community, alcohol consumption among teenagers remains a prominent social problem. In addition, the social characteristics of the community and the living environment of teenagers in the area were considered relevant to the focus of the study.

The research was conducted over a period of approximately three months, covering the stages of research preparation, data collection, data analysis, and research report writing.

Research Subjects and Informants

The subjects in this study were adolescents residing in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City, who had experience with or involvement in alcohol consumption. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, which is the deliberate selection of informants based on specific criteria in line with the research objectives.

In addition to adolescents as the main informants, this study also involved supporting informants, such as parents, community leaders, and village officials, to obtain more comprehensive data and strengthen the validity of the research findings.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was conducted using several techniques, namely:

1. In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with key informants and supporting informants. This technique was used to explore information related to the background of alcohol consumption, driving factors, the influence of the social environment, and the impact felt by adolescents.

2. Observation

Observations were conducted to directly observe the social environment of adolescents, patterns of interpersonal interaction, and situations related to alcohol consumption behavior. Observations were conducted in a non-participatory manner so that researchers were not directly involved in the activities of the informants.

3. Documentation

Documentation is used to supplement research data in the form of field notes, photos of activities (if possible), and other supporting documents relevant to the research focus.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted qualitatively using an interactive analysis model. The analysis process consisted of three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on data relevant to the research objectives. Next, the data was presented in the form of descriptive narratives to make it easier to understand. The final stage was drawing conclusions, which was done continuously throughout the research process.

Data Validity

To ensure data validity, this study uses triangulation techniques. Triangulation is carried out by comparing data obtained from various informants and using various data collection techniques, such as interviews, observation, and documentation. Thus, the data produced is expected to have a high level of credibility and reliability.

Research Ethics

This study adheres to research ethics principles, including obtaining informants' consent prior to data collection, maintaining informants' confidentiality, and using research data solely for academic purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Research Informants

This study involved several key informants who were adolescents in the Panjang Baru subdistrict of Pekalongan City, ranging in age from 15 to 19 years old and having experience related to alcohol consumption. In addition, this study also involved supporting informants, namely the parents of adolescents, community leaders, and subdistrict officials. The involvement of these various informants was intended to obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon of alcohol consumption among adolescents from various perspectives.

Based on interviews and observations, it was found that most of the teenage informants were introduced to alcoholic beverages in junior high school and high school. Their initial exposure to alcoholic beverages generally occurred through peers and their neighborhood environment.

Factors Driving Alcohol Consumption Among Teenagers

The results of the study show that several main factors encourage teenagers to consume alcoholic beverages. Social environmental factors, particularly peer influence, are the most dominant factors. Teenagers tend to consume alcoholic beverages because of peer pressure and the desire to be accepted into a social group. In many cases, alcohol consumption is seen as a symbol of solidarity and togetherness within the group.

In addition to peer influence, family factors also play a role in shaping adolescent behavior. Lack of parental supervision, disharmonious family communication, and behavioral examples from adults in the surrounding environment also influence adolescents' tendency to consume alcoholic beverages. Several informants revealed that they often saw adults in their neighborhood consuming alcoholic beverages, so this behavior was considered normal.

Psychological factors are also an important driver, particularly those related to feelings of stress, emotional pressure, and low self-esteem. Teenagers use alcohol as a means of temporarily escaping from the personal problems and social pressures they experience.

Patterns and Forms of Alcohol Consumption

Based on research findings, alcohol consumption among adolescents generally occurs in groups and at certain times, such as at night or when there are no school activities. Consumption usually takes place in relatively hidden locations with minimal supervision, such as beach areas, small alleys, or friends' houses.

The types of alcoholic beverages consumed vary, ranging from bootleg liquor to illegally obtained alcoholic beverages. The frequency of consumption varies among adolescents, ranging from occasional to regular habits at certain times.

The Impact of Alcohol Consumption on Teenagers

The results of the study show that alcohol consumption has a negative impact on the lives of adolescents, physically, psychologically, and socially. Physically, some adolescents experience minor health problems such as dizziness and nausea. Psychologically, alcohol consumption triggers aggressive behavior, emotional instability, and decreased self-control.

From a social perspective, alcohol consumption has an impact on the deterioration of relationships between adolescents and their families and school environments. Several informants admitted to frequently skipping school and getting into conflicts with their parents as a result of this behavior.

These findings are consistent with Social Learning Theory, which states that individual behavior is shaped through social learning processes. Adolescents in Panjang Baru Village tend to imitate the alcohol consumption behavior they observe in their peers and surrounding environment. Social reinforcement in the form of group acceptance further reinforces this behavior.

In addition, the results of the study also support Self-Esteem Theory, which emphasizes the importance of self-esteem in shaping adolescent behavior. Adolescents with low self-esteem are more likely to engage in alcohol

consumption as a means of gaining recognition and reducing emotional stress. Conversely, adolescents who have positive family and environmental support tend to be better able to resist negative influences.

Thus, alcohol consumption among adolescents is the result of a complex interaction between social environmental factors and individual psychological conditions. Therefore, prevention efforts need to be comprehensive, involving families, schools, communities, and local governments.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the research and discussion described in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that alcohol consumption among adolescents in Panjang Baru Village, Pekalongan City, is a social phenomenon influenced by various interrelated factors. Alcohol consumption does not appear suddenly but is formed through a process of interaction between social and family environmental factors and the psychological conditions of individual adolescents.

Social environmental factors, particularly peer influence, are the most dominant factors in encouraging adolescents to consume alcoholic beverages. Adolescents tend to follow group behavior as a form of solidarity and an effort to gain social acceptance. An environment that is permissive towards alcohol consumption also normalizes this behavior, so that adolescents no longer view drinking alcohol as deviant behavior.

In addition, family factors also play an important role in shaping adolescent behavior. Lack of parental supervision, poor communication within the family, and negative role models among adults in the community increase the risk of adolescents engaging in alcohol consumption. From a psychological perspective, low self-esteem and the inability of adolescents to manage emotional stress encourage them to use alcohol as a means of temporary escape.

The findings of this study are in line with Social Learning Theory, which asserts that adolescent behavior is shaped through social learning processes, as well as Self-Esteem Theory, which emphasizes the role of self-esteem in determining adolescents' responses to environmental influences. Thus, alcohol consumption behavior in adolescents is the result of a complex interaction between internal and external factors.

Based on these conclusions, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

1. For Families

Parents are expected to improve their supervision and communication with their teenage children. An open, supportive, and attentive approach needs to be developed so that teenagers feel comfortable sharing the problems they face without having to seek escape through negative behavior.

2. For Schools

Schools are expected to play an active role in educating students about the dangers of alcohol consumption through counseling, character education, and risk behavior prevention programs. Schools also need to collaborate with parents and the community in monitoring adolescent behavior.

3. For the Community and Local Leaders

The community and local leaders are expected to create a conducive social environment by not normalizing alcohol consumption. Positive activities for teenagers, such as sports, religious activities, and youth activities, need to be increased as alternatives for channeling teenagers' energy and free time.

4. For Local Governments

Local governments are expected to strengthen supervision of the distribution of alcoholic beverages, especially in areas that are easily accessible to teenagers. In addition, youth development and empowerment programs need to be developed on an ongoing basis with the involvement of various relevant parties.

5. For Future Researchers

Further research is recommended to examine the phenomenon of alcohol consumption among adolescents using quantitative or mixed methods, and involving a wider range of informants in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

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