

Brand advertising and brand sharing of alcoholic and non-alcoholic products, and the effects on young Thai people's attitudes towards alcohol use: A qualitative focus group study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction and Aims. The dominant Thai alcohol companies have strategically employed brand advertising and brand sharing (using a very similar branding for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic products) to circumvent restrictive alcohol advertising regulations. As empirical evidence confirms that exposure to alcohol advertisements increases youth drinking, young Thais could be at risk of constant and incidental exposure to alcohol advertising, hence leading to increased alcohol consumption. This study aims to explore young people's perceptions of these alcohol branding strategies and to examine how exposure to such advertising strategies affect their attitudes towards alcohol use.

Design and Methods. Seventy-two university students aged 20-24 years participated in 1.5-hour semi-structured focus groups conducted in Bangkok and a peripheral province. Logos of two domestic alcohol brands were also used as part of projective techniques to elicit information. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse data.

Results. Despite a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic products under the same branding, participants associated the logos primarily with beer – the flagship product. Branding strategies seemed to successfully increase young people's brand familiarity and affected their brand recognition and brand awareness. Participants had a high awareness of the alcohol companies' commercial activities but regarded alcohol advertisements to be indifferent to advertisements of other ordinary products.

Discussion and Conclusions. Brand advertising is a dynamic tool that affects young people's attitudes towards the advertised brands and alcohol use. Due to early exposure to the brands, brand sharing increases brand familiarity and, among other factors, potentially affects drinking attitudes and purchase intentions.

Key words: Qualitative, Alcohol, Brand advertising, Brand sharing, Alcohol policy, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

The alcohol industry uses marketing and advertising to retain their customer and attract potential customer. The alcohol industry includes alcohol producers, wholesalers, distributors and retailers, while advertising companies, media outlets, social media corporations and sporting agencies are not part of the alcohol industry but gain benefits from alcohol marketing and advertising. Its role is significant in causing alcohol-related harm, particularly to young people, because alcohol advertising exposure has been found to be a significant predictor of youth drinking [1, 2]. Dose-response relationship between exposure to alcohol advertising and increased risks of drinking initiation and heavy drinking is also evident in several longitudinal studies conducted mostly in Western countries [3, 4].

Exposure to alcohol advertisements

Governments across the world have attempted to protect young people in particular from overexposure to alcohol advertising through statutory regulation, co-regulation or self-regulation frameworks [5]. Nevertheless, young people are often disproportionately exposed to a significant alcohol advertising targeting youth. The previous studies have found that within self-regulation settings youth were increasingly exposed to alcohol advertisements on various media over time and had a high awareness of these advertisements, regardless of the level of compliance to the regulatory guidelines [6, 7]. Violations of the content guidelines are reportedly prevalent in a variety of media channels [7]. This is problematic because high awareness and receptivity to alcohol advertisements are associated with higher levels of drinking behaviours [6]. The effectiveness of alcohol marketing and advertising restrictions is further undermined by the alcohol industry venturing into non-traditional media. While traditional media, such as magazines, television and newspapers, are typical, the use of non-traditional media like digital and social media is rising [8]. Digital and social media offer greater advantages over traditional media because they remain unobtrusive, yet sophisticatedly encroach on consumers' privacy through mobile devices, hence easily reaching a broader audience [9]. Previous research suggests that increasing exposure to alcohol marketing on digital media is associated with higher levels of drinking behaviours [10], hence increasing risks of alcohol-related harm.

