

**An Investigation into the ethics of alcohol advertising
to students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo**

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DEDICATION

To my Mum and Dad for their ongoing support and who have always encouraged me
in whatever I chose to do.

DECLARATION OF WORK

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which is to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree, except where due acknowledgement has been made throughout the text.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was primarily to ascertain whether or not the advertising of alcohol on college grounds influenced the Students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo to purchase alcohol. In order to do so, it was necessary to firstly establish what is understood by the term ethics, from a theoretical background and the role it plays in the advertising of potentially harmful products like alcohol

One of the most heated advertising issues in recent years is the proposed restrictions on the advertising of controversial products such as alcohol. The amount of money spent on alcohol advertising continues to increase substantially each year, in 2002 the spend on alcohol advertising in Ireland was €43.2 million across television, radio, cinema, outdoor and press.

Ireland continues to be amongst the highest consumers of alcohol in the world. Drinking alcohol seems to be an integral part of the process of adolescent development, partially explaining why alcohol use is so widespread among university and college students and while moderate alcohol consumption is not necessarily a negative behaviour, binge drinking or excessive drinking is cause for concern.

In order to investigate the role of ethics in the advertising of alcohol to college students in the Institute of Technology, Sligo a questionnaire was employed to assist the research process. The questionnaire was designed in order to ascertain an insight into the student's view of the advertising of alcohol on college grounds.

The research findings highlighted that students are open minded and have positive views towards the idea of alcohol advertising on campus, many students suggested that socialising is a huge part of college life and even though they were aware of the alcohol advertisements around the college, the majority of participants believed that, advertising has no influence over their decision to purchase alcohol. However, there were some contradicting views from students who believed that the advertising of class parties for example placed extra pressure especially from fellow students to go out and drink alcohol.

The findings of this research study propose that more work must be imposed by the education system to promote the effects and potential dangers that binge drinking can have on the lives of students both from an academic and personal aspect.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration of Work.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Figures	vi

Chapter

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
	2.1 Introduction.....	4
	2.2 Ethics.....	4
	2.3 Marketing ethics.....	5
	2.4 Advertising and the ethical issues surrounding advertising.....	7
	2.5 Alcohol advertising.....	10
	2.6 The advertising of alcohol to college students.....	13
	2.7 The factors influencing alcohol consumption.....	16
	2.8 Physical and psychological effects of alcohol.....	17
	2.9 Alcohol branding.....	21
	2.10 The marketing of alcopops to students.....	22
	2.11 Alcohol sponsorship of sporting events.....	25
	2.12 Why alcohol advertisements are cause for concern.....	26
	2.13 Conclusion	28
3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	31
	3.1 Introduction.....	31
	3.2 Research aims.....	32
	3.3 Objectives of the study.....	32
	3.4 Research procedure.....	32
	3.5 Instrumentation.....	33
	3.6 Questionnaire.....	33
	3.7 Questionnaire design.....	34
	3.8 Piloting.....	35
	3.9 Participants.....	35
	3.10 Procedure.....	36
	3.11 Reliability.....	36
	3.12 Validation of data.....	37

3.13 Procedure for analysis.....	37
3.14 Limitations of the study.....	38

4 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS.....	39
4.1 Introduction.....	39
4.2 Outline of presentation and analysis of findings.....	39
4.2.1 The particular area of study each participant is in.....	40
4.2.2 If each respondent was in fulltime or part-time education..	40
4.2.3 The age bracket in which each student fell under.....	40
4.2.4 What year each participant was in.....	41
4.2.5 The sex of each student.....	41
4.2.6 Alcohol consumption rate amongst students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo.....	42
4.2.7 The age at which the students had there first alcoholic beverage.....	43
4.2.8 Alcohol preferences.....	44
4.2.9 The physical and psychological effects of alcohol.....	44
4.2.10 The specific targeting of alcohol advertisements.....	45
4.2.11 The branding of alcoholic beverages.....	45
4.2.12 The factors influencing the purchasing power of the students	46
4.2.13 The influence of the packaging on alcoholic products.....	47
4.2.14 The characteristic's of designer drinks.....	47
4.2.15 The number of students who drank prior to attending the Institute of Technology, Sligo.....	48
4.2.16 On average, the number of nights per week the student socialised.....	48
4.2.17 The preferred student pub and night-club in Sligo	49
4.2.18 The influence of theme nights or drink promotions in student pubs and clubs in Sligo Town.....	49
4.2.19 The advertising of college events and how such events may influence the students decision to consume alcohol while socialising.....	50
4.2.20 The college's participation to student's binge drinking Levels.....	50
4.2.21 The ethical issues surrounding the college's decision to allow the advertising of night-clubs and drink promotions on the college grounds.....	51
4.2.22 The problems associated with pubs and night-clubs, advertising on campus which may encourage students to drink.....	51
4.2.23 The students understanding of RAG Week.....	52
4.2.24 The college's written alcohol policy	52
4.2.25 The ethical issues surrounding the Student Unions decision to organise drink promotions for students on class party nights out.....	53
4.2.26 The college's participation in binge drinking rates amongst its students by allowing the advertising of alcohol and social events on college grounds.....	54
4.2.27 Student binge drinking rates in the college.....	54

4.2.28 The effects of alcohol abuse can have on the college.....55
 4.2.29 The medium of alcohol advertising students are most exposed to.....55
 4.2.30 The complete ban on the advertising of social events within the college.....56
 4.2.31 The pressure on students to consume alcohol by affiliating the Institute of Technology with drinking establishments.....57
 4.2.32 The effect of advertising alcohol on college grounds57
 4.2.33 The branding of merchandise to promote alcohol.....58
 4.2.34 The main focal point of alcohol advertising.....58
 4.2.35 The use of graphics, images, humour or language in the advertising of alcohol59
 4.2.36 Diageo advertisements and how effective they are at Targeting students.....59
 4.2.37 The banning of innovative fictitious characters in the advertising of alcohol.....60
 4.2.38 Potential health dangers associated with drinking.....60
 4.2.39 The inclusion of potential health dangers associated with drinking on all alcohol advertising and packaging61
 4.2.40 An increased partnership between alcohol agencies and bodies such as the Road Safety Authority to combat drink driving in Ireland.....62
 4.2.41 Any additional comments62

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS63
 5.1 Introduction.....63
 5.2 Recommendations.....63
 5.3 Conclusion.....65

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....67

APPENDICES.....77

1. The letter sent (via post) to the Director of the Institute of Technology, Sligo, Dr. Richard Thorn, seeking permission to carry out the research within the college
2. E-mail the researcher sent to the Freedom of Information Officer seeking permission to send the research questionnaire via e-mail to all registered students
3. An e-mail the researcher received from the Freedom of Information Officer (Marian Hargadon), containing information on the total number of students that were currently attending the Institute, the time the research was carried out
4. E-mail sent to each student in the college, containing a brief introduction about the researcher and the link to the questionnaire

5. **A reminder e-mail that the researcher sent to the students, asking them to fill out the questionnaire.**
6. **Finalised questionnaire**

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure.	Title	Page No
1	Number of students studying full or part time	40
2	The year in which each student was currently in	41
3	The number of students who were male or female	41
4	The total number of participants who drinks alcohol	42

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Ethics, although not a new concept, plays a much more important role in people lives, in businesses and in today's society then ever before, people are now penalised for any wrong doing and must obey certain codes of conducts in all aspects of their lives. This dissertation will investigate advertising and the role of ethics within advertising in relation to the selling of controversial goods and products like alcohol to college students, paying particular attention to those students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo. In light of this, it would appear timely to consider the various insights of ethics, both past and present concerning the concept of ethical issues facing the advertising of alcohol and subsequently the significance it holds in today's society among the youth and college students in particular and the influence (if any) advertising has on their decision to purchase or consume alcohol.

In the past decade, substantial increase in the use of addictive substances by young people has been observed throughout the developed world. College students and their alcohol use has been the subject of numerous studies over the last three decades and have received an increasing amount of attention. Alcohol availability is associated with increased alcohol consumption among the general population as well as among young adults and older adolescents.

Subsequently, the researcher became aware that there are many pressures imposed on students in third level education in order to develop a sense of belonging, which can accumulate to have a serious effect on both their personal and academic life. Following this exploration, a yearning awoke in the researcher to further explore the concept of ethics and the role it plays in the advertising of alcohol to students, as it became evident that there was a void in the research carried out on third level students in Ireland regarding there views on alcohol advertising and there feelings towards the Institute of Technology, Sligo allowing such advertising on college grounds.

The researcher believes this is an area of great importance, as more students then ever are attending third level education, which increases the alarming numbers of binge

drinking in society. The researcher also believes such a study to be fundamental in helping the education system deal with student substance abuse on college grounds. Henceforth, it would seem necessary that the aim of this research dissertation is to investigate the effects alcohol advertising has on the students decision to consume alcohol or not and to ascertain whether they believe the college is behaving in an ethical manner by allowing the advertising of alcohol oriented social events.

In order to further investigate the topic at hand, it was deemed necessary to exhaust all past literature and knowledge on the area, such data was retrieved from online journals, newspapers and government internet sites such the data retrieved was analysed in the Literature review chapter, this was also an essential part in the construction of the questionnaire, as it gave the researcher a wider scope and understanding of the area and what area's had previously been investigated and what the researcher should concentrate on, when dealing with students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

The response rate of the questionnaire although quite low (6.6% of the total student population at the Institute of Technology, Sligo) was still beneficial to the researcher as it delved deeper in to the students thoughts and views about alcohol advertising on college grounds and also how alcohol affects them on a personal and academic level, the findings were quite interesting although some coincided with that of the findings from past published literature, new material was created as a lot of finding's from past literature was not from an Irish perspective.

The researcher did identify that the majority of students are aware of the Diageo advertisements, company slogan (know the one that's one to many) and its campaign to combat binge drinking. Some students agreed that it is an effective way in reaching students to get them to drink in a sensible manner, as the slogan was deemed as catchy and easy to remember, although some students did contradict previous students suggesting that although they are aware of Diageo's efforts to help stop the binge drinking in Ireland they had less positive attitude towards the effectiveness of such advertisements. As the literature already identified that students although aware of the dangers of alcohol they seem to think they are invincible and are oblivious to the real potential dangers associated with binge drinking on a regular basis. However

students did suggest that it would be a good idea to have more health warnings on all alcohol products as it was identified that 'knowledge is power'.

After exhausting both primary and secondary sources of data, the researcher concluded the dissertation with a number of recommendations that is primarily focused on the Institute of Technology, Sligo and the changes the college could adopt to help cut down on the number of students that drink alcohol on a regular basis. The author also suggests ways that the college could reduce the number of advertising of alcohol social events around the campus, which may directly or indirectly encourage students to purchase alcohol. It would be recommended by the researcher that the management and Staff of the Institute of Technology, Sligo, read and take on board the recommendations that the author has drawn from the research. Through the primary research that was conducted the author concluded that the majority of students did consume alcohol before attending college, with only a small minority who hadn't, this suggests to the researcher that although the college may not be solely responsible for the rate of alcohol consumed by Students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo it may be a contributing factor to the amount of which students consume on a night out.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of a literature review is to discuss published information in a particular subject area and to provide the researcher with a guide to a particular topic and give them a better insight and a more detailed understanding of a particular area. A literature review can be a simple summary of the sources, but it usually has an organisational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis, it may give a new interpretation of old material or combine new with old interpretations, (http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/literature_review.html 9/05/2008).

The aim of the first chapter is to address the underlying theoretical basis that epitomised the term 'Ethics'. The chapter will also explore the different forms Ethics takes in advertising and the role it plays in today's society and in particular, the physical and psychological effects alcohol advertising has on third level students. The body of the literature review consisted of secondary data retrieved from online journals such as Emerald and Science Direct as these two areas deemed to have the most up-to-date and relevant data, although other sources of data was retrieved from National Irish Newspapers and various Irish sourced websites for example the Central Statistics Website.

2.2 Ethics

Ethics, often called 'moral philosophy', is philosophical thinking about mortality, moral problems or moral judgements. It attempts to arrive at an understanding of how people should live and what constitutes right conduct. But ethics is more than the justification of particular mortalities; it is concerned more generally with questions about what would constitute good reasons for acting one way rather than another (<http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/INTROETH.HTM> 22/05/2008).

Ethics is a word on many people's minds and over the past number of years higher demands are being made of organisations by their employees, customers and wider community to act in an ethical manner suggests Orme and Ashton (2003a: 184). Who also defines ethics as follows:

"Ethics is about fairness and deciding what is right and wrong, about defining the practices and rules which underpin responsible conduct between individuals and groups".

So in other words ethics is the foundation of who we are, our beliefs and it lies in our sense of values. In today's dynamic environment there are three types of ethics;

- 1 Social Ethics
- 2 Transcendental Ethics
- 3 Tactical Ethics.

According to Orme and Ashton (2003b: 185) social ethics is an approach that came from Greek society and is based on the Greek idea of basic rules for civilised living, but is different for each society. Transcendental ethics rely on the concept of right and wrong and a sense of justice which is applied equally regardless of any social geographical or cultural restriction. Finally, tactical ethics is based on obeying rules or laws in order to avoid any penalties from breaking the law, these ethics are usually practised out of convenience and self-interest rather than what is right or what is wrong.

Many consumers are likely to have formed their views of fairness and ethics based on life experiences, individuals are influenced by people that they have met and those people in turn help to shape the person's opinions of the world, these people include parents, family and friends (Smith, 1995a: 87). Of course everything we do has a consequence, that is a plain and simple matter of physics, therefore the amount to which it has an effect should also be measurable and as a result the question of social responsibility and ethics has become more of a core issue for many businesses (Orme and Ashton 2003c: 187).

2.3 Marketing Ethics

Despite the amount of attention given to marketing ethics in recent years, the buyer side of the exchange process remains under-researched suggests Hunt and Vitell

(1992a: 3). Wells et al, (1998: 240) argue that we are now living in the ethics era, whereby society's expectations of marketers have changed.

Ethical purchasing plays a bigger role in Irish culture and in the daily lifestyle of customers. As consumers of today are more concerned with moral values, they are willing to pay more for a product with an ethical quality and pay more attention to firms that sell and support such products. This idea is based around ethical consumption (Smith, 1995b: 87). Ethical consumption is consumption that takes into account societal factors that is good for society this may include the socially responsible consumer (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972: 30; Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968: 173) that are concerned with their own personal satisfaction but are also aware of the effects on the people and environment around them.

Consumer ethics is sometimes advertised as contributing to an improved, more coherent lifestyle states Brinkmann and Peatttie (2008:26), who also predicts that the sort of appeal that ethical consumption can have for people is the fact that their lives are organised around central issues with moral content, which may seem important in real time but becomes outdated with time. Kotler was a key founder of the societal marketing movement, who recognised that what consumers desire may not necessarily be good for them an example of this is tobacco and although marketers may create a happy customer in the short term, in the long run both consumer and society may suffer as a direct result of the marketers actions in satisfying the consumer.

There is an increasing focus on firms who are now examining their Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR). CSR is a vague and intangible term, which can mean anything to anybody and therefore is effectively without meaning describes Frankental (2001: 3) and as a result it is seen as an evolving concept, arguably Moir (2001: 18) proposes the following definition for CSR:

“CSR is the continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large”.

