



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

NIHR | School for Public
Health Research

ALCOHOL
CHANGE^{UK}

Identifying the key contextual characteristics of heavy drinking occasions: A qualitative content analysis of alcohol discussion forums

By Olivia Sexton

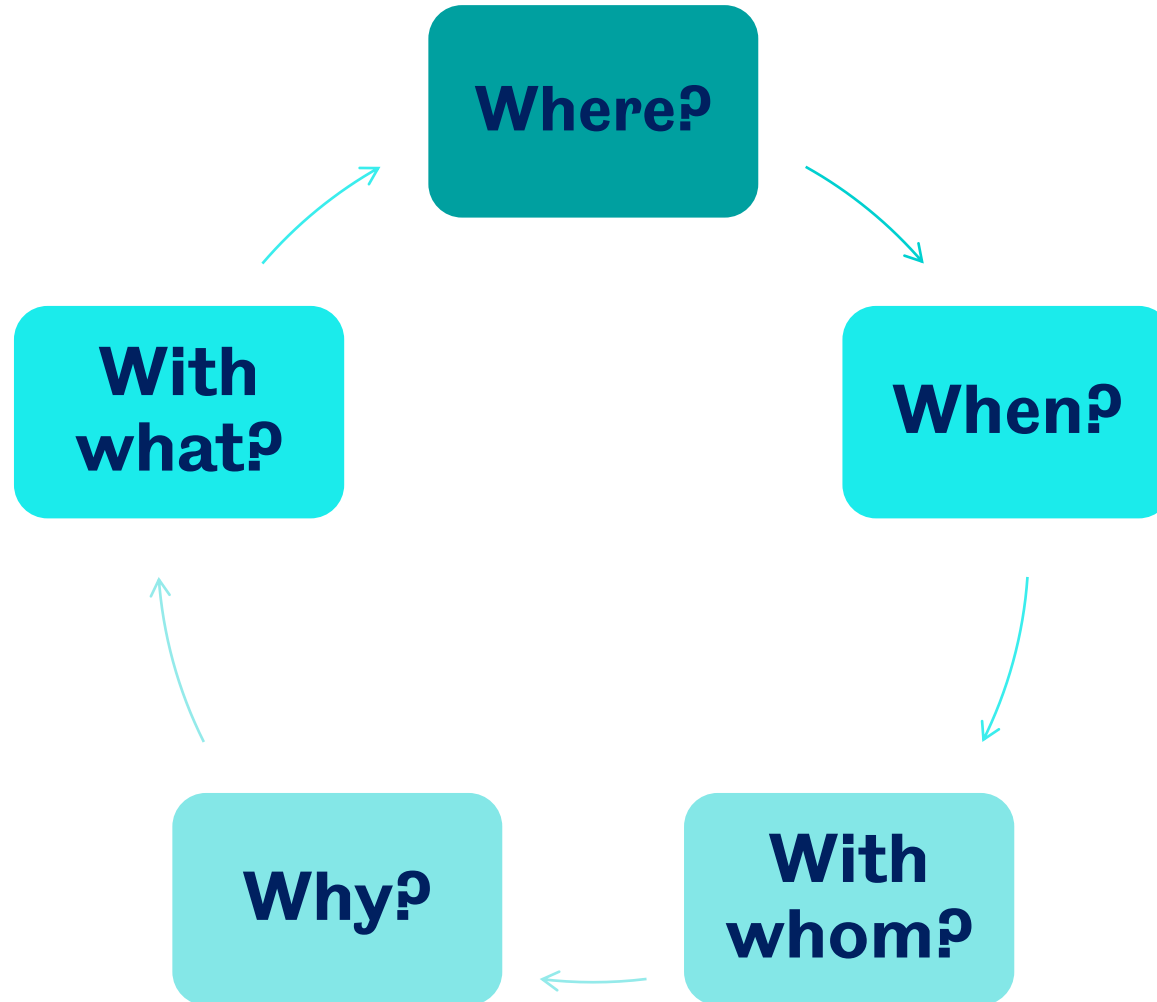
Co-authors: Dr Melissa Oldham, Prof Matt Field, Jane Hughes & Prof John Holmes

Conflict of interest: none



Background

- Traditionally research into drinking habits has studied individuals average or typical drinking occasions.
- Risk of overlooking variation in drinking behaviours.
- To capture this variation, we can measure the contextual characteristics of a drinking occasion.





Previous literature





Rationale

- Identify the key characteristics of heavy drinking occasions for measuring in surveys.
- Novel approach of online ethnography, a method involving the observation of individuals' conversations and activity within an online setting.