Alcohol advertising regulatory control in Thailand

In Thailand, the claims that the alcohol-related harm is confined to the minority of drinkers are arguable. A recent cross-sectional household survey has found that 79% of people aged 18-70 years reported experiencing psychological, social, economic and physical adverse effects of others' alcohol drinking [11]. The estimated total economic cost of alcohol consumption in Thailand in 2006 was 156 billion baht (2% of the total gross domestic product) [12]. To reduce overall alcohol consumption, prevent drinking initiation in young people in particular, and lower alcohol-related harm, the Thai *Alcohol Control Act* was enacted in 2008 [13]. It contains strict alcohol marketing and advertising regulations, prohibiting all alcohol advertisements on any media from containing explicit drinking or illustrations of the product containers. However, advertisements bearing company logos are legally permissible. Despite an abundance of these restrictions, the total number of alcohol advertisements has increased by 25.7%. Two-thirds of these increases were brand advertisements alone [14].

Brand advertising in the form of brand sharing

Besides the typical alcohol brand advertising, the Thai alcohol companies have employed unique strategies to promote their brands and products using brand sharing to circumvent alcohol advertising restrictions in Thailand. Brand sharing refers to a strategy where a company utilises corporate reputation and identity to launch new products or services that benefit from previous marketing efforts [15]. For alcoholic beverages, brand name, emblem, trademark, logo, distinctive colour combinations or any other distinctive feature may be used for other products or services. Although there is no regulatory control of brand sharing of alcohol, its use for other 'unhealthy' products such as tobacco has been regulated against in some countries. In the United Kingdom, for example, any feature of tobacco products, including logo, trademark, colour, pattern of colour, appearance or imagery, is prohibited to be used for non-tobacco products or services to avoid such products being mistaken for tobacco products [16]. In Turkey, a total ban of tobacco advertising, promotion and

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sponsorship has resulted in the banning of any distinctive features of tobacco products being used for non-tobacco goods and services since late 2012.

In Thailand, brand sharing is exploited by the dominant alcohol companies. They use the same brand names and logos for both alcoholic (beer) and non-alcoholic (still water and soda water) products and widely use the branded logos in their advertisements without specifying the type of products advertised. The use of brand sharing makes violations against marketing and advertising restrictions harder to detect. Therefore, young Thais could be at risk of constant and incidental exposure to alcohol advertising on various media. Furthermore, the lack of research especially in non-Western settings, in light of the increased amount of alcohol marketing and advertising in these countries is concerning [17]. While there are regulations to control the content of alcohol advertisements, brand advertising and brand sharing are legally permissible in Thailand. It is uncertain whether such strategies will implicitly allow the alcohol companies to increase exposure to their inclusive brand and product advertisements across mass communication platforms, especially among young people. Therefore, this study aims to explore young people's perceptions towards the use of alcohol brand advertising and brand sharing and to examine how exposure to such advertising strategies affects their brand preference and brand purchase intention. To the knowledge of the authors, this study is the first to explore the influence of alcohol brand advertising on young people's perceptions towards alcohol in an oligopoly alcohol market.

METHODS

Participants and Recruitment

This study considered focus groups to be an appropriate qualitative method to explore young people's perceptions towards the use of brand advertising and brand sharing due to two main reasons. First, focus groups were useful for examining social nature of people's views and feelings, and allowed participants to express their own experiences [18]. Second, this study acknowledged that drinking was essentially a social activity [19]. Therefore, the researcher could be actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction, which enabled

participants (groups of friends) to discuss other issues that were not listed in the discussion guide [18].

The study received ethics approvals from the Human Research Ethics committees in Australia (HE15/480) and Thailand (MUPH 2016-034). At the time of recruitment, participants were at least 20 years old; the minimum legal age for alcohol purchase in Thailand [13]. The upper age limit was 24, which was based on the United Nations' definition of youth. Participation was voluntary. The study recruited focus group participants via information flyers and 'snowball' referrals. The study recruited people with a wide range of drinking experiences, from non-drinkers to frequent drinkers to allow each group to have sufficiently varying degrees of drinking experiences and views to incite discussion of these differences [20, 21]. As with many topics related to health disparities, discussion about the use of substance such as alcohol is sensitive and may pose challenges to elicit quality and quantity of information from young people [22]. Therefore, peer groups (groups of friends) were encouraged to lower anxiety amongst participants who would be talking about sensitive issues with strangers.