Corporate social responsibility, however one chooses to define the term, implies that a company is responsible for its wider impact on society notes Frankental (2001a: 4). Marketers are encouraged to behave in an ethical manner because information about a firms ethical behaviour is thought to influence product sales and consumers image of the company suggests Frankental, (2001b: 5) although it seems obvious that consumers hold more positive attitudes towards companies that behave ethically, than companies which behave unethically, this information may be combined in complex ways (Folkes and Kamins, 1999a: 251). Companies are driven by market forces and competitive pressures, they are judged primarily according to financial indicators, profits, earnings per share etc. Board members receive incentives based on these performance indicators, corporate social responsibility can only take root when it is rewarded by the financial markets, (Frankental, 2001c: 6).

Legislation has played a part in raising consumer expectations of marketing behaviour and regulation has also helped move us from the “caveat emptor”(Latin for ‘Let the buyer beware’) position of the 1960’s to a more socially responsible era in marketing notes Folkes and Kamins (1999b: 252). Globally there have been hundreds of organisations and institutes established to research and promote ethical business behaviour states Carrigan and Attalla (2001a: 562). Laczniak (1993: 93) has argued that as the field of marketing develops a stronger ethical profile, academically and professionally, marketers are finding it harder to ignore the ‘ethics gap’ between what society expects and what marketing professionals are delivering. However does society expect such behaviour or at least if it does, will it actually reward marketers for their ethical behaviour by buying their products and boycotting those of unethical firms. Given that this flurry of ethical concern is driven in some way by the belief that consumers will be attracted to socially responsible firms, but is there enough evidence to support such a belief (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001b: 563).

2.4 Advertising and the ethical issues surrounding advertising

Advertising is everywhere, and people everywhere are united by it. Perhaps for the first time, young people of all ethnic and geographic origins share images and experiences, as a result of mass media and mass advertising (Goldstein, 1999a: 115).

Advertising is a paid form of communication, although some forms of advertising such as public service use donated space and time. Not only is the message paid for, but the sponsor is identified, in some cases the point of the message is simply to make consumers aware of the product or company although, most advertising tries to persuade or influence the consumer to do something (Goldstein, 1999b: 117). A definition of advertising includes six elements, the message is conveyed through many different types of mass-media, reaching a large audience of potential consumers and because advertising is a form of mass communication it is also non-personal, the following definition of advertising includes all six elements: "Advertising is a paid non-personal communication from an identified sponsor using mass media to persuade or influence an audience" (Wells et al., 1998: 248).

Advertising is a way of communicating a number of messages in a number of ways. When something has been perceived, the message has registered, one of the biggest challenges for advertisers is simply to get consumers to notice these messages. This is extremely hard to accomplish, not only do consumers miss more than half the messages directed at them, other messages continuously compete for their attention. (Wells et al., 1998: 250). Once a message has been perceived and has caught your attention, your perceptual process can move to the next step, which is awareness of the message and the product. Awareness means that the message has made an impression on the viewer or reader, who can subsequently identify the advertiser. Although awareness of the advertising comes first, awareness of the advertising is not the ultimate objective. As far as the advertiser is concerned, the ultimate objective is awareness of the product, not the advertisement (Wells et al., 1998: 251).

Advertising is a dynamic public forum in which business interests, creativity, consumer needs and government regulation meet. Advertising's high visibility makes it particularly vulnerable to criticism suggests Well et al., (1998: 251). Although advertisers face extensive regulation, every issue is not covered by a clear, written rule. Many advertising related issues are left to the discretion of the advertiser. Decisions may be based on a variety of considerations, including the objective of the advertising campaign, the attitudes of the target audience, the philosophies of the agencies and the advertiser and legal precedent. Many decisions are based on ethical concerns (Hunt and Vitell, 1992b: 3).

It is doubtful that negative attitudes toward advertising will disappear, so it is worthwhile for all marketers to be aware of the social issues facing advertisers. Each of these issues is complex and each involves the public welfare as well as freedom of speech (Hunt and Vitell, 1992c: 3). The collective advertising industry, including agencies, advertisers and the media has an important stake in how these social issues are viewed both by the public and by those in a position to pass legislation to regulate the industry. The following three issues are central to the ethical discussion of advertising: Advocacy, accuracy and acquisitiveness (Well et al., 1998: 43).

1 **Advocacy:** Advertising by its very nature tries to persuade the consumer to do something, it is not objective or neutral. Critics believe that advertising should be objective, informative and neutral. They want advertising to provide information to its consumers and stop there, most people however, are aware that advertising tries to sell us something whether it be a product, a service or even an idea (Well et al., 1998: 43).

2 **Accuracy:** Beyond the easily ascertainable claims in an advertising message (for example is the advertised car available in different colours) are matters of perception, some people may believe that by purchasing a particular car or wearing an expensive brand of clothing could make one more attractive to the opposite sex or be the envy of their neighbours. Such messages may be implied by the situations pictured in the advertisements (Well et al., 1998: 44).

3 **Acquisitiveness:** Some critics maintain that advertising is a symbol of societies pre-occupation with accumulating material objects. Consumers are continually exposed on a daily basis to an array of changing, newer and better products (Well et al., 1998: 45). Critics believe that consumers are somehow corrupted into thinking that they must purchase and consume these products or services. For the most part, advertising simply tells consumers about goods and services that they implicitly demand, it is part of the integrated marketing program that helps produce a satisfied, well-informed consumer.

Advertising involves many ethical issues, the predominant issues concern stereotyping, advertising to children, advertising controversial products and

subliminal advertising, (Wells et al, 1998: 55). Engaging in any of these techniques is always a matter of choice for the advertiser and just because it is not illegal does not mean that is it right, as concerned consumers may make choices for or against the products of one advertiser as opposed to another based on ethical issues (Saffer, 2002a: 172).

2.5 Alcohol advertising

The amount of money spent on alcohol advertising, excluding sponsorship and other promotional activities, continues to increase substantially each year in Ireland. In 1996, the alcohol advertising spend in Ireland was €25.4 million which increased to €30.5 million in 2000 and by 2002 the spend on alcohol advertising was €43.2 million across television, radio, cinema, outdoor and press,

(www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=1 03/03/2008). Both the level of alcohol misuse on college campuses and the level of alcohol advertising are high according to Saffer, (2002b: 173). Evidence of exposure does not prove that alcohol advertising induces more alcohol consumption by young people. It is believed that cultural myths and symbols used in alcohol advertisements have powerful meanings for college students. Others have concluded that alcohol advertising affects knowledge, attitudes and intentions to drink, which in turn are believed to affect drinking, (Saffer, 2002c: 174).

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (1999)

(http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Robert_Wood_Johnson_Foundation 26/04/2008) maintains that alcohol advertising and marketing are factors in the environment that help create problems of under-age drinking and college high-risk drinking. There is, however, very little empirical evidence that alcohol advertising has any effect on actual alcohol consumption, Eagle and De Bruin, (2001a: 266), stated that bans on advertising in one media segment usually leads marketers to reposition their advertising to the other non-regulated media.

One of the most heated advertising issues in recent years is the proposed restrictions on advertising controversial products such as alcohol. Restrictions on products thought to be unhealthy or unsafe to the environment or members of the general

public are not new (Eagle and De Bruin, 2001b: 266). Proponents of such a ban argued that advertising alcohol products might result in sickness, injury or death for the user and possibly others. Restricting advertising of those products would result in fewer sales of the products and consequently would reduce their unhealthy effects to, (Saffer, 2002d: 177). Although alcohol industries have maintained that their intent is to advertise only to those who have already decided to use their products and not to persuade non-users or underage to try them (Kopp et al., 1999a: 543).

Advertising to college students may require a course in computer science as a way for marketers to reach students where they live, study and play on their computers, as many students spend a remarkable amount of time online. However, college students still visit the usual haunts like pubs, sporting venues, campus events, clubs and the like in massive numbers, according to the Irish Nightclub Industry Association, INIA, which is the national representative body for nightclub owners and operators in the Republic of Ireland, an average of 2,600 customers attend nightclubs each week in Ireland with an annual turnover of €2.94 million, (www.inia.ie 26/03/2008).

Targeted advertising refers to the specific imagery used to create personality for a brand. Targeting also requires choosing media that will expose the intended market segment to the advertising. Product personalities are designed to appeal to specific market segments, for example in targeting the young people, Coors beer is associated with an unspoiled wilderness, whereas Budweiser is associated with athletic success, (Kopp et al., 1999b: 543). The use of these products connects the young person's fantasies to these images. Product price provides information about intended product quality, if the brand has been defined as a premium product, brand capital will be decreased by frequent discounting or a permanent decrease in product price. Although the price of various brand categories tends to be the same for all firms, price variation across markets is created by state taxes, transportation costs and local cost factors. Variations in the level of advertising also exist across markets because of local cost factors, (Saffer, 2002: 177).

Many advertisers can seek help in making decisions about questionable advertising situations from such sources as codes of ethics; these codes provide only general guidance. When advertising, decisions are not clearly covered by a code, a rule or a

regulation, someone within the organisation must make an ethical decision. That particular person must weigh the pros and cons, the good and the bad, the healthy and the harmful effects and make a value judgement about an unfamiliar situation (Wells et al, 1998: 46).

The advertising of alcohol in Ireland is currently under review by an inter-departmental group, with a view to introducing legislation governing the area. At the moment, the advertising of alcohol is self-regulated. The Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland (ASAI), broadcasters and the drinks industry themselves have their own codes of practice about how alcohol should be advertised. As well as developing their code of practice for advertising alcohol, the Drinks Industry Group has recently initiated a copy clearance process, which reviews all alcohol ads from the conceptual stage to completion. Any ad found to be in breach of the various codes of practice for alcohol advertising must be withdrawn. The panel is staffed by senior advertising industry figures in association with the Institute of Advertising Practitioners in Ireland (IAPI) and the Association of Advertisers in Ireland (http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories/health/alcohol-and-drug-treatment-services/alcohol_awareness_programmes 12/08/2008).

The UK advertising industry has long recognised the natural credulity and vulnerability of the young and the intrinsic risks associated with exploiting them, accordingly strict regulations have evolved to safeguard their welfare and preserve this lucrative market. The restrictions on alcohol advertising in broad-cast and non-broad-cast media demonstrate the concern that advertising will encourage children to start drinking and that they must be protected and prevented from doing so identifies, Dresden et al., (2003a: 78). The codes states that advertisements for alcoholic products should not be directed at people under 18 nor feature real or fictitious characters who are likely to appeal to people under 18 in a way that might encourage them to drink. The hysteria over the launch of alcopops in the 1990's has resurfaced in the wake of new products, such as WKD, Bacardi Breezers and Smirnoff Ice, (Dresden et al., 2003b: 78). However, RTE, as an Irish public service broadcaster, also operates its own controls on ads for alcohol. RTE will not carry any ads for spirits on either of its two television stations or any of its radio stations. While alcohol can be advertised all day on RTE1 television, no alcohol ads are shown on RTE 2

until after 7.30pm. This reflects the primarily underage audience for the second station. In certain circumstances, RTE will make a decision not to show alcohol ads on RTE1, for example, if a children's film is being shown. However, the placement and timing of ads is frequently left to the discretion of the drinks companies themselves and this is where the role of self-regulation comes into play. Not all independent broadcasters have their own specific codes of practice, but they all abide by the ASAI's advertising standards,

(http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories/health/alcohol-and-drug-treatment-services/alcohol_awareness_programmes 12/08/2008).

An aspect of advertising is that its effects linger over time, and that it fully depreciates within one year, also the cost of advertising varies across local areas, which also contributes to differences in advertising levels. New consumers are often adolescents who are un-informed about the true costs and benefits of alcohol consumption. Early initiation is associated with increased alcohol-related problems in adolescence and adulthood and with increased lifetime risk for alcohol-related injury suggests Saffer, (2002: 175).

A study by Breed et al. (1999: 260) found that alcohol advertising in college newspapers far exceeded all other product advertisements. Research concluded that alcohol advertising originating locally encouraged irresponsible and heavy drinking. Grube (1993: 58) also found evidence of targeting: 2.4 alcohol commercials per hour were placed in professional sports programmes and 1.2 per hour in college sports programming. This compares with only .25 per hour in prime time fictional programming. Grube (1993: 54) also concluded that as children age, they become more aware of alcohol advertising. Evidence was also found of youth targeting in alcohol advertising on the internet.

2.6 The advertising of alcohol to college students

A survey carried out by the Central Statistics Office for 2004/2005 showed that the total number of students in full-time Third Level Education in Ireland was 143,546, (www.cso.ie/statistic/per_full_time_edu.htm 19/03/08), which was a significant increase from the previous years. It has come to be generally accepted that alcohol

use sometimes excessive is “de rigueur” (a French expression meaning ‘the done thing’) on the college campus. Occasionally this acceptance has blossomed into concern identifies Page, (1983: 77) who later suggests, attention has subsequently focused on the age group particularly affected, the 18-21 year-olds caught in the public and legislative tug-of-war over what should constitute the legal drinking age. To date no clear consensus has emerged on how to deal with the changing patterns in the consumption of alcohol among the Irish and the resulting problems. This change trend in consumption, according to the Minister is attributable to ‘societal changes, changing lifestyles and expectations, more disposable income, the lessening of parental control on young people and a strong focus on consumerism’, (http://www.progressivedemocrats.ie/press_room/17/19-03-2008).

In the past decade, substantial increase in the use of dangerous substances by young people has been observed throughout the developed world (Bauman and Phongsavan, 1999: 203). Drinking alcohol seems to be an integral aspect of the process of adolescent development (Jessor and Jessor, 1975: 57), partially explaining why alcohol use is so widespread among university and college students and while moderate alcohol consumption is not necessarily a negative behaviour, binge drinking or excessive drinking is cause for concern. One conception of ‘Irishness’ that is shared with many popular sources involves the use, and often even the abuse, of alcohol, (Cassidy, 1996: 5).

College students and their alcohol use has been the subject of numerous studies over the last three decades and have received an increasing amount of attention (Janosik and Anderson, 1989: 197; Tyron, 1992: 114). Studies on student alcohol use began appearing in the literature in the mid-1970’s (Rouse and Ewing, 1978: 3). There is a debate, however, concerning whether alcohol abuse problems on campuses are increasing or whether higher education simply has become more sensitive to the issue suggests Sharma, (1994: 30). Researchers study the affects of tobacco and alcohol advertising because the consumption of these substances is known to have potentially adverse health consequences, one in ten abuse alcohol which results in a range of negative health and social outcomes including an estimated 100,000 premature deaths per year, (Saffer, 2004: 1).

Both interior and exterior advertising were correlated with college binge-drinking rates. Campuses with more off-premise establishments that were free from alcohol advertising, the college binge-drinking rates were significantly lower (Larimer et al., 1997: 595). The marketing of alcohol in the communities surrounding college campuses, it was found that alcohol specials, promotions and advertising were prevalent in the alcohol outlets around college campuses, (Kuo et al., 2003a: 4).