Aim of Study

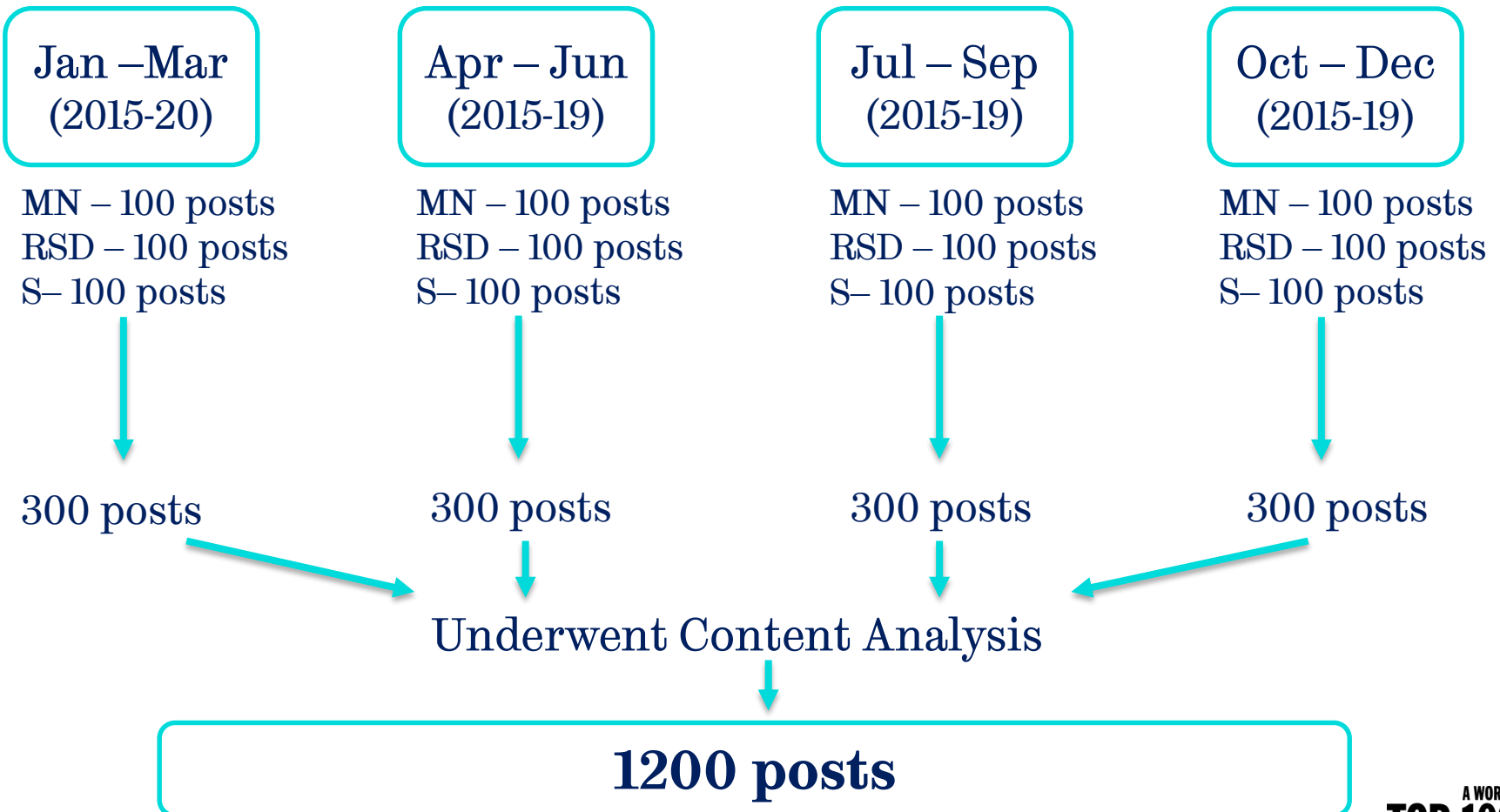
To identify the most salient contextual characteristics of heavy drinking occasions by examining user-initiated posts on online discussion forums.



Methods

- Three discussion forums discussing drinking:
 - Mumsnet
 - Reddit Stop Drinking
 - Soberistas
- Forums were searched for posts containing discussions of heavy drinking occasions (e.g. reference to units or feeling of intoxication) and related contextual characteristics.

Analysis approach





The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Findings



Who

- Friends
- Alone
- Family
- Partner
- Colleagues

Where

- Nightclub
- Pub
- Restaurant
- Own home
- Others home

Why

- To relax
- To celebrate
- To alleviate stress
- To cope
- Habit
- Boredom
- Reward

When

- Evening
- Daytime
- Weekend
- Special Occasions
- Other activities
- Holidays

What

- Container size
- Mixed drinks
- Beer
- Wine
- Spirits



Who

- Friends
- Partner

Where

- Own home

Why

- To alleviate stress
- To cope
- Boredom
- Reward

When

- Evening
- Weekend
- Special Occasions
- Other activities
- Holidays

What

- Wine



Characteristics	Quotes
Drinking at a special occasion (when)	So, Saturday. We went to <i>a family member's 40th birthday party and I caved in and drank</i> . Everyone was drinking. Not one person was chilling with a coke or water. The voice told me <i>"just drink on special occasions, you've got this."</i>
Drinking to cope with boredom (why)	<i>"I was never a big drinker at all before I had kids but it started about 6 years ago as a coping mechanism to get through evenings; the bedtime routine, my unhappy marriage and boredom really."</i>
Drinking to alleviate stress (why) Drinking as a reward (why)	<i>"I have a lovely life, family and friends. Yes I do have a lot of stress on occasions. I always tell myself I deserve wine!! If I've had a bad day I deserve it to make myself feel better, and if I've had good day, I use it to celebrate it!!"</i>



Characteristics	Quotes
Own home drinking (where)	<i>"I don't think about alcohol all day and it's only when I get home from work and it's " wine o clock" I reach for the wine glass and turn on the tv or spend the evening with a bottle of wine, ironing board and a cd of sorts."</i>
Other activities (when)	
Drinking wine (What)	
Evening drinking (When)	
Drinking wine (what)	<i>The amount of wine we have been drinking has really crept up. We never have dinner without a bottle of wine and at weekends a lot more, my husband is forever topping up my glass and if he has just poured it then I drink it, I struggle with the stop button.</i>
Weekends (when)	
Partner (who)	
Other activities (when)	



Limitations

- Potential gender bias
- Lack of individual characteristics



Conclusion

- Five inter-related groups of contextual characteristics identified.
 - Occasion purpose (why)
 - Location (where)
 - Companions (who)
 - Timing (when)
 - Drink choice (what)
- New characteristics identified: drinking to cope with boredom and activities accompanying drinking.



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

NIHR | School for Public
Health Research



Thank you for listening

Contact details:



orsexton1@sheffield.ac.uk



@OliviaRSexton