Data Collection

Seven focus groups were conducted at the university's campuses. Each group consisted of nine to 12 participants and mixed-gender. There were 72 participants in total, 38 men and 34 women. The characteristics of the participants are summarised in Table 1. This study also considered the significance of group composition [18] and so arranged young people with similar characteristics in terms of education levels and educational degrees (health/non-health background) in the same group.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

A moderator (RK) and an assistant moderator (SN) conducted the focus groups in Thai using a topic guide. The topic guide contained open-ended questions which explored the participants' attitudes towards alcohol marketing and advertising and their perceptions specifically on alcohol brand advertising and brand sharing. This study ensured that, besides

asking focus group participants a list of predetermined questions, participants were encouraged to talk among themselves. The black-and-white and coloured logos of two dominant alcohol (beer) brands in Thailand (Table 2) were also used as part of projective techniques to supplement the questions to elicit information. The two logos belonged to Boon Rawd Brewery Co Ltd (Singha beer) and Thai Beverage PCL (Chang beer) that shared 58.5% and 32.5% of the total beer market by volume in Thailand, respectively [14].

[Insert Table 2 about here]

The participants were provided with an information statement and given the opportunity to ask questions. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to the commencement of the focus group. Both the information statement and consent form were in Thai to ensure that all participants were well informed. Each focus group lasted approximately for 1.5 hours and was audio-recorded with the participants' permission. The participants were compensated for their time and travel costs to participate in the focus group. All data were fully anonymised to preserve confidentiality and each participant was assigned a code.

Data Analysis

Data analyses were ongoing and iterative, as new enquiries were pursued in the subsequent focus groups. Firstly, the recorded discussions were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts in Thai were read, re-read, and coded separately by RK and SN. Thematic content analysis was used to identify key themes, and the data were continually coded and refined into categories. Notes were taken throughout the process of analysis. Secondly, the emerging themes, categories and concepts were discussed among the study team. Finally, the codes, themes, categories and sub-categories were refined by comparing the participants' accounts for similarities and differences, until no new themes or categories emerged.

RESULTS

Based on the participants' responses, they were categorised into either: ex-drinker, social drinker or frequent drinker (Table 3). No participants were non-drinkers. This classification was based on the category of drinking frequency used by Thailand's National Statistical Office for its national surveys on smoking and drinking behaviours [23]. Despite mixing people with different genders and drinking frequencies (levels) in each focus group, surprisingly the disparities in the views regarding attitudes towards alcohol use among participants with different educational backgrounds, drinking frequencies or genders were not apparent.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Brand recognition and association

Participants perceived both brands to symbolise socialising activities. First, participants were shown the two black-and-white logos that were just the brand logos without any description of content. They were asked about the first things that they could think of. All three types of products were identified. Most participants thought of beer and only a few participants mentioned non-alcoholic products. Many participants spontaneously recalled features of beer such as the taste and the shape of the bottle. They also thought of the locations and people with whom they have consumed these products. Participants associated these logos with social gatherings and celebrations and considered alcohol to be a socialising tool in society, even at religious ceremonies such as ordination ceremony (becoming a Buddhist monk). Additionally, corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, sports sponsorship, youth-orientated entertainment events sponsored by alcohol companies, beer gardens and beer girls, and celebrities were all mentioned in every focus group. Participants also recalled seeing these logos in friendship-themed alcohol advertisements.

Drinking is a part of socialisation with your friends. (We can see it at) parties, ordination ceremony, wedding receptions.” – Female social drinker

The dominance of these brands in sponsoring famous football teams was particularly noted by the participants. Both men and women said that they had often seen both logos on football players' jerseys in both international and domestic football leagues. They added that these two brands often sponsored numerous local and national entertainment events, festivals and concerts.