Heavy alcohol consumption by college students and others is encouraged by a 'wet' environment in which alcohol is prominent and easily accessible. Previous studies have documented the effect of price on alcohol consumption in the general population and among young adults and adolescents. In general, as the price of alcohol increases, consumption rates decrease and in contrast as the price of alcohol decreases, consumption rates increase (Gfroerer et al., 1997: 63). Alcohol outlets near college campuses commonly use various discounts and promotions to attract students, and alcohol promotions and specials may increase consumption, for example both heavy and light drinkers drank more than twice as much alcohol during simulated 'happy hours' as they did during times without such promotions. (Kuo et al., 2003b: 1).

Alcohol advertisements also shape knowledge, attitudes and perceptions about alcohol use, which in turn are predictive of positive expectancies and intentions to drink. Messages in alcohol advertising are particularly appealing to the youth and influential in developing their intentions to drink (Valliant and Scanlan, 1996: 153). Adolescents, as compared with adults, may be at increased risk of influence by advertisements because of changes in brain structure that occur during adolescence and adolescents reduced inhibitory control (Pechmann et al., 2005: 206). Alcohol advertising has also been found to influence positive expectancies about alcohol abuse, which in turn influenced intention to use alcohol for under-age youth (15-20 year old) but not for adults 21 and older. Other studies have found that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with increased alcohol use by youth (Pasch, et al, 2007: 588).

2.7 The factors influencing alcohol consumption

Psychologists and social scientists have identified several factors that influence alcohol consumption. Teenagers are more involved with trends than probably any other age group, they are not only trendsetters for one another, but are also trendsetters for the population at large. Adolescents are often influenced by a variety of outside interests while adopting their own set of self-image, lifestyle and consumption patterns suggests Martin and Bush, (2000a: 442). For adolescents, the most important appears to be parental and peer influences. Parents exert an influence by establishing normal drinking standards, while peers appear to exert their influence through modelling, (Martin and Bush, 2000b: 442).

These influences may be in the direction of abstaining, consuming alcohol moderately, or being heavy drinkers, agreed by Pollay et al., (1996b: 13) who also suggests that parents not only can be very effective in influencing their children about potential marketplace dangers such as drugs and alcohol, but can also encourage positive behaviours as well. Adolescents perceive both direct and vicarious role models as important influences on their purchase intentions and behaviours. Although today's media-saturated environment has elevated famous athletes, actors/actresses and entertainers to role model status for many adolescents, parents are still the most important influence on teenager's lifestyle and consumption patterns (Martin and Bush, 2000c: 447).

The peer group appears to be the single most important determinant factor, at least in early drinking patterns of adolescence and young adulthood. Drinking is largely a social and recreational activity and it is therefore no surprise that friends have a major influence on drinking habits suggests Davie (1995: 52). Males are expected to report the use/abuse of alcohol in response to peer pressure. The encouragement of independence typical of the male socialisation process, coupled with the actual greater freedom and opportunities to be away from parental control and supervision that males enjoy, permit the development of male peer groups less constrained by familiar influences (Liu and Kaplan, 1996a: 28).

As drinking progresses into the heavy level or becomes more problematic, drinking context may switch from peer presence to a more private environment where peers are no longer of much importance. The difference could also be the result of different component items used for the scale of peer influence (Martin and Bush, 2000c: 442). Gender differences are stronger in the escalating phase of drinking than at the initial level. The greater quantity of alcohol consumption during a short span of time may also contribute to greater disinheriting effect of alcohol and result in a greater likelihood of males coming into confrontation with the law authorities (Rose, et al, 1996: 252). The stronger tendencies of females to report feelings of distress and having interpersonal problems as correlated with binge drinking might reflect the judgement that such a pattern of escalating levels is contrary to cultural standards of women, (Liu and Kaplan, 1996b: 45).

2.8 Physical and psychological effects of alcohol

Several explanations have been offered for high-risk rate of alcohol consumption behaviour among college students for example, sensation-seeking and feelings of invulnerability (Lipkus et al, 1994: 151) and very little attention has been paid to the idea that personal values may play a role in predicting the likelihood of being a drinker. Binge drinking (the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks for women, at least once in the past two weeks) has been recognised as a major problem among college students (Kropp et al., 1999: 541). Several studies have found that approximately two out of five college students are binge drinkers. Binge drinking has been associated with problems such as property damage, physical injuries, unwanted sexual advances and encounters with the law. In addition binge drinking is associated with second-hand effects such as interruption of study or sleep, having to babysit a drunken student, or being victim of a physical and sexual assault, Liu and Kaplan (1996: 46). It is estimated that 1400 college students die each year from alcohol-related injuries in America (Kuo et al., 2003: 1). Many findings on drinking habits indicated that men drank almost twice as much alcohol per month as did women, however the similarity in number of men and women who ever drink alcohol may be the same notes Sharma, (1995: 20).

Drinking has also been associated with thrill-seeking as well as deviant behaviours (Lastovicka et al, 1987: 260; Beerman et al 1988: 445), in addition to this, alcohol use is linked to aggressive and risk-taking behaviours, such as drink-driving. The focus on drink driving fails to address problems associated with binge drinking among college students, who make up some of the heaviest drinkers and are often within walking distance of bars and clubs.

In Ireland, alcohol related mortality has increased over the last decade. Over the period 1999-2002, 14, 223 people died in Ireland from these five main alcohol leading causes (Cancers, liver disease, alcohol acute conditions and suicide). The increase in alcohol consumption corresponded with an increase in alcohol-related deaths between 1992 and 2002. It was estimated by the National Safety Council that alcohol is involved in at least 30 percent of all road accidents each year in Ireland, however the overall number of road deaths and persons injured in 2002 showed a significant decrease from 2001, which was due mainly to the introduction of the penalty point system,

(www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=03/03/2008).

According to the Strategic Task force on Alcohol, Report,

(www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=03/03/2008), alcohol was the third most detrimental risk factor for European ill health and premature death, in 2002, alcohol related death and disability accounted for 9.2 percent of all burden of disease. Alcohol is an even greater risk factor in the lives of young people, it is estimated that alcohol causes one in four of all deaths of young men in Europe aged between 15 and 29 years, the majority of these deaths result from injuries (unintentional and intentional). For young men, alcohol contributes to nearly half of all deaths from motor vehicle accidents, over one-third of poisonings, drownings, homicide and falls and in one-fifth of suicides, on the other hand, for young women aged between 15 and 29 years, alcohol contributes to about one in three of all deaths from poisonings, drownings and homicide and one in five deaths from motor vehicle accidents and falls,

(www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=03/03/2008).

For students the real problems are passing out, losing control, getting into fights, being victim or perpetrator of a sexual assault and poor academic performance rather than drunk driving suggests Wolburg (2005: 176), who also reports that alcohol misuse commonly precedes the commission of a delinquent or criminal act, furthermore this behaviour is reported more often in males than in females. Males are said to be more individualistic, aggressive and dare to challenge authorities. The disinheriting effects of alcohol might exacerbate such tendencies as well as reflect confrontation with the law and authorities. The confrontation might also feed the need for excitement and power hypothesized to be more characteristic of males suggests Liu and Kaplan (1996c: 28), whereas girls feel they became bolder and more sociable. They wanted to hug everyone and it became easier to make contacts with new people. They did not feel as shy and withdrawn as usual, but dared to say and do things they would not have dared to do without alcohol (Suvivuo et al., 2008: 151).

There are contradictory findings on the role that alcohol plays in risky sexual behaviour. While some studies have observed positive relationships between alcohol consumption and sexual activities, others have not found this relationship a positive one (Halpern-Felsher et al., 1996: 333). Risky behaviour includes not using contraception, having intercourse with casual partners or having many sexual partners at a young age. Alcohol was found to have an especially remarkable impact on the decision to have sex and was especially associated with first-time intercourse identifies Suvivuo et al., (2007a: 146).

On the other hand, some studies could not establish a direct and undisputed association between alcohol use and taking risks in sexual behaviour among adolescents and young adults. Abundant alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour as well as sexually transmitted diseases appear to be a question of lifestyle and personality rather than of them having a casual association with each other, (Chubb and Fertman, 1997: 115). In sexual health, good self-control includes not only psychosocial well-being, but also responsibility for the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Self control has been shown to be quite stable in adolescence, even though it becomes less external during the high school years (Suvivuo et al., 2008b: 146).

It is not clear whether alcohol has a negative impact on grades, or whether alcohol is being used to mask stress, related to achieving poor grades, but relationships between substance use and certain factors may be consequential for example the relationship between poor academic performance and substance use often noted in the literature could arise as a direct result of substance use argues Boys et al., (2002: 281). Sax (1997: 255) focuses on beer drinking in particular because it is so commonly a part of college life and because the majority of student drink beer as their alcoholic beverage of choice. One study by Kropp et al., (1999b: 542) specifically examined beer consumption in first-year university students and found that students who engaged in greater frequency and volume of beer consumption had a less sophisticated identity status.

Many physicians and members of Congress consider government warning labels to be a significant step in a comprehensive educational effort to communicate the dangers of alcohol consumption. The standard label, as read from any container, states that: “consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machines and may cause health problems”. The health and safety problems mentioned on the label represent a large proportion, perhaps as much as 80 percent, of the total economic costs associated with alcohol according to DeCarlo et al (1997a: 448).

Alcohol warnings and warning labels are intended to alter an individual’s perceived vulnerability to the potential harms disclosed. Proponents of government warning labels contend that consumers will read the label and therefore be less likely to drink alcohol if pregnant or drive after consumption (Suivuo et al., 2008c: 146). Individuals who are neither heavy consumers of alcohol nor intently focused on health and fitness may pay greater attention to messages addressing the effects associated with drinking. Lower involvement individuals are most likely to accept alcohol educational efforts, particularly when these efforts are executed in the form of print media, which requires some effort on the part of the individual to access the information. However in terms of attitude change, it is suggested that age may be a discriminating variable for the persuasive effectiveness of alcohol warning labels. (Lastovicka et al, 1987b: 261). Younger individuals may simply assume that risks associated with drinking alcohol do not exist or that any risks to not apply in their

particular case, concluding that the benefits of drinking outweigh the costs. This may be one reason why alcohol related traffic fatalities remain the most frequent cause of death for young people (DeCarlo et al., 1997: 448). Since younger drinkers may perceive themselves as immortal, alcohol warnings and warning labels may not be accepted. Older drinkers, on the other hand, may perceive themselves as more susceptible to the dangers of drinking.

Research suggests (Avison and McAlpine, 1992: 80), advertising plays only a minimal role in persuading individuals to start drinking. Compared with the influence of family and friends plus the impact of popular entertainment advertising is of secondary importance for drinking and drug-taking behaviour. In many ways the impact of alcohol control campaigns shows how, rather than attacking marketing campaigners and regulators can use its strengths to get across the health and safety message. Adding warnings to labels and advertisements gives the health message a free and pertinent promotion, (Wells, 1992: 24).

A combination of sensitive labelling regulations, taking over part of the advertising budget by statute and running effective public awareness programs should prove more effective than more draconian restrictions. In the case of alcohol, laws intended to protect others from drink driving need active enforcement and prosecution in order to deal with the few who refuse to accept the scientific arguments and continue to abuse alcohol and risk factors (Kropp et al., 1999c: 557). Governments must enlist marketers in dealing with alcohol abuse rather than limit their scope of action. Most people involved in the promotion of alcohol want to maintain responsible drinking habits, it was suggested that attacking the marketing will only result in a more difficult, expensive and ineffective campaign against alcohol abuse (DeCarlo et al., 1997c: 462).

2.9 Alcohol branding

Exposure to alcohol advertising leads children and youth to have a brand recall and hold more positive beliefs about social and ritual use of alcohol. The theory of brand capital explains the process by which advertising affects demand and can also explain how alcohol advertising affects knowledge, attitudes and intentions to drink, (Wells et

al, 1998: 57). Brand capital is defined as the collective positive association that individuals have about a brand identifies, Spawton (1990a: 48). Firms with higher levels of brand capital will have higher levels of utility; also brand capital can depreciate over time, accompanied by decreases in sales. The creation of a new brand involves three steps: (1) market segmentation, market segmentation can be based on geography (e.g., region, size of community), demographics (e.g., age, gender, race and religion), behaviour (e.g., frequency of purchase occasion of purchase, readiness to purchase) or psycho-graphics (e.g., values, attitudes, personality, lifestyle) (2) the creation of a branded product and (3) the creation of new advertising for the brand, (Spawton, 1990b: 48).

A trend towards 'quality' has made the whole new concept of 'brand name' of vital importance to marketers as the ultimate communicator of quality and value. Thus the corporate ownership of a recognised 'quality' brand name can mean considerable price premiums and profit (Spawton, 1990c: 48). The creation of branded products consists of producing distinguishable products with unique packaging or with unique product features. Branding can be accomplished with individual brand names such as Miller, which has no obvious association with each other, or by creating brand families.

The brands in a family all have the same name but have different attributes, such as light beer, ice beer and genuine draft beer or some may have different packaging attributes such as glass bottles, extra large size containers or long necked bottles (Wells et al, 1998: 57). The major advantage of branding, is that the brand, irrespective of volume or quota, can be used as leverage to gain distribution for lesser brands or to provide single or preferred supplier status to prestigious accounts. It is not only the brand name that needs care, patent protection and nurturing but also the packaging and bottle-dress, especially where distinctive bottles or label styles are used to reinforce consumer recognition. Packaging is important in its ability to build and defend a brand name and this is especially important when it comes to the branding of alcoholic beverages (Spawton, 1990: 52).

2.10 The marketing of alcopops to students

Marketing is a specialised activity that enables organisations to be in the forefront of their competitors. Within the western world, economic growth, improving living standards and technological progress has affected many marketers to the extent of establishing future strategies to help them survive in today's competitive markets, (Barnard and Forsyth, 1998a: 207). Within consumer markets, new and improved products have become important symbols of economic change and development. New products may be vital to the future of the firm, in regard to the strategic change to innovate and change to response to market change. Successful new products can set industry standards. Standards that become another company's barrier to entry or instigate the opening of crucial new markets. New products offer corporate renewal and redirection and help maintain and build an organisations confidence and momentum, (Davie, 1995a: 49).

Increases in the levels of adolescent drinking have been linked to the introduction of 'designer' alcoholic drinks. The year 1995 saw the release of the first official, alcoholic soft drink, the first such product to be sold in Britain was Hoopers Hooch. The market in alcoholic soft drinks has proved so successful that novel products were being launched at a rate of one a month, Davie (1995b: 52). In the recent past, this term (alcoholic soft drink) has tended to refer to fortified or 'fruit' wines (such as WKD) and the new ciders (such as white lightning). These drinks are notable for the style of their packaging which tends to be bright eye-catching labelling and distinctively shaped bottles and the often brightly coloured, sweet, often syrupy flavour of the drink itself, particularly the fruit wines (Davie, 1995c: 52). Characteristic of all of these drinks are their high levels of alcohol by volume (typically 8 per cent proof, or, in the case of the fruit wines 15 per cent proof). Research reported on by Spawton (1990: 48), confirmed that such drinks were particularly popular with younger age adolescents who reported that they liked the packaging and enjoyed the sweet taste. This latter was appreciated in particular for masking the strong taste of alcohol identifies Barnard and Forsyth, (1998b: 208).

