

Social Bonding and Integration: Alcohol Use among Adventists in the China Union

Adventist Human-Subject Researchers Association Annual Meeting

May 16-20, 2018

Andrews University

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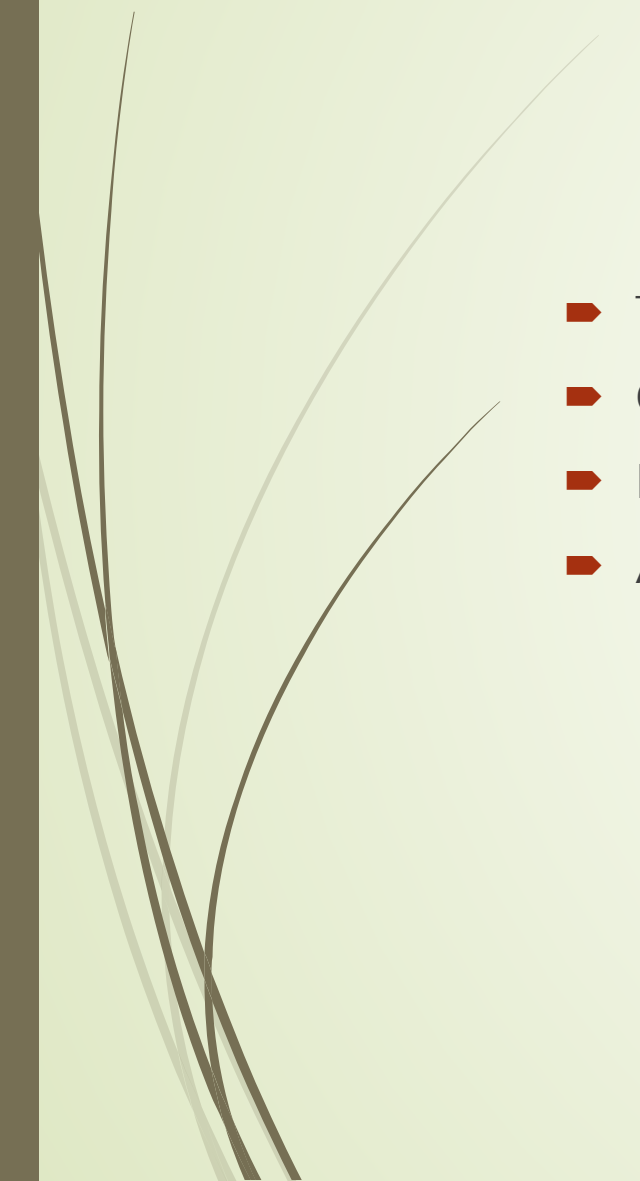
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Acknowledgements

- ▶ The Global Church Member Research Team
 - ▶ Our Funding Agency – ASTR
 - ▶ David Trim and Galina Stele
 - ▶ All of those who took the time to fill out our kind of long survey
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Purpose of Presentation

- ▶ Examine the utility of two major conceptual frameworks in Sociology in the understanding of alcohol use in a sample of Seventh-day Adventists in the Chinese Union.
 - ▶ Consider the possible policy/practice impact of the data.
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Conceptual Framework

- ▶ The two major conceptual frameworks are:
 - Social Control/Bonding/Integration theory as developed by Travis Hirschi and Emile Durkheim
 - Social/Religious Capital as developed by Robert Putnam and Rodney Stark.
- ▶ Social Control Theory asks not why we engage in deviant behavior, but why we don't and the answer is because of our attachment, involvement, commitment and beliefs (or social bonding and integration)
- ▶ Social Capital adds the concepts of horizontal and vertical integration – horizontal integration involves the extent and depth of social networks on ones same social level. Vertical integration involves networking with power structures. And in our conceptualization a connection with God.
- ▶ Also thinking of mezzo to macro levels in these relationships



Sample

- ▶ The Chinese Union was chosen because of interest in examining theory in non-Western culture.
- ▶ The data was available.
- ▶ The total N >1150 – so it is easy to find statistical significance.
- ▶ The rate of alcohol use in the last year was about 17.5% in the sample.



Operationalization/Variables

Independent variables

- ▶ Attachment to conventional others to institutions (mezzo to macro -- horizontal).
- ▶ Involvement in conventional activities (vertical and horizontal)
- ▶ Commitment to conventional institutions (vertical/horizontal)
- ▶ Belief in core religious values (vertical)

Dependent variable was alcohol use in last 12 months – a core Adventist belief and prohibition.

Attachment and Alcohol Use

Alcohol Use last 12 months

Yes

Very close to parents

Disagree	34.8%	p<.05
Not sure	31.4	r=.10
Agree	17.2	

Satisfied with church

Dissatisfied	25.8	p<.001
Neutral	25.3	r=.13
Somewhat	17.2	
Very satisfied	12.1	

Need to deal with human suffering

Never/rarely	29.4	p<.001
Sometimes	18.1	r=.15
Often	14.5	

Involvement and Alcohol Use

Alcohol Use last 12 months

Yes

Hold Church Office

Yes	9.1%	p<.001
No	25.8	r=-.21

Attend SS

Weekly	15.6	p<.01
Monthly	24.2	r=-.10
<Monthly	25.8	
Never	22.6	

Family Worship

Never	21.0	p<.001
Monthly	23.4	r=.14
Weekly	14.3	
Few X wk	12.9	
Daily	8.7	



Lifelong Commitment to SDA Church

Alcohol Use last 12 months

Yes

Very likely	15.8%	p=.01
Somewhat likely	28.0	r=-.07
Neutral/unlikely	24.5	




Belief and Alcohol Use

Alcohol Use in last 12 months

	<u>Yes</u>	
<u>Body is Temple of God</u>		
Strongly agree	13.0%	p<..001
Agree	19.3	r=-.13
Not sure/disagree	45.2	
<u>Christs Coming is very near</u>		
Strongly agree	13.2	p<.001
Agree	19.3	r=-.14
Not sure/disagree	43.2	



So What does this Mean

- Western conceptual models may be based on human universals.
 - Social bonding/integration are generally significantly related to significantly lower rates of alcohol use.
 - Effect size, while significant is relatively small.
 - Both horizontal and vertical social capital are related to lower rates of deviant behavior – alcohol use in last year.
 - These conceptual models may be a useful way of interpreting the Global Church Member survey and making recommendations.
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Hoped Impact of Data and Conceptual Model

- ▶ Horizontal bonding is a very positive thing for practice adherence – nurture is a good thing!
- ▶ Mezzo to macro bonding and religious capital are all important for the Church to support and facilitate the development of.
- ▶ Social justice, a deep concern for human suffering, may be a good thing for practice adherence – bonding with the community makes us better Adventists?
- ▶ Both horizontal (Sabbath School attendance) and vertical religious capital (hope in second coming) related to adherence.
- ▶ All aspects of bonding and religious capital (horizontal and vertical) were significantly inter-related and all significantly related to a core SDA health practice.

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