“Many concerts are sponsored by the alcohol companies. For example, the concert I’ve been to in Pattaya (a tourist destination), Chang was the major sponsor.” – Female social drinker

Asked if they thought of non-alcoholic products when seeing these brands, most participants were adamant that beer was more dominant. Despite a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic products under these brands, participants perceived that these companies' advertisements were meant for beer because it was the companies' flagship product.

“(I think of beer first because) I see their beer advertisements everywhere.” – Male social drinker

Colour in brand sharing

Later, participants were shown the identical logos in three different colours, all participants could immediately recognise and correctly identify each coloured logo with its corresponding product category. Similar to the black-and-white logos, most participants initially associated both brands with beer. Non-alcoholic products were not immediately mentioned. Participants said to be more familiar with 'beer advertisements' of these brands.

“I always think of beer when seeing these two brands, probably because of their persistent advertising.” – Male frequent drinker

Participants believed that the colour of the logos could indicate the kind of product advertised. They recalled to have often seen gold logos of both brands in most

advertisements. Many of these advertisements were brand advertising featuring a gold logo. In using gold, they believed that the colour was intended for advertising beer and could make the product look prestigious.

“If they use gold colour to advertise their brand, we would definitely think of beer.” – Male social drinker

However, some participants thought that the colour was merely a significant indicator and only associate these two logos to beer, despite logos being in other colours. They added that beer was both alcohol companies’ flagship product, hence the brands themselves were symbolic of beer. In reality, the advertising restrictions meant that the participants in the study were seeing the logos associated with alcohol companies and interpreted these as beer advertisements.

“Whatever colour they use, I always think of beer first.” – Male social drinker

Participants added that while there are several brands of non-alcoholic products in the market, the market of alcoholic products is oligopolistic. Therefore, they tended to associate these two particular brands to beer, their more dominant product.

“There aren’t so many alcohol brands. It’s making me remember these brands. But there are so many brands for water. So I don’t usually associate these brands with water.” – Female social drinker.

Awareness of brand advertising and brand sharing

Participants had a high awareness of the alcohol industry’s use of brand advertising and brand sharing. They noted that alcohol companies increasingly used brand advertising in neutral colours, such as white logo with blue background or gold logo with black background, without explicitly identifying the type of product advertised. Participants added that alcohol advertisements have evolved from promoting the products to emphasising the brands. One of

many alcohol advertisements that participants particularly recalled was Chang's advertisement. It contained deliberately puzzling content, showing a group of young people doing upside-down photography. The advertisement featured nothing about alcohol and only showed the company's logo at the end of the advertisement, however, this advertising novelty successfully made young people recall its brand. Nevertheless, participants noted that the advertisement was meant for beer because of the colour theme used - green and gold.

“There's a Chang's advert about taking photos upside down. The first time I saw that ad I didn't understand what it was trying to communicate. I just know that they aren't directly focusing on beer..., but rather on doing cool things with friends.” – Female social drinker

Participants were also aware that the alcohol industry's intentional use of brand placement, particularly in CSR activities and sports sponsorship, was intended for commercial purposes. Nonetheless, participants were neither approved nor disapproved such practice. They seemed to 'understand' that the alcohol companies were for-profit enterprises and therefore would focus on their profitability. Participants thought that the alcohol companies were obligated to conduct CSR activities in the forms of donations and youth-orientated sponsorships as 'compensation' to society. However, they did realise that CSR activities helped enforcing a positive image of the companies and were a means to corporate tax deduction.

“...(I realise) it is a sort of advertisements, because we could see their company's logo on the (things they donate).” – Male frequent drinker

Effects of branding on alcohol use

There was no apparent difference between participants with different consumption patterns in terms of their attitudes towards the effects of brand advertising and brand sharing on alcohol consumption. When asked about the influence of brand advertising and brand sharing on their drinking, participants believed that exposure to brand advertising, including brand sharing, partly impacted their brand recognition and purchase intention, but neither affected their

brand preference or attitudes towards alcohol use. They also noted that being exposed to repetitive brand advertising did make them initially recall those brands when buying alcohol.