Alcoholic carbonates such as WKD and Barcardi Breezer are dubbed as alcopops and have been an ongoing source of controversy. Vigorous debate in the media, among

health professionals as well as in Parliament, has centred on the degree to which such drinks (usually 5 per cent proof or less) are designed and advertised specifically to appeal to the younger drinker, again on the basis of their attractive packaging and sweet flavour. Young people do respond positively to advertisements which they associate with peer pressure acceptance and having fun has been reported on in a qualitative study carried out by Wylie et al., (1994: 117).

The marketing success of the various types and flavours of alcoholic carbonates has been remarkable. Clearly the appeal of these drinks is not limited to under-age drinkers; they have also proved attractive to the young adult market for which they are legitimately intended. This may indeed to a factor recommending their consumption to adolescents looking for a more sophisticated alcoholic drink than the fruit wines drunk by a younger age group, explains, Barnard and Forsyth (1998c: 211).

In the short space of time that alcopops have been on the market they have clearly become very popular among young people. Second to beer, alcopops and vodka were the drinks most likely to be consumed. However, despite the popularity of alcopops, their consumption was inversely associated with drunkenness.

Setting aside issues of the association between drunkenness and alcopop consumption there remain other concerns. The sweet and fruity flavour of such drinks is masking the taste of alcohol making alcohol consumption more attractive to young drinkers. It is possible that the observed trend towards a reduction in the age at which under-age drinking initiated may be encouraged by the availability of these drinks, (Mackintosh, et al., 1997a: 213). Relatedly, there are concerns as to the likelihood that such drinks will act as a bridgehead to stronger alcoholic drinks and drunkenness with all its potential adverse health consequences (McKeganey, 1998: 471).

Although there are legal restrictions on the sale of alcohol to young people, access to alcohol is relatively unproblematic for many under-age drinkers. This is both because these restrictions are flaunted by some establishments and because of the creative ploys used by some under-age drinkers to obtain alcohol from shops. The requirement for young people routinely to show proof of age cards when making alcohol purchases would be one means of reducing the likelihood of such sales

(Mackintosh, et al., 1997b: 213). Clearly this is not going to prove entirely effective given the known practice of asking adults or older friends to purchase alcohol for them. However, it would reduce access.

Stricter enforcement of legislation covering the sale of alcohol to under-age drinkers, including the imposition of greater penalties, might act as a disincentive to unscrupulous shop keepers, Dresden et al., (2003: 78). Frequent and heavy drinking from an early age clearly increases the likelihood of alcohol-related health and social problems among a young population. If the new designer drinks are implicated in this process, we should actively consider ways of limiting the availability of such drinks and their attractiveness to young people in the first place (Barnard and Forsyth, 1998: 211).

2.11 Alcohol sponsorship of sporting events

This issue has received limited attention, in terms of public opinion research, which is the use of sport sponsorship to market potentially unhealthy products, like alcohol and tobacco. Sports, have long been viewed as an effective vehicle through which products, including alcohol and tobacco, can be promoted (McDaniel and Mason, 1999a: 484). One of the most prolific forms of sport marketing is sponsorship. Sponsorship, or event marketing, had been defined as ‘a cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property...in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with property’ (McDaniel and Mason, 1999b: 484). Sponsorship strategies are used to reach a variety of consumer-orientated marketing objectives, which include increasing brand awareness and brand image, and using potential tie-ins and product sampling at events. In 1994, \$10 billion dollars were spend to procure sponsorship rights worldwide, this figures illustrate why event marketing has become one of the fastest growing areas of promotion (Cunningham and Taylor, 1995: 130).

In many ways, sports are the perfect vehicle to reach the young male target audience and is desired by marketers of alcoholic products. Moreover, consuming alcohol or can be viewed as somewhat similar to playing/viewing sports, in that they are all considered to be examples of experimental consumption (McDaniel and Mason, 1999: 484). It may be the experimental nature of these seemingly disparate activities that is

responsible for their long-standing connection in the leisure context of sport speculating, and even those who are sport participants have been found to use alcohol products. This may be because some individuals perceive alcohol use as a way to increase their enjoyment of leisure activities: a mindset researchers have termed 'alcohol expectancies' (Carruthers, 1993: 239). Therefore, alcohol companies are willing to invest significant sums to reach sport-minded consumers, by associating their products with major sporting events. A study found that over a period of 443 hours of televised sports, there were more commercials for alcoholic beverages than for any other beverage category, with mediated signage for alcohol sponsors appearing at a rate of 3.3 times an hour (Madden and Grube, 1994: 297). Regardless of one's self-interest in terms of drinking and smoking, the omnipresent nature of these promotional messages in sport contexts may influence consumers to see sport sponsorship involving alcohol or tobacco as part of the status quo of sport suggests McDaniel and Mason (1999: 486).

2.12 Why alcohol advertisements are cause for concern

Alcohol advertisers more than ever need to be aware of their social responsibility and make efforts to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to the alcohol industry. The use of inappropriate images and advertising appeal will only make the advertisers position more vulnerable in the eyes of the advertising policing organisations (Lass and Hart, 2004a: 615).

In accordance with the Advertising code of ethics complaints can be made on grounds of discrimination or vilification, violence, language, portrays of sex/sexuality/nudity, health and safety, and alarm or distress to children, (Zanten, 2005a: 25). It is not surprising that television emerged as the medium that was associated with the highest number of advertisements subject to complaint, most likely because of the medium's potential for wide coverage and high reach. Outdoor and print occupy some what distant second and third places respectively, beer was the category most subject to complaint identifies Zanten (2005b: 28), however the beer industry has often situated responsibility messages within the problem of drunk driving, which implies that drinking excessively can still be done responsibly as long as no driving is involved, the designated driver program was introduced as a common sense solution to the

problem, however the initiative is not without its faults identifies Wolburg (2005: 176).

According to Zanten (2005c: 25) advertisers, when developing an advertisement, usually select from one of seven major types of advertising appeal – fear, humour, sex, music, rationality, emotions and scarcity. Music association within advertising has moved from the 1980's jingles to more sophisticated music in the genre of rock 'n' roll, hip hop or R 'n' B. Musical associations provide a collective and aesthetic identity of the brand, its music and its totemic identity which is transferred onto the product (Kenyon, 2006: 52). An effective use of musical association on Irish television is Mundy and Sharon Shannon's version of the 'Galway Girl' which advertises Bulmer's Original Cider.

Emotional appeal help create a bond with consumer. Commonly used emotions in advertising are: trust, reliability, security, happiness, romance, friendship, and contentment. Sexual appeals are used in advertising to create attention, and build brand awareness (Lass and Hart, 2004b: 621), but if the viewer believes the ad is in poor taste or demeaning, negative feeling about the brand will result. Humorous appeals are useful in cutting through advertising clutter and enhancing recall (Wolfe, 1998: 22).

Despite humour's undoubted advantages, it has its pitfalls. Humour is often perceived differently amongst people for example, among those from different cultural backgrounds (Weinberger and Gulas, 1992a: 49). The response to humour by audience members can be very idiosyncratic: sexual humour, satire and other forms of aggressive humour may generate strong positive feelings in some audience members and strong negative feelings in others. According to Wolfe (1998: 22) sarcasm and jokes made at another's expense are popular with younger audiences, but are likely to backfire with the baby-boomer generation (40 to 60 year olds). The idiosyncratic response by viewers to humour mean that humour is perhaps a more risky approach than other advertising appeals and it should therefore be used with care (Caputo, 2003: 33).

One out of 60 advertisements that attracted complaints in the years 1999 to 2003, 78 percent had a humorous content. Furthermore, 74 percent of these had an aggressive or sexual content. These statistics are not surprising as much alcohol advertising, especially beer advertising, is directed towards a male-dominated audience. Weinberger and Gulas (1992b: 43) suggest that men appear to enjoy aggressive and sexual humour more than women do and women have a greater appreciation for nonsexual humour.

According to Spotts et al., (1997: 23) the use of humour should be limited to low involvement goods, such as snack foods, beer, alcohol and tobacco products etc. 18 percent of the ads that attracted complaints used a direct sexual appeal, but this rises to 37 percent with both direct and humorous sexual appeals are taken into account. The use of sexual imagery is a common approach in alcohol advertising, and helps create attention and build brand awareness, but advertisers need to study the target market closely as female consumers, who are much less appreciative of the use of sex in alcohol advertisements, may be alienated (Lass and Hart, 2004c: 617).

2.13 Conclusion

To conclude, alcohol-related harm happens to those who don't drink, those who drink small amounts but in a risky situation, those who drink to excess sometimes and those who regularly abuse alcohol. Alcohol harm is visible throughout Ireland; on the streets, in the courts, hospitals, workplaces, schools and homes. Despite the tendency to 'blame' underage drinkers, the vast majority of alcohol harm occurs among the adult population, for example drink driving, hospital admissions and street violence (www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=03/03/2008).

Ireland continues to be amongst the highest consumers of alcohol in the world. In the new enlarged European Union, in 2001, Ireland ranked second after Luxembourg for alcohol consumption (the most recent available international data) (www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/stfa_secondpdf?direct=03/03/2008). In examining the marketing of alcohol in the communities surrounding college campuses, it was found that alcohol specials, promotions and advertisements were prevalent in the alcohol outlets around college campuses. An indication that lower sale prices, more

promotions, and alcohol advertising at both on and off premise establishments was correlated with higher binge-drinking rates on the college campuses (Kuo et al., (2003a: 6). This is consistent with previous findings that alcohol consumption by college students is affected by price. In line with this are the findings that alcohol promotions, price specials, and large-volume discounts are associated with higher binge-drinking rates. Marketing practices that reduce cost may increase drinking levels, and heavy drinking by students may induce bars and restaurants to cater to and compete for their patronage through price lowering promotions (Kuo et al., 2003b: 6). Eagle and De Bruin (2001: 266), stated that bans on advertising in one/some media segments usually leads marketers to reposition their advertising to the other non-regulated media.

Efforts to reduce problems associated with college binge drinking have focused primarily on education and changes in behaviour; however the regulation of marketing practices (e.g. sale prices, promotions and exterior advertisements) may also be important strategies to help reduce alcohol consumption among college students (Hoek et al., 1993: 27). Unfortunately, courses on alcohol and other drug use have not yet found their way into most college curricula, however there are additional materials aimed specifically at college-aged audiences (or for use in college programs), there are many items dealing with a variety of aspects of alcohol use which have been published for the general public, many of these materials are free or low cost (pamphlets, leaflets, posters) and can be used effectively in college alcohol education and prevention programs, audiovisuals have long been a popular way to communicate information, and a variety of films, audio and visual cassettes, slides, and so forth, about alcohol and alcohol use have been produced in recent years, that may be of some benefit to educate college students about the harmful affects of alcohol (Page, 1983a: 78).

As colleges and universities struggle to formulate policies on campus alcohol use, education of administration, faculty and students, as well as the general public, must take place. Attitudes and drinking behaviour can only change gradually with the help of increased public awareness and concern. Alcohol education should ideally begin at secondary school level and continue through college, the resources are available and, if properly used, can be an effective means of preventing many alcohol problems

(Page, 1983b: 79). It would also be important to have health promoting policies on campuses and ensuring that students had enough time for recreation and sport as well as supports to deal with stress and pressure and it may also be essential for colleges to provide on site services for students dealing with alcohol problems, sexual health, drug addiction and mental health issues.

No-one would suggest that alcohol companies promote 'irresponsible' drinking as a solution to the problem, but perhaps it is time to evaluate whether 'responsible' drinking is really a misplaced message (Wolburg, 2005: 177). However, by focusing on the age of the drinker rather than the amount of alcohol consumed, the problem of alcohol abuse is again situated with the drinker instead of the product.

The introduction of mandatory alcohol and drug testing for students at Irish Universities would be draconian, but a sensible approach to drinking and overall health should be encouraged. Dr Chris Luke (Irish Independent, 2008: 2), consultant in accident and emergency medicine at Cork University and Mercy Hospital, pointed out that 10 years ago university campuses were awash with cheap booze, now many of the universities had managed to get rid of that culture, but students started drinking at home instead.

More than half of the 1.26 million visits to Irish emergency departments every year were a result of alcohol, drugs and violence. Students should be given the support to live healthy lives on campus and there should be an element of trust on both sides, the curriculum should be engineered so that students are not overloaded with work and the campus should be engineered so that they can play sports, debate, be involved in societies etc, to indulge the non academic brain as well,

(www.independent.ie/national-news/only-96--charged-for-selling-alcohol--to-minors-1297114.html?service=14/0302008).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

A discipline or profession is established by developing a body of knowledge which is unique, that body of knowledge is produced through research. Although research is important in both business and academic activities, there is no consensus in the literature on how it should be defined, identifies Amaratunga et al., (2002a: 17). One reason for this is that research means different things to different people, however, there is an agreement that research is a process of enquiry and investigation

Research is conducted in the spirit of inquiry, which relies on facts, experiences and data, concepts and constructs, hypotheses and conjectures and principles and laws. The starting point in research is to focus clearly on the fact that the ultimate purpose is to add something of value to the body of accumulated knowledge. This means that an unanswered question or unsolved problem will be identified and studied and that the researcher will attempt to produce a suitable answer to the question or solution at hand. Therefore, a discussion or philosophy is essential before embarking on a research project (Amaratunga et al., 2002b: 18). Research may be categorised into two distinct types: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative concentrates on words and observations to express reality and attempts to describe people n natural solutions. In contrast, the quantitative approach grows out of a strong academic tradition that places considerable trust in numbers that represent opinions or concepts (Ruyter and Scholl, 1998: 7).

The purpose of the research was primarily to ascertain whether or not the advertising of alcohol to Students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo plays a role in there influence to purchase alcohol. This chapter details the construction and use of the research instrument, the gathering of data, and the procedure for analysis within this research, it will discuss these methods and will give an explanation as to why a particular method has been chosen as opposed to another. Methods are an important part of a successful research design and need to be conducted in a specific way to

obtain the most valid and significant results for the available resources. Therefore the main source of primary research was made in the form of a questionnaire.

3.2 Research aims

The aim of the research is to investigate the role importance alcohol advertising has on the purchasing influence of students and to ascertain whether or not advertising has any affect what-so-ever on the brand or particular type of alcohol the student may purchase. When considering the composition of this piece of research it was found that other researchers had investigated related topics and so the current piece was something that would provide new information. The controversy surrounding the topic, made it all the more exciting to research as the students reactions and opinions towards the advertising of alcohol were varied.

3.3 Objectives of the study

- To investigate the students views on allowing the advertising of alcohol on college grounds and discover if such advertising affects their choice to consume alcohol
- To discover if such alcohol advertising places pressure on the individual to drink alcohol at college events (for example class parties)
- To discover student's views about how alcohol affects them on a personal level and what their main attraction is, for drinking alcohol
- To discover what methods of alcohol advertising students are most exposed to on a daily basis on the college campus (i.e. posters, emails etc)
- To investigate whether college events including Fresher's week and RAG week is alcohol orientated and to discover whether such events puts pressure on students to consume alcohol

3.4 Research procedure

The research commenced in spring of 2008, by sourcing past and present literature in the chosen area to clarify the research problem. This documentary analysis was completed prior to the construction of the questionnaire, so the insights gained gave

the researcher a better understanding and knowledge about the chosen topic, which contributed greatly in the formulation of the questionnaire.

3.5 Instrumentation

When undertaking a piece of research, it is imperative to the overall success of the study that one chooses a suitable research method. Inevitably this is determined by the nature of the research, the research problem and the specific sources of information.

