



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Smoking and Alcohol Drinking Related to Experience of Harmful Shops among Korean Adolescents

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**Abstract**

**Objectives:** This study was conducted in order to determine any correlation between experience of harmful shops and adolescent smoking and alcohol drinking in middle and high school students.

**Methods:** The survey was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire online via the homepage of the Ministry of Education student Health Information Center; 1888 and 1563 questionnaires were used for middle and high school students, respectively, for a total of 3451 questionnaires in the final analysis. The collected data were processed using SPSS version 21.0 and examined using frequency analysis and hierarchical linear regression.

**Results:** In this research, 8.3% of all participants were found to have experienced smoking and 17.0% alcohol drinking. Regarding the types of harmful shops, 81.8% said they had been to a gaming place; 21.2% to a lodging place; 16.0% to a sex and entertainment place; and 6.8% to a harmful sex industry location. Sociodemographic variables had a significant effect on adolescent smoking and alcohol drinking. Regarding environmental variables, a significant difference was observed for living with parents and school location. Among adolescent experience of harmful shops, both smoking and alcohol drinking showed a significant association with harmful sex industry locations.

**Conclusion:** National government-level management and supervision on this issue will be necessary to prevent adolescent access to harmful shops, along with more studies exploring methods for implementation of policies with more systematic control of harmful shops.

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## 1. Introduction

Environment has a significant influence on growth and development of adolescents, and a negative environment is a particular hindrance to normal personality formation [1]. In addition to temporary effects on adolescence, such negative environments can also have more long-term effects, even into adulthood. In particular, adolescents spend a significant amount of time around school, and they are influenced more around their school environment [2]. Adolescents are immature and therefore are susceptible to the influence of a negative environment, and this situation is being addressed by society. Therefore, they are more likely to be tempted by risky behaviors such as smoking, alcohol drinking, or drug use, due to the environmental influence.

Despite mandatory controls on adolescent smoking and alcohol drinking, they have tended to show a continual increase. According to the 9<sup>th</sup> Korea Youth Risk Behavior Web-based Survey (2013), the lifetime smoking rate of participants was 21.5%, indicating that they first started smoking when they were in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of middle school; 43.9% of them had experience of alcohol drinking, and the average age they started alcohol drinking was 14.4 years, which is lower than 15.1 years in 1998 [3]. The reason that the alcohol drinking rate is relatively higher than the smoking rate is due to Korean culture, which is relatively favorable to alcohol drinking, and it is readily available. However, adolescent alcohol drinking is not merely an issue of problem alcohol drinking or alcoholism, it may also create conflicts with parents, friends and teachers, and it increases the chance of secondary harmful effects, such as unexpected violence or sexual behavior [4,5]. Children from single-parent or parentless families show relatively higher delinquency rates, and adolescents from single-parent families are more involved in health risk behavior such as smoking, alcohol drinking, and drug taking [6,7].

South Korea has introduced and implemented a system of “school environment cleanup zones” under the School Health Act in 1967, for more efficient student guidance, better scholastic achievement, and more amicable emotions in students. However, despite this regulation, the number of harmful shops in the school environment cleanup zones in 2013 was reported as 40,531 [2], and recently, as regulations on harmful shops and prostitution have become stronger, many new varieties of harmful shops have tended to appear.

Precedent studies on the noxious environment to juveniles in our country also reported that the detrimental factors of the harmful environment and shop affected juveniles’ problem behavior [2], and that the environmental factors they perceived were associated with their deviation, violence, and criminal action [8]. Adolescents

contact with harmful shop and their surrounding environment is related to problem behavior [1,9].

In developed countries, as culture and lifestyle are fundamentally different from ours, hiring teenagers to work in entertainment spots for adults, access to those kinds of places, smoking or alcohol drinking do not become social issues. Nevertheless, various systems for protection of adolescents from harmful environments and preservation of the educational environment around schools have been implemented [2]. In Japan, laws have been enacted to protect adolescents and the educational environment from negative influences, by controlling the location of harmful shops within 100–500 m of schools. In the UK, Germany and France, adolescent drug addiction and prostitution have become social problems, and various measures are being implemented. In some foreign countries, adolescent delinquent behavior is affected not only by personal factors, family, or peers, but also by the community environment where they reside, which implies that environmental factors are closely connected with adolescent problems [2,8,10].

Although many studies have reported that harmful environments influence adolescent behavior, most were conducted at a local community rather than national level [8,9]. Few studies have investigated the correlation between the harmful environment around schools and health risk behavior such as smoking and alcohol drinking. This study investigated the accessibility harmful shops to middle and high school students and its effect on smoking and alcohol drinking.

### 1.1. Adolescent access to harmful shops and smoking and alcohol drinking behavior

Risk factors for smoking and alcohol drinking have variables relevant to individual, family, and school [11], and residential type, broken family structure, and economic problems are factors relevant to family [12,13]. When adolescents spend a lot of time with their parents at home, or when their parents have a positive role in their lives, parents have a major influence on adolescents’ behaviors positively. Accordingly, if the parent–child relationship is broken, adolescents are more likely to become violent and display deviant behavior [9,10]. Adolescents from more harmonious families enter harmful shops less often [14]. Family structure has a significant effect on adolescent smoking and alcohol drinking, and children from single-parent families drink more than those from two-parent families or two-family households [7,15].

Adolescents are easily tempted to smoke, drink alcohol, take drugs, and experience sex and violence, and are more likely to act out these behaviors impulsively [16]. Even though their alcohol drinking, smoking, and drug use are legally controlled, they are increasing, and these health risk behaviors may develop into social issues [5]. Satisfaction with school life is

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