“(Brand) advertising helps remind me of the brands when I’m buying or drinking alcohol but doesn’t influence my attitude towards any brand.” – Male frequent drinker

For young people, alcohol was a socialising tool. Young people believed that their choice of alcoholic drinks would primarily depend on peer group’s decision because alcohol was shared among friends. They added that their brand preference was usually determined by price promotion and their own brand experience (the taste of the beverage). However, brand preference was only present among social drinkers, while frequent drinkers were more concerned about the price. The participants also added that they usually drank a range of beverages within their preferred brand, citing brand familiarity and a lack of choices as the determinants. Similarly, participants did not believe that branding advertising or brand sharing featured in CSR and sponsorship activities could influence their choice of alcoholic drinks or alcohol brand preference, but rather the taste and their personal liking. However, they stated that being exposed to brand sharing seen in these CSR activities could actually influence their brand-specific consumption of non-alcoholic products, such as soda water and still water.

“It’s common for big corporates to have CSR activities. I don’t think their CSR activities could make me buy their beer, but probably could for other products like water.” – Male social drinker

Additionally, although participants did not believe that being exposed to brand advertising and brand sharing could affect their attitudes towards alcohol use or their own brand preference, some participants admitted that sports sponsorship, in particular, were influential in inducing them to purchase and consume those particular brands, and conceded that

sponsorship of their favourite sports teams could induce them to stay loyal to the brands, despite disliking the products (the taste).

Chang beer is the first brand that I've tried because I like Barcelona (Football Club). It's so bitter but I still drink it...it is an indirect way to support my team."

– Female social drinker

DISCUSSION

Discussions with young people in the study reveal that they firmly regard alcohol as a necessary socialising tool. In fact, young people in the study regard alcohol as an ordinary product. This is consistent with a previous cross-sectional study that shows that 71.2% of young Thais aged 13-24 years think drinking alcohol is normal [14]. This study finds that repetitive exposure to brand advertising and brand sharing increases brand familiarity and, in turn, enhances brand recognition and brand awareness that affect purchase intention.

Branding strategies and brand recognition

It is wise, in the interest of public health, that alcohol marketing and advertising should be statutorily regulated [24]. However, as with most policy, there are intended outputs and unintended outcomes. In Thailand, the legal restrictions of overt alcohol advertising forces the alcohol companies to utilise branding innovation to achieve maximum advertising exposure to drinkers and potential drinkers. This study finds that these branding strategies seem to successfully increase young drinkers (and ex-drinkers)'s familiarity to the brands. In using brand advertising and brand sharing, the alcohol companies have strategically exposed their customers and potential customers to their brands. Brand sharing offers advantages over a simple alcohol advertising because it increases frequency of exposure to the brands and leads to brand familiarity [25]. Brand familiarity, in turn, increases brand recognition, hence keeping the companies (or brands) in the eyes and minds of the customers and potential customers at all times [26]. Moreover, these branding strategies also conveniently allow the alcohol companies to circumvent strict alcohol advertising regulations. Brand recognition

among young people in this study is apparent, as they are able to recognise the colour schemes of the logos and the types of products these logos represent [27]. In reality, the advertising restrictions meant that young people are seeing the logos associated with alcohol companies and interpret these as alcohol advertisements. As people's association between beer and the brand becomes entrenched, it is no longer necessary to distinguish between the products. As a result, the incidental exposure to alcohol advertisements is likely to increase. The alcohol industry's increasing use of repetitive exposure to brand advertising is in line with the concept of advertising repetition effects. The concept of advertising repetition effects has been extensively investigated and is described as "the differential effects of each successive advertising exposure", which include wear-in and wear-out effects [28]. That is, upon repetitive exposure to brand advertisements, the attitudes towards the brands increase with the exposures until positive factors (wear-in effects) such as familiarity and learning are saturated [28]. Additional exposures past the highest level of attitudes result in a drop of attitude leading to insignificant effect or even negative factors (wear-out effects) such as boredom and redundancy. However, the negative factors are not yet seen in this study, as young people remain neutral or relatively positive to the brands.