For the purpose of this research, an approach was employed which saw the use of qualitative data, which consisted of the construction of a questionnaire. Qualitative methods are objective and therefore allows the researcher to 'collect facts and study the relationship of one set of facts to another' (Bell, 1993a: 5). 'A questionnaire, can be used before you begin your research...it can also be used after developing your Research problem, as your only research technique, or as part of a group of techniques' (Kane 1993a: 72). Questionnaires are the most common technique used in survey research suggests De Vaus, (1986: 5). They are believed to be easy to conduct, as the researcher is able to collect information on the same variables and are characterised as being systematic or structured. This enables the researcher to organise quantitative data in a more formal way.

3.6 Questionnaire

The design of the questionnaire can have an effect on the answers received from the targeted group. It is important that the questions are laid out in an appropriate way so that the respondents do not become confused or miss any questions (Kane, 1993b: 74).

As the study was largely based upon gaining an insight into the personal views of the students, it would appear obvious that the researcher should select a qualitative method of research and as a result and due to time constraints the use of a questionnaire was necessary as they are a a good way of collecting certain types of information quickly and relatively cheap suggests (Bell, 1993b: 76). However, in an

attempt to address this issue, the questionnaire designed was composed essentially of multiple choice and dichotomous questions which did lead the participants to logical and organised data entry and analysis for both quantitative and qualitative findings.

3.7 Questionnaire design

For the purpose of this research and as a fast and efficient way of reaching the students, an online survey tool called 'SurveyMonkey' was used. SurveyMonkey was set up in 1999; it enables people of all experience levels to create their own surveys quickly and easily. With thousands of customers in over 40 countries, SurveyMonkey is flexible and scalable enough to meet the needs of a wide range of people, it gives researchers the tools they need to create their own surveys, and above all, it enables them to get it done quickly and easily. There are no long-term commitments or hidden charges when you use SurveyMonkey. Researchers can sign up as a monthly customer, and use their services for as long as is needed, there is no software to install, and no complicated manual. In an age where personal data is traded like a commodity, SurveyMonkey pledges to respect each customer's privacy. Any data that the researcher collects is kept completely and absolutely confidential, (http://www.surveymonkey.com/Home_FeaturesDesign.aspx 20/04/2008).

The designed questionnaire was composed mainly into two sections, both sections consisted of a selection of question types i.e. structured and unstructured. The 'comment on' section on each question, attempted to elicit an extensive answer by posing a question and leaving enough space for the respondents to type a short paragraph or contribute by adding any additional opinions or views that they may have, which may be beneficial to the research topic.

Section A of the questionnaire deals with the background information of the students, trying to get a further insight (for example, age bracket, year of study currently in, sex, etc). Section B, which was the main section of the questionnaire consisted of a range of questions each looking at the possible problems at hand, facing the advertising of alcohol on College grounds of the Institute of Technology, Sligo. Each question looked at the students opinions of alcohol advertising. The goal of the

instrument was to identify students opinions, attitudes and awareness of been exposed to such advertising.

Due to the somewhat delicate nature of the study, it was paramount that much time was invested into the careful design of the questionnaire i.e. the wording, structure and presentation of the questions. The language employed had to be carefully considered in order to facilitate the respondent's completion of the questionnaire.

Although using surveymonkey was fast and cheap, it also had its disadvantages; for example by not having someone there in person to answer any queries that the participants may have regarding the research or a particular question may result in the students not completing the questionnaire. With only 368 responses in total (6.7% of the total student population), the information gathered was still considered adequate to provide answers to the research problem at hand.

3.8 The pilot study

Anderson and Arsenault (1999: 188) recognises that it is important to test a questionnaire to ensure that the wording and instructions will be fully understood. Hence why the questionnaire was piloted among two past members of the Institute of Technology, Sligo. The participants were asked to record their responses or opinions accurately regarding the suitability of the methods. The results and feedback from the piloting process allowed for the questionnaire to be adjusted accordingly with included the adding and subtracting of particular questions and also showed that whilst the questionnaire was quite lengthy (41 questions in total), it did address a range of issues which was necessary to cover for the research problem and gained a greater understanding of views and opinions towards college events and students own experience's with the advertising of alcohol on college grounds.

3.9 The sample size

As the research problem was based on the perceptions and attitudes of students in the Institute of Technology, Sligo the potential sample size was quite large. On Thursday, May1st 2008 each student in the Institute received an email containing the questionnaire link and a brief explanation of the study. At this particular time, there

were 3,500 full-time students; 1,100 part-time students (the college has three main departments which divide the students into the different courses which are as follows: School of Business and Humanities; School of Engineering and School of Science), and 900 apprentices attending the Institute of Technology, Sligo, which was a total potential sample size of 5,500 students. It was imperative that each respondent remained anonymous to the researcher at all times, as to respect the students identity it was not necessary to view each students response on a personal scale.

3.10 Field procedure

As it was, a somewhat personal matter and the students individual opinions and views were sought after, it was important to follow the right protocol when carrying out the questionnaire, the first step was to contact the Director of the college Dr. Richard Thorn by letter, followed up by phone calls explaining the research problem and seeking permission to contact each student individually using the college campus email system, after permission was granted by Dr. Richard Thorn the Freedom of Information Officer had to be contacted also seeking permission to send the questionnaire via email. Then the email containing the questionnaire link was circulated to each student throughout the college briefly explaining the purpose of the study and to clarify individual items (Gay, 1996: 56).

Each email contained a short background about the researcher and the intentions of the study, each student was then informed that the questionnaire was to be completed individually and all information retrieved was to remain anonymous. When the e-mail was successfully sent out, the researcher checked the questionnaire response rate on a regular basis and two weeks prior the closing date for the questionnaire each student was again sent an e-mail reminding them to fill out the questionnaire if they had not taken the time to do so already.

3.11 Reliability

An essential component which all researchers need to take into consideration when conducting a piece of research is the reliability and validity of the methods employed to obtain the research findings. Bell (1993c: 64) defines reliability as; the extent to

which test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions. However, in saying that it is near impossible to control all of the factors affecting reliability. Kumar (1999a: 138) points out that, a slight ambiguity in the wording of questions or statements can affect the reliability of a research instrument, as can the respondent's mood. Hence, reiterating the need for the piloting process, as discussed previously. When dealing with people's thoughts, views and opinions you can not predict what they are thinking or what moods or experiences is clouding their judgement, therefore an element of trust is needed to ensure that they, to the best of their ability answer all questions with honesty and respect.

3.12 Validation of data

Validity is the touchstone of all types of educational research, be it qualitative or quantitative and according to Kumar (1999b: 140), validation of data refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration. In order to enhance the content validity of the study, attention was paid to the extent to which the questions represent the issue they are supposed to measure. It was also crucial to the face validity of the research, that a logical link be established between each question and to the research objective (Kumar, 1999c: 140). Data validity was also improved through careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatments of the data, as well as recognition of research limitations (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003: 105).

3.13 Procedure for analysis

Due to the vast nature of the study in question, unfortunately not all the individual comments and suggestion can be addressed but the researcher will take the general view and opinions that the students may have and combine them. In light of this, the analysis will be largely centred on the exploration of any key themes which emerge from the examination of the questionnaire. The responses obtained for many questions in the questionnaire will be sub-categorised according to the derived data. Further more respondents may provide numerous answers, which may all fall under separate categories.

3.14 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study were many and varied, within the practical constraints of time, money and availability there were many areas for concern. Firstly the time constraint, as it was quite late in the year when the questionnaire was distributed, at a period when students were studying for exams, completing assignments and looking forward to the end of yet another college year there time was quite limited and therefore the number of responses may not have been as many as was initially hoped for. Not one response was received from the Apprentice students, which limited the amount of responses and level of feedback to an extent.

Although a questionnaire is a good method of collecting, organising and analysing data, many criticisms also accompany them. These can include the fact that some people may not have a large knowledge surrounding the topic of the questionnaire and therefore will not provide a valid set of results, or it could be that the participant will interpret certain questions in a different way to the researcher. Also the questionnaire as a research tool can pose its own threats to the reliability and validity of the research, as the researcher has no true way of establishing the honesty and depth with which each question was answered. One of the most important criticisms of questionnaires in general, is that they do not enable the researcher to adequately understand the subjective views of the informants, as some areas of life are not quantifiable (De Vaus 1986: 9).

Sending the questionnaire to students via email was fast and efficient, but a response rate is not guaranteed and although an email was sent at a later date reminding students about the research topic and informing them of the closing date for completing the questionnaire, the researcher could never be sure if students had given any attention to such emails.

Finally, there was quite a limited number of Irish sources of information for the literature review and a lot of the evidence is largely based on information obtained from overseas studies, which was beneficial as it gave the researcher a greater understanding of rules and regulations dealing with the advertising of alcohol abroad but just not from an Irish perspective.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In chapter four, the researcher gained an insight from Kane, (1993c: 75), regarding the challenge of overcoming the analysis of qualitative responses in the quantitative methodology of the questionnaire. In conclusion, the quantitative data obtained depicts a holistic view of specific observations in the research field.

As previously stated the questionnaire was distributed via e-mail to:

- 3,500 full-time students, 1,100 part-time students and 900 apprentices in The Institute of Technology, Sligo. A total of 368 surveys were completed (6.7% response rate) and analysed using the online survey tool (surveymonkey.com) which was previously explained in the methodology chapter.

4.2 Outline of Presentation and analysis of Findings

The questions in the research questionnaire provide a broad framework to the investigation. Hence, with a view of fulfilling the proposed research questions, the following questions were considered when beginning the analysis process:

1. What are the major themes or patterns running through the data?
2. Are there prominent links between themes?
3. What impacts are identified on a recurring basis?

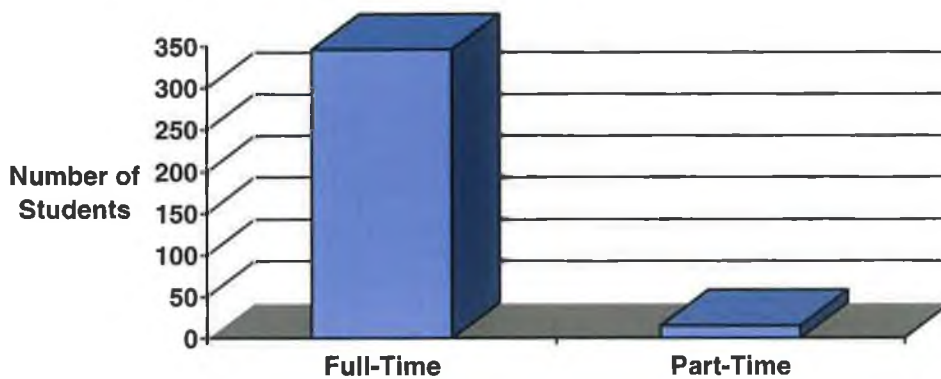
Subsequent analysis and discussion of these results are made in light of the literature review. With regards to qualitative data it is not possible or desirable to treat analysis as an individual activity.

4.2.1 The particular area of study each participant is in

A total of 5,500 students were registered at the Institute of Technology, Sligo, in 2007/2008 between lifelong learning, the apprentice department and the three schools (Business and Humanities, Science and Engineering). A total number of 368 students partook in the questionnaire, six were from lifelong learning, 180 students were from the School of Business and Humanities, 103 from the School of Science and 73 students from the School of Engineering, no students from the Apprentice department participated in the questionnaire (which resulted in quite a loss of ideas that may have been beneficial to the study). The only explanation the researcher can give for this shortfall is the fact that it was nearing the end term when the questionnaire was distributed at a time when students were busy studying etc.

4.2.2 If each respondent was in fulltime or part-time education:

Figure 1: Number of students studying full or part time



Of the total response, 346 students were in full-time education and 15 students were studying part time in the Institute of Technology, Sligo

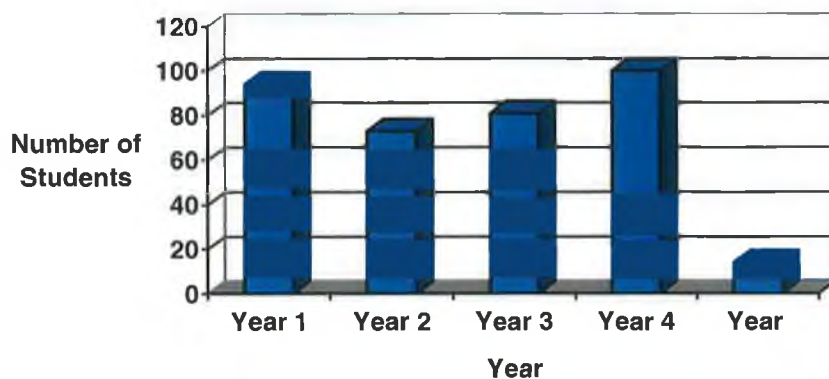
4.2.3 The age bracket in which each student fell under

363 students answered this particular question, of which 133 were aged between 15-20, 168 aged between 21-25, 34 between the ages of 25-30, 11 students between 31-

35, nine aged between 36-40 and eight respondents were aged between 40-50+ and five students left this question unanswered.

4.2.4 What year each participant was in

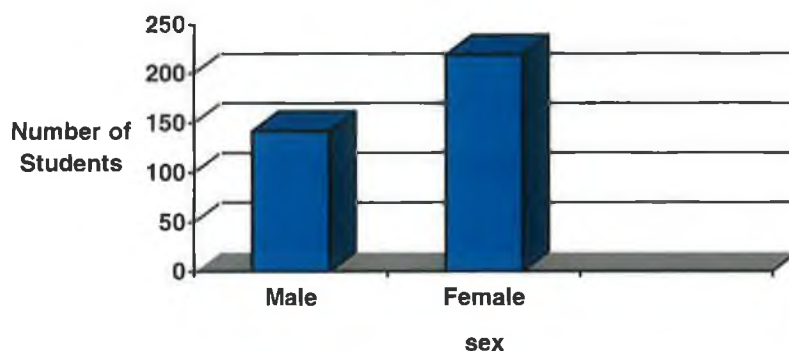
Figure 2 The year in which each student was currently in



A total of 94 respondents were in year one, 73 students were in year 2, 81 were in year 3, 100 students in year 4 and 14 students in year 5 participated in the questionnaire and a total of six students skipped this question, the researcher is unaware why some students skipped certain parts of the questionnaire and as it was an online survey, the author was not present at the filling out of the questionnaires, so the only conclusion that can be drawn from some participants choosing not to answer certain questions was that they were not comfortable to do so.