The growing extent of branding strategies and brand awareness

Young people's accounts of brand advertisements are usually in the forms that closely resonate with them in a positive and attractive sense, such as advertisements featuring friendship and youth-orientated lifestyle activities. These features are related to one of the contingent factors of the concept of the advertising repetitive effects, 'involvement' of consumers [28]. Involvement is explained as the degree to which the consumers are able to identify their personal preferences to these alcohol advertisements. These friendship- and lifestyle-themed advertisements depicting 'feel-good moments' may help shape the perceptions that alcohol is a necessity for socialisation [29]. Once the alcohol companies have earned the attention of their customers and potential customers with brand recognition strategies, they start to or even simultaneously create brand awareness (e.g. reputation, values and quality) strategies to display the value of the companies to their targeted customers [27]. In line with the global alcohol industry [30], the Thai alcohol companies have involved in

many benevolent works of CSR and utilised colour-neutral brand advertising in the form of sports and entertainment sponsorships to enhance its image in promoting youth-orientated activities. However, although young people in the study believe that CSR activities are an ethical responsibility of the alcohol industry, these activities may not be truly altruistic. The increase of the Thai alcohol producers' sports sponsorship in the past decade has resulted in increased revenue and exposure in the international arenas [31], and consequently raised the brand reputation. This indicates that the industry-initiated activities align philanthropy with profits.

Effects of brand advertising and brand sharing on alcohol use

Although this study is unable to explicitly confirm that exposure to brand advertising directly leads to brand consumption, it reveals that, among other factors, exposure to repetitive brand advertising increases brand recognition that determines young Thais' purchase intention. The intention to purchase a brand by young Thais seems to be significantly affected by brand preference that is mediated by price promotion and brand experience (taste). Despite denying the direct influence of brand advertising on their drinking attitudes and behaviours, branding strategies could have implicitly affected their brand preference. An experimental study investigating the relationship between incidental exposure to alcohol and implicit attitudes towards alcohol use has suggested that incidental exposure to alcohol sponsorships, such as in sporting events, positively impacts implicit attitudes towards the advertised brand and alcohol in general [32]. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that young people in this study do have a social awareness and realised the alcohol industry's intention, but choose to consume specific products based on the association with their lifestyle. Additionally, young people in this study largely show brand preference in terms of friendship groups because young Thais report only drinking alcohol with a group of friends. Nonetheless, brand preference is found only among social drinkers. The findings of this study are in line with other quantitative studies which have found that exposure to alcohol advertising not only exerts its effects on drinking behaviours, but also on brand preference [33, 34] and brand-specific consumption [35, 36] among young people. This study reveals that brand sharing of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages could also cause "spillover effects", from non-alcoholic to alcoholic products or

vice versa. The terminology of spillover effects has been used in many disciplines, including economics, public health and political science, and it generally describes the benefits that extend beyond the direct targets [37]. However, the spillover effects of brand sharing seem to only apply within the advertised brand, because young people in the study tend to consume a range of products within their preferred brand.

Future directions of alcohol branding control

If Thailand is to introduce an alcohol advertising regulation similar to the ones that prohibit brand sharing of tobacco and non-tobacco products and services enforced in many European countries [16], the drafting of this regulation will need to be pursuant to any relevant sections of the Thai *Alcohol Control Act*. Additionally, like the control of alcohol access and availability in Thailand, it is anticipated that this regulation may encounter two possible obstacles [38]. First, the existing brands and trademarks which have already been used for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic products would be subjected to conformity to the regulation. An immense opposition of the alcohol industry is to be expected, given that brand sharing has been an extremely successful strategy to indirectly advertise alcoholic beverages in Thailand. Second, the control of brand sharing of alcoholic and non-alcoholic products would involve more than a single government agency. Due to the multifaceted nature of alcohol control, the responsible authorities may need to be assigned to implement and enforce this regulation with regard to brand sharing.