4.2.5 The sex of each student

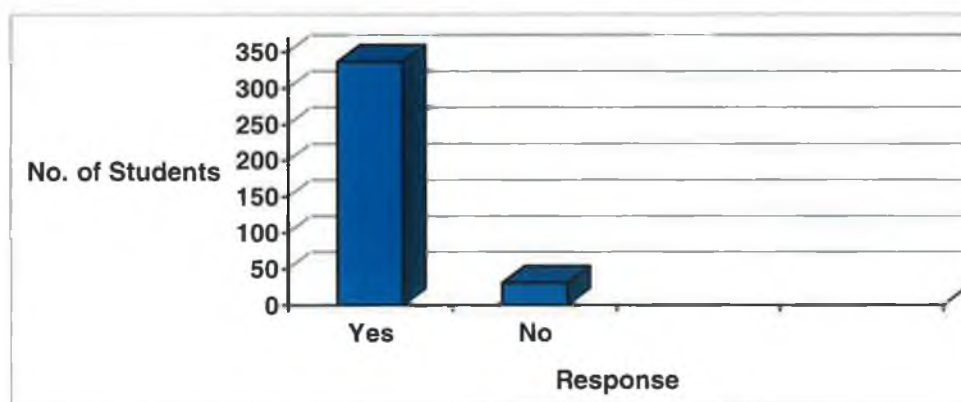
Figure 3: The number of students who were male or female



Of the 368 participants, 142 male and 219 female answered this question and a total of 7 students skipped this particular question. Many findings from the literature review chapter on drinking habits indicated that men drank almost twice as much alcohol per month as did women, however the similarity in number of men and women who ever drink alcohol may be the same notes Sharma, (1995: 20). Gender differences are stronger in the escalating phase of drinking than at the initial level. Males greater power need in the escalating phase of drinking might indicate greater importance that males attach to their ability to consume great quantities of alcohol. The greater quantity of alcohol consumption during a short span of time may also contribute to greater disinheriting effect of alcohol and result in a greater likelihood of males coming into confrontation with the law authorities. The stronger tendencies of females to report feelings of distress and having interpersonal problems as correlated with binge drinking might reflect the judgement that such a pattern of escalating levels is contrary to cultural standards of women (Liu and Kaplan, 1996: 45).

4.2.6 Alcohol consumption rate amongst students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo

Figure 4 the total number of participants who drinks alcohol



As the graph indicates, from a total of 368 respondents, there was a 100% response rate for this question, showing that 337 students answered yes that they do drink alcohol and with 31 students answering no.

The high rate of students who drinks alcohol coincides with published data, who suggested that alcohol consumption rate was high among college students, drinking

alcohol seems to be an integral aspect of the process of adolescent development partially explaining why alcohol use is so widespread among university and college students suggests (Sharma, 1995: 20).

4.2.7 The age at which the student had their first alcoholic beverage

The responses for this question showed that quite a substantial number of students had their first alcoholic beverage at the very young age of 11, but the majority of respondents had their first alcoholic drink between the ages of 15 to 17, with just eight out of the 226 students with whom answered this question waited until they were the over the legal age to consume alcohol (7 participants had their first alcoholic beverage at 18 years of age and just one participant was 19 years). Alcohol availability is associated with increased alcohol consumption among the general population as well as among young adults and older adolescents. One conception of 'Irishness' that is shared with many popular sources involves the use, and often even the abuse, of alcohol. Alcohol advertising has also been found to influence positive expectancies about alcohol abuse, which in turn influenced intention to use alcohol for under-age youth (15-20 year old) but not for adults (18 and older). Other studies have found that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with increased alcohol use by youth (Pasch, et al, 2007: 588).

Although there are legal restrictions on the sale of alcohol to young people, access to alcohol is relatively unproblematic for many under-age drinkers. This is both because these restrictions are flaunted by some establishments and because of the creative ploys used by some under-age drinkers to obtain alcohol from shops. The requirement for young people routinely to show proof of age cards when making alcohol purchases would be one means of reducing the likelihood of such sales. Clearly this is not going to prove entirely effective given the known practice of asking adults or older friends to purchase alcohol for them (Barnard and Forsyth, 1998: 211).

Therefore, the findings from the primary research conducted by the researcher proved that youth do consume alcohol at quite a young age and many had done so before starting college, which indicates that the college is not solely to blame for the high levels of alcohol consumption among students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

4.2.8 Alcohol preferences

The most popular drinks in this category was beers/ciders (chosen by a total of 103 respondents) followed closely by spirits (chosen by 102 students). As seen in the literature, product personalities are designed to appeal to specific market segments, for example in targeting the young people, Coors beer is associated with an unspoiled wilderness, whereas Budweiser is associated with athletic success. Use of these products connects the young person's fantasies to these images (Wells et al, 1998: 46), and the finding of the research proves this, that young people are attracted to beers and spirits at a young age. One study by Kropp et al. (1999: 542) specifically examined beer consumption in first-year university students and found that students who engaged in greater frequency and volume of beer consumption had a less sophisticated identity status.

It is not surprising to the researcher that beer was the most popular choice among students as it cheap and popular for all ages and sexes to drink throughout Ireland.

4.2.9 The physical and psychological effects of alcohol

A total of 170 students suggested that alcohol makes them feel happy with 88 students stating that alcohol makes them feel more assertive – which consisted of things like more confident, forceful and less tired. Males tend to report higher rates of violence and anti social behaviour. In contrast, females are more likely to resort to alcohol for personal purposes, such as suppressing feelings of distress and dealing with personal problems, such as depression and psychological distress. It has been documented that females are socialised to value such qualities as being warm and compassionate (Liu and Kaplan, 1996: 28).

Drinking has also been associated with thrill-seeking as well as deviant behaviours (Lastovicka et al, 1987: 259), in addition to this, alcohol use is linked to aggressive and risk-taking behaviours, such as drink-driving and delinquent or criminal behaviour, furthermore this behaviour is reported more often in males than in females. Males are said to be more individualistic, aggressive and dare to challenge authorities, these findings tie in with findings and opinions from the primary research.

As many students suggested that alcohol makes them feel happy and confident, this shows the researcher that they have a positive attitude towards their drinking patterns and unless any negative side effects take place their attitude will not change.

4.2.10 The specific targeting of alcohol advertisements

A total of 172 students stated a 'yes' response, with 62 students choosing 'no' implying that they do not agree that advertisements target specific segments. In the 'why' section of this question the general consensus that students gave was that alcohol advertising and selling is aimed at teenagers and the youth market, where beer advertisements were more sport and male orientated and the fact that most advertisements show 20-30 year olds both male and female drinking and having a good time, although there was a substantial number of students who gave the advertising industries of alcoholic beverages the benefit of the doubt stating that they were not segmented to specific age groups and that they targeted the population as a whole. However literature retrieved in chapter one will contradict this finding: Increases in the levels of adolescent drinking have been linked to the introduction of 'designer' alcoholic drinks, 1995 saw the release of the first official, alcoholic soft drink, Davie (1995: 52) confirmed that such drinks were particularly popular with younger age adolescents who reported that they liked the packaging and enjoyed the sweet taste.

Sports, have long been viewed as an effective vehicle through which products, including alcohol and tobacco, can be promoted. A common argument for the restriction of sports-related promotions has been that, by associating images of attractive healthy models and sports activities with alcohol products obscures potential health risks while inducing consumption, particularly among young audiences. In many ways, sports are the perfect vehicle to reach the young male target audience desired by marketers of beer and tobacco products (Davie 1995: 52).

4.2.11 The branding of alcoholic beverages

Again the general consensus of 156 students who answered 'yes' agreed that certain alcoholic drinks are more targeted towards the youth market with 75 students

disagreeing with this statement, in the ‘please specify why’ part of this question many students suggested similar things to the previous questions again alcopops came up numerous times, with students suggesting that all alcopops advertisements is targeted towards the youth market stating that the sweet flavour masked the taste of alcoholic and they tasted more like soft beverages (e.g. lemonade). In the recent past, this alcoholic soft drink has tended to refer to fortified or ‘fruit’ wines (such as WKD) and the new ciders (such as white lightning). These drinks are notable for the style of their packaging which tends to be bright eye-catching labelling and distinctively shaped bottles and the often brightly coloured, sweet, often syrupy flavour of the drink itself, particularly the fruit wines (Barnard and Forsyth, 1998: 207).

Exposure to alcohol advertising leads children and youth to have a brand recall and hold more positive beliefs about social and ritual use of alcohol.

4.2.12 The factors influencing the purchasing power of the students

The choices for this question included; strength, taste, price, packaging, image and name, among these taste proved to be the most popular among students with 198 respondents choosing this option with price and strength been the next favourites. Kuo et al., (2003: 6) found that the lower the price of beer in the surrounding community, the higher the binge-drinking rate at the college. This is consistent with previous findings that alcohol consumption by college students is affected by price. In line with this are the findings that alcohol promotions, price specials, and large-volume discounts are associated with higher binge-drinking rates (Wells et al., 1998: 46).

To the surprise of the author, the students most popular choice was taste, and it had proven in the literature that price was the domineering factor when dealing with college students, but this is not the case for the students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

4.2.13 The influence of the packaging on alcoholic products

180 students stated a 'no' response to this question, whereas 56 students stated 'yes' agreeing that packaging does influence their choice to purchase a particular alcoholic brand. The students who commented on this question suggested that 'taste and quality' was more important than colour or packaging and many students stated that they could not be fooled by the advertising industries of these products, they would not pay more for a colourful vodka just because of its packaging or fancy shaped bottle. This was also found in the literature review when Spawton (1990: 48) suggested that a trend towards 'quality' has made the whole new concept of 'brand name' of vital importance to marketers as the ultimate communicator of quality and value.

This coincides with past literature in a sense that student's opinions and decisions to purchase alcohol cannot be swayed by packaging, colour or design of the bottle and this was proved by the students at the Institute Technology, Sligo.

4.2.14 The characteristics of designer drinks

The options included; shape and size of packaging, colour, taste resembles fruit juice, price range is cheaper, well known brand or other. A total of 103 students chose 'well known brand' as been the most important, followed by 92 students stating price range and 58 students choosing taste.

This theory was also discovered in the literature by Spawton, (1990: 48) who suggest that exposure to alcohol advertising leads children and youth to have a brand recall. The theory of brand capital explains the process by which advertising affects demand and can also explain how alcohol advertising effects knowledge, attitudes and intentions to drink.

Brand recall was most important here for the students, they would choose a brand of beer that they were most familiar with rather than trying new alcoholic beverages, followed next by price which is not surprising as many students are on low budgets the price of the alcohol would be a contributing factor when choosing alcohol.

4.2.15 The number of students who drank prior to attending the Institute of Technology, Sligo

This question was asked to give the researcher an insight into whether college life places more pressure on students to drink, or if the advertising around the campus encourages them to do so. But from the knowledge gained from previous questions many students had their first alcoholic drink at quite a young age, with 225 students stating a 'yes' answer to this question, that they did drink prior attending college with a mere 10 students stating a 'no' response.

The peer group appears to be the single most important determinant, at least in early drinking patterns of adolescence and young adulthood. Drinking is largely a social and recreational activity and it is therefore no surprise that friends have a major influence on drinking habits suggest Davie, (1995: 52).

This indicates that the college is not directly to blame for the high binge rates among students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo the research findings prove that many students had taken their first alcoholic drink before attending college, but the college may, indirectly may be contributing to this problem, by exposing the students to alcohol advertising, enticing them to consume alcohol.

This question proves to the researcher that socialising is a very important part of college life.

4.2.16 On average, the number of nights per week the student socialised

The aim of this question was to show the researcher how many times per week students like to socialise, with the results showing that 103 students only went out one night per week, with 43 students stating they went out two nights per week, 10 students choosing to go out three times per week with six students suggesting they socialised four nights per week in Sligo, in the 'other please specify' option for this question quite a substantial number of students suggested that the maximum amount of times they socialise throughout the college year is only once or twice per month.

4.2.17 The preferred student pub and night-club in Sligo

The purpose of this question was to show the researcher where students most liked to socialise and was this because of advertising of these particular pubs and clubs on the college grounds.

Student Pub

The most popular student pub voted by 49 students in the questionnaire was The Brewery, which may be due to the fact that it is the closet pub to the college campus and surrounded by a lot of student housing and student accommodation. The next most popular pub voted by 45 students was The Leitrim which is renowned throughout the college year for theme nights and special drink promotions, followed by 18 students who voted for McHugh's.

Night-club

The Students of The Institute of Technology, Sligo voted Envy to be their number one student nightclub to socialise throughout the college year, followed closely by Toffs.

4.2.18 The influence of theme nights or drink promotions in student pubs and clubs in Sligo Town

142 students voted 'no', with 92 students choosing a 'yes' answer, implying that theme night or drink promotions has no influence over there decision to socialise. When students were asked to comment on there chosen answer, the main reasons given was that student nights out are all about 'cheap' drinks so promotions would sway there decision to go out. In line with this are the findings that alcohol promotions, price specials, and large-volume discounts are associated with higher binge-drinking rates among college students. On the negative side some students suggested that when pubs are having special promotion nights there tends to be a much bigger crowd out and some students were not in favour of this, findings in the literature suggest that as the price of alcohol increases, consumption rates decrease

and in contrast as the price of alcohol decreases, consumption rates increase. Moreover young people are more affected by the price of alcohol (Kuo et al, 2003: 1).

Students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo are not swayed by theme nights or promotions, they chose to go out because they want to, not because there is a particular event been held in a student pub or nightclubs.

4.2.19 The advertising of college events and how such events may influence the students decision to consume alcohol while socialising

183 students voted 'yes' suggesting that RAG week and Fresher's week encourage students to drink and those who commented suggested that RAG week was all about drinking and a way of having fun, and some suggested that Fresher's week was a good chance to go out socialise, drink alcohol and meet new class mates. Although 54 students voted 'no' saying that these college events has no impact over there decision to drink and feedback retrieved by these students suggested that some events that are held throughout RAG week are sponsored by non-alcoholic drink companies (e.g. Redbull). The general consensus about RAG week among students it that it is the one week of the whole year that many students look forward to and events and theme nights are featured around the pubs and night clubs. It is the one week of the year that many believe that, if it was advertised or not that students would still be aware of and still participate and drink large amounts of alcohol.

It was suggested in the research time after time from the students, that socialising is a very important part of college life and as a way of meeting new friends, therefore the students were quite positive about the advertising of such events as it kept them up-to-date on what events were to be held on a regular basis.

4.2.20 The college's participation to student's binge drinking levels

Although 178 students voted 'no' with 58 students voted 'yes', suggesting that the college is at fault.

Saffer, (2002: 175) concluded that alcohol advertising originating locally encouraged irresponsible and heavy drinking, Both interior and exterior advertising

were correlated with college binge-drinking rates. Campuses with more off-premise establishments that were free from alcohol advertising, the college binge-drinking rates were significantly lower. Many students who commented on this question agreed with these findings in the literature suggesting that posters placed in the canteen during RAG week and Fresher's week and throughout the college year are promoting DJ's in Envy or Theme nights in the Leitrim and some suggest that it is not the college that is at fault but the student union who provide students with drink discount coupons on class party nights out. In contrast to this argued by Kropp et al, (1999: 543) stating that college students are free to choose to drink or not drink.

The students believe that is it their own choice to drink alcohol and they are not encouraged to do so by the college allowing alcohol advertising on college grounds.

4.2.21 The ethical issues surrounding the college's decision to allow the advertising of night-clubs and drink promotions on the college grounds

The majority of students voted 'yes' stating that it was acceptable for the college to advertise night-clubs and drink promotions on the college grounds, many students commented that socialising is an important part of college life and they need to be aware of what events are taking place on a weekly basis also suggesting that it is a good way for students especially first years to meet new people, argued in the literature it would also be important to have health promoting policies on campuses and ensuring that students had enough time for recreation and sport so that all their socialising is not just centred around the involvement of alcohol consumption (Irish Independent, 2008: 2).

4.2.22 The problems associated with pubs and night-clubs, advertising on campus which may encourage students to drink

This question was directed at night clubs and pubs, are they behaving unethically by advertising in the college which may encourage students to drink, but a total of 180 students disagreed with this question believing that what the pubs and clubs advertising is perfectly ok, many students commented on this question suggesting that

it makes perfect business sense for them to advertise to college students as throughout the week they are their main target market and it makes good business sense.

4.2.23 The students understanding of RAG Week

The main options here: charitable event, a week of socialising, a week of drinking, a week of missing lectures or other. Although RAG week is supposed to be about making money for a particular charity and to a certain extent it still is, but ironically the majority of students chose that RAG week is about socialising followed very closely to a week of drinking, some students suggested that is it a waste of a week and that there is too much of an emphasis on drink, whereas quite a number of students suggested that it was a sequel to SHAG week suggesting to the researcher that it is a week of sexual intercourse and that there is a relationship between drink and the intention to behave in a sexual manner, as previously suggested by the students that RAG week is drink orientated and now suggested it is about the sexual relationships, in contrast to the researchers finding, the literature found that there are contradictory arguments on the role that alcohol plays in risky sexual behaviour.

Abundant alcohol use and risky sexual behaviour as well as sexually transmitted diseases appear to be a question of lifestyle and personality rather than of them having a casual association with each other. These findings show that the combination of alcohol and sexual behaviour is complex and affected by many causes, such as the type of self-control the girl/boy has (Suvivuo et al., 2008: 158).

Although RAG week is that of a charitable event and many students suggested that but they also believe it to be a week of drinking and socialising, this shows the researcher that students are more concerned with the social aspect rather than that of a charitable event.

4.2.24 The college's written alcohol policy

Only 55 students who answered this question knew that the college holds a no alcohol policy, with a total of 178 students stating that they did not know about this policy, some of the people that answered yes, suggested that the policy is not advertised enough, but agreed that was good that students were not allowed in lectures

when intoxicated or allowed consume alcohol on college grounds, many believed it contradictory that the college allowed the advertising of pubs and clubs on college campus as is this not going against what the policy is trying to achieve. As suggested in the literature; colleges and universities struggle to formulate policies on campus alcohol use, education of administration and faculty staff and students, as well as the general public, must take place. Attitudes and drinking behaviour can only change gradually with the help of increased public awareness and concern indentifies, Page (1983: 79).

The researcher suggests that the college alcohol policy be advertised more, making the students more aware of its existence on a frequent basis throughout the college year.

4.2.25 The ethical issues surrounding the Student Unions decision to organise drink promotions for students on class party nights out

180 students disagreed with this statement, with 48 students agreeing that the college is at fault, many students suggest that it is an important part of the college life to socialise and class parties are a great way of getting to know one another and that such promotions don't influence students to drink. Although some students did contradict this suggesting that if the college does hold a no alcohol policy and as the Student Union are a college representative that they should not be allowed promote the consumption of alcohol.

Efforts to reduce problems associated with college drinking have focused primarily on education and changes in behaviour; however the regulation of marketing practices (e.g. sale prices, promotions and exterior advertisements) may also be important strategies to help reduce alcohol consumption among college students (Kuo et al., 2003: 1).Therefore the college should take into there own initiative and be more responsible in the advertising and organising of such alcohol orientated events.

4.2.26 The college's participation in binge drinking rates amongst its students by allowing the advertising of alcohol and social events on college grounds

The students were asked to choose if they; strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

Out of 228 students who answered this particular question, 82 suggested they neither agree or disagree with the statement, 64 students disagreed, 41 students agreed, 29 students strongly disagreed and 12 students strongly agreed with the above statement. Many students commented saying that it was their own choice at the end of the day if they decide to drink alcohol or not, yes maybe the college is informing them about promotions etc but this is not making or telling students to drink, findings in the literature suggested by Kuo et al., (2003: 1), that heavy alcohol consumption by college students and others is encouraged by a an environment in which alcohol is prominent and easily accessible.

This contradicts previous findings from the research, as some students stated here that they believe the college is participating in some way in getting the students to drink alcohol, whereas in previous questions they believed that the college was not to blame. However is has been drawn to the author's attention that advertising directly or indirectly influences the students decision to drink.

4.2.27 Student binge drinking rates in the college

146 students stated 'yes' to the statement suggesting that there is high levels of binge drinking among students in the Institute of Technology, Sligo and a total of 82 students disagreed with this statement. These finding by the researcher was also discovered in the literature which identified that binge drinking (the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks for women, at least once in the past two weeks) has been recognised as a major problem among college students (Kropp et al., 1999: 541), who also indentified that approximately two out of five college students are binge drinkers.

The findings coincide with published data, as it shows that there is high levels of binge drinking among third level students and especially within the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

4.2.28 The effects of alcohol abuse can have on the college

For the purpose of this question students had a number of options to choose from which were: vandalism, academic achievement, absenteeism, concentration and other (please specify).

A total of 204 students believed absenteeism was the main cause for concern, followed by 86 students suggesting concentration, 77 students choosing academic achievement, 49 choosing vandalism and a 17 students choosing the 'other' option which consisted of students suggesting student poverty, also the college reputation. These findings were of no great surprise as the literature had already stated many of these at some stage for example, it is not clear whether alcohol has a negative impact on grades, or whether alcohol is being used to mask stress related to achieving poor grades, but relationships between substance use and certain factors by be consequential for example the relationship between poor academic performance and substance use often noted in the literature could arise as a direct result of substance use argues Boys et al., (2002: 281). Alcohol has been associated with problems such as property damage, physical injuries, unwanted sexual advances and encounters with the law. In addition binge drinking is associated with second-hand effects such as interruption of study or sleep, having to babysit a drunken student, or being victim of a physical and sexual assault (Kropp et al., 1999: 541).

The main problem suggested here was absenteeism, which in-turn affects academic performance and this may be why many students struggle around exam time or with assignment deadlines identifies the author.

4.2.29 The medium of alcohol advertising students are most exposed to

This was a multiple choice question with the following options to choose from; billboards, television, posters, sponsorship, radio, newspaper, branding on

merchandise, internet and other, in the 'other' option many students suggested that peer pressure plays quite a substantial role in students lives, the literature indentified this fact, that the peer group appears to be the single most important determinant, at least in early drinking patterns of adolescence and young adulthood Davie, (1995: 52). The need for power is significantly and positively related to peer influence. Males are expected to report the use/abuse of alcohol in response to peer pressure.

Television was the most popular medium chosen by 165 students this was not surprising, as the literature identified that television is the medium that was associated with the highest number of advertisements subject to complaint, most likely because of the mediums potential for wide coverage and high reach (Zanten, 2005: 28). The next most popular identified by students is posters and billboards again this coincided with Zanatan (2005: 28) that next to television, print and outdoor advertisements were the two most likely to be identified by the public. The third method indentified by the students was sponsorship; one of the most prolific forms of sport marketing is sponsorship of sports, have long been viewed as an effective vehicle through which alcohol products, (McDaniel and Mason: 484).

It was not surprising for the researcher to discover that television was the most exposed form of advertising to Students, as it has the highest reach rate of all advertising mediums. Sport sponsorship was also selected, as sporting is quite a huge part in the lives of many students at the Institute of Technology and sponsorship is a good way to communicate with students especially males or females who are sports orientated.

4.2.30 The complete ban on the advertising of social events within the college

The majority of student's voted 'no' to the ban. There was nothing new to contribute to the research as comments that students added were similar to previous questions. Although, one particular student did suggest not a total ban but just tighter controls on the type and amount of advertising that is placed around the college. Wells et al., (1998: 254) suggested that by banning one form of advertising, marketers would only turn their focus to another method.

The findings here conclude that students would not be optimistic about a complete ban on social events, as again they believe it is a part of student life and should not be taken away from them but a tighter control of advertising may be an appropriate form of action for the college to consider.

4.2.31 The pressure on students to consume alcohol by affiliating the Institute of Technology with drinking establishments

A total of 190 students chose 'no' for this question with only 37 agreeing with this statement, this proves to the researcher that the college is not to blame for the trends in student drinking patterns, that their may be underlying reasons for their binge drinking and this was proved in the earlier statement's when many students suggested that they had consumed alcohol before attending third level education, so the Institute is not to blame for the students binge drinking patterns.

4.2.32 The effect of advertising alcohol on college grounds

138 students voted 'no' that the advertising had no influence over there decision to purchase, with 84 students voting 'yes', although the findings indentified in the literature contradict these findings as it suggested that alcohol advertisements shape knowledge, attitudes and perceptions about alcohol use, which in turn are predictive of positive expectancies and intentions to drink. Messages in alcohol advertising are particularly appealing to the youth and influential in developing their intentions to drink. Adolescents, as compared with adults, may be at increased risk of influence by advertisements because of changes in brain structure that occur during adolescence and adolescents reduced inhibitory control (Pechmann et al., 2005). Other studies have found that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with increased alcohol use by youth (Pasch, et al, 2007: 588), agreed by Wells, (1992: 22) who suggests that exposure to alcohol advertising leads children and youth to have a brand recall and hold more positive beliefs about social and ritual use of beer.

Although the majority of students voted a no answer to this question suggesting to the researcher that alcohol had no authority over there decision to purchase or consume alcohol, it is suggested that if such advertising was not available, then students may

not be tempted to go out but the whole point of pubs and clubs advertising is to entice students to go out, socialise and consume alcohol.

4.2.33 The branding of merchandise to promote alcohol

The majority of students (178) voted a yes, whereas only 48 students voted 'no' the comments that was retrieved by the researcher suggest that students do not care where the products come from as long they are free, many students believe that this type of marketing would not sway their decision to consume alcohol and they see no harm in the companies promoting their products.

4.2.34 The main focal point of alcohol advertising

This was a multiple choice question, and the choices the students had to chose from include; the taste of the product, sophistication, fun or good times, friends and popularity, sex and attractiveness, sports and athleticism, male or female bonding and other.

The most popular theme that students identify with alcohol advertising is fun and good times, followed by friends and popularity and then sex and attractiveness, one student also suggest that advertisements use all of these theme in one way or another these findings correspond with Kenyon, (2006: 52), who suggest that advertisers, when developing an advertisement, usually select from one of seven major types of advertising appeal – fear, humour, sex, music, rationality, emotions and scarcity. Music association within advertising has moved from the 1980's jingles to more sophisticated music in the genre of rock 'n' roll, hip hop or R 'n' B; as this is another strategy used by creative directors of alcohol advertisements (Kenyon, 2006: 52).

Emotional appeal help create a bond with consumer. Commonly used emotions in advertising are: trust, reliability, security, happiness, romance, friendship, and contentment. Sexual appeals are used in advertising to create attention, and build brand awareness, humorous appeals are useful in cutting through advertising clutter and enhancing recall (Wolfe, 1998: 22). Alcohol advertisements also shape knowledge, attitudes and perceptions about alcohol use, which in turn are predictive of positive expectancies and intentions to drink. Messages in alcohol advertising are

particularly appealing to the youth and influential in developing their intentions to drink. Adolescents, as compared with adults, may be at increased risk of influence by advertisements because of changes in brain structure that occur during adolescence and adolescents reduced inhibitory control (Pechmann et al., 2005).

College life is about a new journey, for many students it means moving out of the family home for the first time, it involves meeting new people and socialising, students can identify with advertisements if they are based around what is going on in their own lives at that time, for example advertisement showing young people socialising and drinking and having fun, this is what students will relate to and these such ads will encourage students to do the same; go out, have fun, mix with the opposite sex and have fun suggests the researcher.

4.2.35 The use of graphics, images, humour or language in the advertising of alcohol

This question is quite similar to the previous, with 166 students suggesting 'no' that these factors do not influence students decision to consume alcohol and with 62 students voting 'yes'.

Stating that students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo cannot be influenced by the types of appeal that alcohol advertisers had to offer.

4.2.36 Diageo advertisements and how effective they are at targeting students

The response by students for this question was quite balanced, with 120 students choosing 'no' and a total of 106 students voting 'yes', that such ads are affective.

The feedback that the researcher received from the students about these advertisements is quite positive, many students commented that these advertisements were quite realistic and graphic which related totally to the youth market, others believed that it did create awareness of the youth drinking problem and some felt that the slogan was quite catchy and easy to remember. On a more negative side many students suggested that although college students are aware of the risks of binge drinking, they tend to ignore the facts and maybe change the channel when such advertisements come on to the television, some students suggest that the message

should become more bolder and with more media coverage, to encourage students and the youth to listen.

4.2.37 The banning of innovative fictitious characters in the advertising of alcohol

175 students answered no to this question, whereas 38 students voted yes, again this question refers to the humorous technique that advertisers use in the marketing of alcoholic beverages, although the students suggested that these advertisements were funny and eye-catching the literature proved that the response to humour by audience members can be very idiosyncratic: sexual humour, satire and other forms of aggressive humour may generate strong positive feelings in some audience members and strong negative feelings in others. According to Wolfe (1998: 22) sarcasm and jokes made at another's expense are popular with younger audiences, but are likely to backfire with the baby-boomer generation (40 to 60 year olds).

4.2.38 Potential health dangers associated with drinking

213 students stated that 'yes' they are aware of the health risks associated with drinking, where as only nine students suggested that they were not aware of the potential risks associated with drinking alcohol. Many students identified health problems such as liver disease/failure, cancer, stomach ulcers, memory loss, addiction, brain damage, depression, lack of concentration, drink driving, all these findings correlate with research identified in the literature, several explanations have been offered for this high-risk harmful consumption behaviour among college students for example, sensation-seeking and feelings of invulnerability (Lipkus et al, 1994, Lynch and Bonnie, 1994) and very little attention has been paid to the idea that personal values may play a role in predicting the likelihood of being a drinker. Drinking has also been associated with thrill-seeking as well as deviant behaviours (Lastovicka et al, 1987; Beerman et al 1988), in addition to this, alcohol use is linked to aggressive and risk-taking behaviours, such as drink-driving. Other researchers (Jesen, 1982; Newcombe and McGee, 1989) report that alcohol misuse commonly precedes the commission of a delinquent or criminal act, furthermore this behaviour is reported more often in males than in females. Males are said to be more

individualistic, aggressive and dare to challenge authorities. The disinheriting effects of alcohol might exacerbate such tendencies as well as reflect confrontation with the law and authorities. The confrontation might also feed the need for excitement and power hypothesized to be more characteristic of males suggests Liu and Kaplan, (1996a: 28) although it is not clear whether alcohol has a negative impact on grades, or whether alcohol is being used to mask stress related to achieving poor grades, but relationships between substance use and certain factors by be consequential for example the relationship between poor academic performance and substance use often noted in the literature could arise as a direct result of substance use argues Boys et al., (2002: 281).

Although the majority of students suggested that they are aware of the health dangers associated with binge drinking, it still had no effect over there choice to do so, students had the attitude that they did not care or that bad things only happen to other people they were oblivious to the fact that the rate of there own drinking is putting them in potential danger

4.2.39 The inclusion of potential health dangers associated with drinking on all alcohol advertising and packaging

187 students suggested that this would be a very positive thing, as one student pointed out ‘that knowledge is power’ and that advertising the risks can only make students more aware and conscious of the adverse health affects associated with consuming alcohol.