Limitations

A few limitations need to be addressed in this study. First, the study is unable to determine the effects of neither youth exposure to the advertisements of other alcohol brands nor the exposure to advertisements of alcoholic products other than beer. However, focusing on branding strategies and young people's attitudes towards the advertised brands, the study confirms the significant role of branding strategies in shaping young people's drinking attitudes and perceptions. Second, the generalisability of these findings is limited, however this group of young people had a wide range of drinking experiences, and gender was balanced among participants. Thirdly, although this study encouraged all types of drinkers in

a single group, homogenous groups were not allotted. Homogenous participants in individual groups may offer more apparent differences in young people's views across groups of drinkers [39]. Finally, the information about the socio-economic background of the participants was not accounted for in the analysis, which could partly determine brand preference due to price promotion. It is also worth noting that the results of this study may be limited to countries with strict alcohol advertising regulations and an oligopolistic alcohol market. Therefore, future studies should consider these determinants to investigate the association between exposure to branding strategies and the causal relationship between surrogate outcomes (e.g. brand attitudes and drinking intention) and alcohol use.

CONCLUSIONS

This study suggests that at the micro level, brand advertising is used as a comprehensive tool to portray alcohol as an ordinary product. Due to early exposure to the branding strategies, they increase people's familiarity to the brands and potentially affect drinking attitudes. At the macro level, branding strategies stipulate the ideology of product presence at social gatherings through the accumulation of exposures and familiarity at the micro level. For the greater public health benefits in the settings with restrictive statutory regulations, brand sharing could become one of the challenging issues and should be subjected to rigorous monitoring to reduce any unintended outcomes, such as overexposure to alcohol brands and spillover effects from non-alcoholic to alcoholic products. Given that branding involves other interconnected sectors such as trade and commerce (intellectual property and trademark), a more comprehensive alcohol policy is required.

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Table 1. Characteristics of participants

| Group | n | Mean age, years | Gender, M:F | Educational degree | Education level |
|--------------|----------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | 12 | 22.0 | 6:6 | Public health | Undergraduate |
| 2 | 9 | 23.6 | 9:0 | Public health | Postgraduate |
| 3 | 9 | 20.8 | 9:0 | Public health | Undergraduate |
| 4 | 10 | 22.1 | 6:4 | Public health | Undergraduate |
| 5 | 9 | 24.0 | 3:6 | Public health | Postgraduate |
| 6 | 11 | 22.4 | 4:7 | Environmental science | Undergraduate |
| 7 | 12 | 20.7 | 1:11 | Environmental science | Undergraduate |
| Total | 72 | 22.1 | 38:34 53:47% | Health:non-health 68:32% | Undergraduate:postgraduate 75:25% |

Table 2. Logos of Singha and Chang in black-and-white and in colours corresponding to each product type

| Brands and the colours corresponding to product type | Singha | Chang |
|--|---|---|
| Logo in black-and-white |  |  |
| Beer: logo in gold |  |  |
| Soda water: logo in red |  |  |
| Still water: logo in blue |  |  |

Sources: www.boonrawd.co.th and www.thaibev.com

Table 3. Classification of drinkers

| Type of drinker (%) | Definition |
|----------------------------|---|
| Non-drinker (nil) | Reported having never had or tried alcohol. |
| Ex-drinker (21%) | Reported having had no alcohol in the past 12 months, but having had alcohol more than 12 months ago. |
| Social (64%) | Reported having an average of less than one drinking session per week in the past 12 months. |
| Frequent (15%) | Reported having an average of at least one drinking session per week in the past 12 months. |