Alcohol warnings and warning labels are intended to alter an individual’s perceived vulnerability to the potential harms disclosed. Proponents of government warning labels contend that consumers will read the label and therefore be less likely to drink alcohol if pregnant or drive after consumption (Suvivuo et al., 2008c: 146).

Warning consumers about the dangers of alcohol consumption can only be a positive thing, therefore, it should become legislation for all alcohol companies to state potential health dangers on all alcohol labels.

4.2.40 An increased partnership between alcohol agencies and bodies such as the Road Safety Authority to combat drink driving in Ireland

Many students agreed 100 percent with this statement emphasising the seriousness of driving an automobile while under the influence of alcohol, this partnership may be effective at reducing the incidence of drink driving.

Therefore the author suggests that such a partnership would have a positive effect on reaching the students and warning them about the dangers of drinking alcohol with the intention to drive.

4.2.41 Any additional comments

The general consensus here from students is that the drink culture in Ireland, may be gone beyond repair at this stage and whether alcohol is advertised or not, students will still drink to a certain extent.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Following the completion of an extensive exploration into the ethical issues facing the advertising of alcohol and its significance in today's society, from previously obtained sources as well as findings from the questionnaire presented in the analysis chapter. The researcher purposes a number of conclusions pertinent to the investigation.

On reflection, the researcher acknowledges that the nature of the research investigation was somewhat ambitious relative to the size of the study and in hindsight; the researcher would reduce the number of questions in the research questionnaire. The researcher must also highlight that due to the vast number of responses which had to be examined, the qualitative material obtained from the study may not have been analysed to its full potential, as each individual comment could not possibly be recorded individually, therefore, the researcher only submitted the general consensus of ideas and suggestions from the students, as this was deemed the most feasible way of analysing and recording the data.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the researcher proposes four approaches, which the Institute of Technology, Sligo could adopt in helping the college to deal with student drinking patterns throughout the college year:

- The first approach is problem based, the researcher suggests that the college hold an annual 'National drink driving and alcohol health awareness day' in the grounds of the college and work in conjunction with the Road Safety Authority. The objectives of this day would be to promote alcohol awareness to the students, via leaflets, pamphlets, visual aids and personally, from professional bodies such as members of the Gardai Siochana who could provide statistical data and facts to

students about the tragic consequences associated with drink driving – even resorting in shock tactics by addressing real testimonials from people who have suffered bereavement or injury as a result of drink driving. Also a nurse or councillor could be present to speak to the students about the adverse health affects that alcohol has on their personal and social lives or answer any questions that the students may have in relation to this social problem. This recommendation would cost very little for the college all that is needed is co-operation from outside bodies who could volunteer their time and support to address this topical and problematic subject, to ensure the day is effective.

- Secondly, another way in which the college could participate in tackling the college binge drinking patterns, would be for the Institute to designate just one notice-board throughout the whole college, for the sole use of entertainment posters and for the advertising of college social events such as RAG week and fresher's week, instead of having posters placed all throughout the college, which to-date are placed on academic notice boards, throughout the college corridors and in the main canteen, this way the students still receive entertainment updates (which was identified from the research as been a very important aspect of college life) but students are not subject to the advertising of such events all over the college campus, which may encourage or place pressure on the students to consume alcohol.
- The third approach is education, although it was identified throughout the literature that alcohol education should begin in secondary schools, it is still not too late to educate students in third level colleges about the dangers of alcohol abuse, it was proposed by the researcher that the college place a drug addiction councillor for just one day per week. This professional body who would be trained and readily available to deal with the different addictions that students may be dealing with and would also encourage students to be more open about these social problems.
- Lastly, the researcher suggests that the college work in conjunction with the chaplaincy and members of the Student Union to create a monthly or quarterly newsletter, educating students about the consequences of drinking alcohol, not

only in their personal lives but also the affects it has on their academic performance. The newsletter could provide students with useful telephone numbers and website addresses that may be useful in case they were ever in need of further assistance. The newsletter could be circulated via e-mail to each registered student, as this is a very fast, cheap and effective way of reaching such a high concentration of people.

5.3 Conclusion

After researching this area, using both primary and secondary data, the author has brought closure to the research problem at hand, but also became aware of gaps in the knowledge of the chosen topic, as a result the author's attention was drawn to other similar areas that could be studied and investigated to further enhance the information and understanding of the topic.

For example, the author would deem it pertinent to further investigate how alcohol education could be integrated into the college curriculum to make students even at this stage in their lives aware of the harmful effects alcohol may have on both their personal and academic performance, although it was stated in past literature that alcohol education should begin at a much earlier stage, the researcher believes that educating students at third level would still be extremely beneficial and helpful for all those students beginning this new and exciting journey in their lives, as it is a journey filled with many trials and tribulations and students need to be aware of the potential health dangers associated with alcohol.

Overall, the author felt that this study was valuable in terms of the results that came to light in the analysis of the questionnaire. This study yielded useful information regarding the effects alcohol advertising has on students and on the lives of students of the Institute of Technology in particular, it also gave the researcher a better insight into the thoughts and views of what the students think about the college allowing the advertising of alcohol orientated social events and the physical and psychological effects alcohol has on their personal and academic lives. The questions posed in the questionnaire were of a similar nature, all based around the effects alcohol advertising has on the students' decision to purchase alcohol and the ethical issues surrounding the college in allowing such advertising.

A total of 368 (6.7% response rate) students at the Institute of Technology, Sligo partook in the questionnaire. The overall consensus from the students, was that they believed that the college was not behaving in an unethical manner by allowing the advertising of social events on college grounds and many suggested in more than one area that socialising was a big part of college life as it was an essential way to meet and connect with new colleagues. Although many students agreed with this statement, the majority of students also suggested that even though they are aware of alcohol advertising on college grounds, it has no influence over their decision to consume alcohol, so the findings from the questionnaire were slightly contradictory in a sense that the majority agree with the college allowing the advertising of alcohol but also suggested that it has no effect whatsoever on their decision to consume alcohol, but past published literature has proven that sub-consciously each of us are aware of all advertising around us and that it must have some effect over our decision to purchase certain products otherwise what would be the point of mass advertising.

Many students are aware of most if not all of the dangers associated with drinking alcohol but even these potential health risks is not enough to stop them from drinking alcohol, but knowledge is power so maybe the only way to reach students is through education and increasing the exposure of the effects alcohol can have.

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APPENDIX 1

The letter of permission sent to Dr. Richard Thorn.

Research Department,
Business and Humanities,
Institute of Technology,
Ballinod, Sligo.

Date: 21st March 2007

Re.: Market Research

Dear _____

The Bachelor of Business in performing market research for a company and analysing the need for a particular software. We would greatly appreciate your participation in this research project.

As part of this study we will be conducting telephone questionnaires with companies involved in certain sectors pertaining to the research. It would therefore be of great assistance to the researchers if you could expect a call on Thursday 22nd March and answer a 3 minute questionnaire.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the supervisor, Joanna Sweeney at the Institute of Technology.

Yours Sincerely,

John Keane
Business & Humanities
Marketing Year 3

APPENDIX 2

E-mail the researcher sent to the Freedom of Information officer

-----Original Message-----

From: Emma Dunleavy

Sent: 21 April 2008 22:17

To: Marian Hargadon

Subject: MSC in Marketing

Hello Marian

Emma Dunleavy here from MSC in Marketing, as part of my research topic which is "An investigation into the ethics of alcohol advertising to students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo", it is necessary for me to carry out primary research in the form of a questionnaire, I was hoping to email the questionnaire using Surverymonkey.com to all students on this coming Wednesday, April 23rd.

I have posted an official letter to Dr. Richard Thorn seeking permission to circulate the questionnaire, but I also need the approval from you the Freedom of Information Officer . If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me or my dissertation supervisor Joanna Sweeney here in the college.

Kind Regards

Emma.

APPENDIX 3

E-mail received from the Freedom of Information Officer

Hi Emma

The number of students is as follows 3500 full-time; 1100 part-time and 900 apprentices.

The structure is as follows:

- Director
- Registrar Department
- Finance Department
- Learning Environment

These three departments would have other areas within them e.g. HR comes under Finance; IT comes under Learning Environment etc.

The Schools are as follows:-

School of Business and Humanities

- Department of Humanities
- Department of Information Systems
- Department of Business
- Dept Marketing Tourism & Leisure

School of Engineering

- Dept of Civil Engineering & Construction
- Department of Mechanical & Electronic Engineering
- Dept of Engineering Technology

School of Science

- Department of Applied Sciences
- Department of Environmental Science

Hope this is the information you are looking for.

Regards
Marian

APPENDIX 4

E-mail sent to students asking them to fill out the questionnaire

Hi everybody

For all of you who do not know me, my name is Emma Dunleavy, I am currently doing my Masters in Marketing here in IT Sligo. As part of my Research topic "An investigation into the ethics of alcohol advertising to students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo" I would greatly appreciate if you would please take a few minutes of your time to fill out a short questionnaire relating to my research topic as the more responses I receive the better my finding's and research will become.

All you have to do is click on the link below:

Thank you all for your time and co-operation,
Emma.

APPENDIX 5

A reminder email asking students to fill out the questionnaire

Hello everybody

Emma Dunleavy from the Msc in Marketing reminding you, that if you have not yet filled out the "Alcohol advertising" questionnaire there is still time to do so, as the questionnaire will not close until Friday 30th May 2008.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have taken the time to fill out the survey already and would ask all students who have not yet had a chance to please do so as soon as possible. The more responses I get the better my research will become.

All you have to do is click on the link below, I do appreciate how busy students are at this time with study and exams but this will only take a few minutes of your time.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=GPTiC9G1mZcg8RUI75K59A_3d_3d

Thank you all again for your time and co-operation and best of luck in your exams.

Emma Dunleavy.

APPENDIX 6

Finalised questionnaire

1. Default Section

1. What area of study are you currently involved in?

- Life Long Learning
- School of Business and Humanities
- School of Science
- School of Engineering
- Apprentice

2. Please specify if you are you studying

- Full-time
- Part-time

3. What year are you currently in?

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5

4. Please tick the age bracket which applies to you?

- 15-20
- 21-25
- 25-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 40-50+

5. Please tick if you are:

- Male
- Female

* 6. Do you drink Alcohol?

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes above, please continue to the next question, if not please do not proceed with the rest of the questionnaire and thank you for your contribution.

7. What age were you when you had your first alcoholic drink?**8. What do you usually drink on a night out?**

- spirits
- beers
- alco pops
- wines
- shots

Other (please specify)

9. How does alcohol make you feel?

- Physically aggressive
- Aroused
- Verbally aggressive
- Assertiveness (confident, forceful)
- Happy
- Sad
- Other (please specify)

10. In your opinion do alcohol companies tailor advertisements to target specific age groups and genders (for example Alco pops and teenagers)

- Yes
- No

Please specify why

11. In your opinion is the Branding of certain alcoholic beverages targeted more towards the youth market?

- Yes
- No

Please specify why

12. What factors influence your purchasing of certain alcoholic brands?

- Strength
- Taste
- Price
- Packaging
- Image
- Name

Other (please specify)

13. Does the packaging (shape, size or colour) have any influence on your decision to drink a particular brand of alcohol?

- Yes
- No

Please specify why

14. From the following characteristics of designer drinks, which one entices your decision to drink them?

- Shape and size of packaging
- Colour
- Taste resembles fruit juice
- Price range is cheaper
- Well known brand
- Other

15. Did you drink prior to attending the Insitute of Technology Sligo?

- Yes
- No

16. On average how many student nights per week do you go out in Sligo?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Other (please specify)

17. In Sligo Town what is your favourite:

Student Pub

Night-club

18. When you hear about theme nights or promotions in student pubs and clubs in Sligo Town, does it encourage you to drink?

yes

No

Please specify why

19. Do you believe that the advertising of college events like RAG week and Freshers Week encourage Students of the Insitute of Technology, Sligo to drink?

Yes

No

Please explain your choice

20. Do you think the college is putting pressure on students to drink alcohol through the advertising of events like RAG Week, Freshers week and Class parties?

Yes

No

Please justify your answer

21. Do you think it is appropriate for the college to allow the advertising of night-clubs and drink promotions in the main canteen and on student notice boards throughout the college corridors?

Yes

No

Please Specify why

22. In your opinion are pubs and night-clubs behaving inappropriately by advertising on campus which may encourage students to drink?

Yes

No

Please specify why

**23. As a student what is your understanding of RAG week?
(please tick the appropriate box)**

Charitable Event

A week of socialising

A week of drinking

A week of missing lectures

Other (please specify)

24. Are you aware that the Insitute of Technology, Sligo has a written alcohol policy in place?

Yes

No

If you answered yes above, do you believe this policy is effective? (Please explain your choice)

25. In your opinion is the college portraying an irresponsible image by allowing the Student Union to promote alcohol consumption through their organising of drink promotions for students on Class party nights out?

Yes

No

Please specify why

26. The college is somehow encouraging students to drink by allowing the advertising of alcohol on the college grounds.

Please tick one of the boxes below

- strongly agree agree Neither agree nor disagree disagree strongly disagree

Please explain your choice

27. Is there a student alcohol binge problem in the Institute of Technology, Sligo?

- Yes
 No

28. How has alcohol abuse affected the Institute of Technology, Sligo?

- Vandalism
 Academic achievement
 Absenteeism
 Concentration
 Other (please specify)

29. What method of alcohol advertising are you most exposed to?

- Billboard
 Television
 Posters
 Sponsorship
 Radio
 Newspaper
 Branding on Merchandise
 Internet
 Other (please specify)

30. Do you think that the Institute of Technology, Sligo should ban all advertising of social events that encourages the consumption of alcohol among its students?

Yes

No

Please specify why

31. Do you think that by affiliating the Insitute of Technology, Sligo with drinking establishments, it is putting pressure on there students to consume alcohol?

Yes

No

Please justify your answer

32. In your opinion, has the advertising of alcohol on college grounds had any influence over student's decision to drink?

Yes

No

Please specify why

33. Should alcohol companies be permitted to brand merchandise like hats, t-shirts, bags and jumpers?

Yes

No

Please specify why

34. From your knowledge what do alcohol advertisements focus on?

- The taste of the Product
- Sophistication
- Fun or good times
- Friends and popularity
- Sex and attractiveness
- Sports and athleticism
- Male or female bonding
- Other (please specify)

35. Has the graphics, images, humour or language used in the advertising of alcohol any influence on your decision to buy a particular brand of alcohol?

- Yes
- No

Other (please specify)

36. In your opinion are the Diageo advertisements or its slogan 'know the one, thats one to many' effective in getting people to drink responsibly?

- Yes
- No

Please specify why

37. Should the use of innovative fictitious characters be banned in the advertising of alcohol?

- Yes
- No

Please justify your answer

38. Are you aware of the potential health dangers associated with drinking?

Yes

No

Please specify the dangers you are aware of:

39. Should alcohol companies be required to include information in their advertisements about the potential dangers associated with drinking?

Yes

No

Please specify why

40. In your opinion should there be increased partnership between alcohol agencies and bodies such as the Road Safety Authority to combat drink driving in Ireland?

41. Please supply any additional comments which you may feel are relevant to this study

3.

I would like to thank you all sincerely for your time and effort in filling out this questionnaire.
Emma.

