Extent of alcohol prohibition in civil policy in Muslim majority countries: the impact of globalization

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INTRODUCTION

Unsafe alcohol consumption causes:

- the death of 3.3 million people yearly
- 139 million net DALYs (disability-adjusted life years)
- 5.1% of the global burden of disease and injury

Many alcohol policies have been introduced globally to reduce the effect of unsafe alcohol consumption

Aim:

- What are the different approaches MMCs take toward civil alcohol policies?
- To what extent is alcohol prohibition applied in Muslim majority countries (**MMCs**)?
- What are the challenges facing MMCs in developing alcohol policy

METHODOLOGY

- English, Arabic and Persian language sources
- Search hierarchy:

Government & WHO, for all countries
↓
PubMed
↓
Alcohol industry, NGO and tourism websites, if information unavailable or inconclusive
↓
Published travel guide, at least one other source was sought
↓
Some MMCs were searched in depth as case studies

Figure 1: Search hierarchy used in this study

MUSLIM MAJORITY COUNTRIES

- Countries in which 50% and more of the population are Muslims
- Fifty countries worldwide

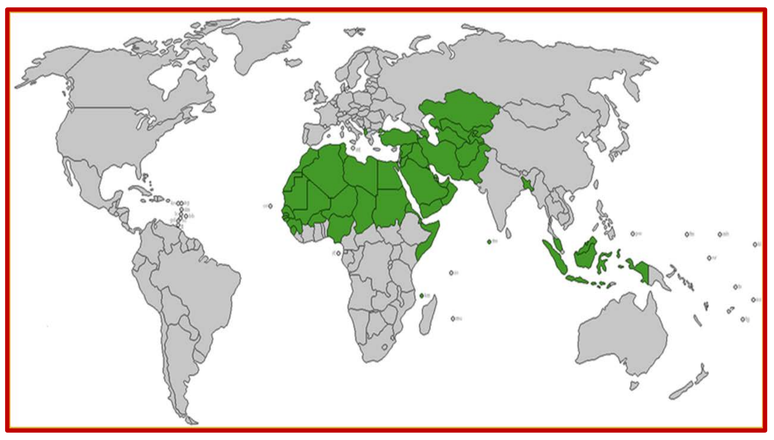

Figure 2: Mapping the MMCs (Source**:** Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *MAPPING THE GLOBAL MUSLIM POPULATION; A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population*. 2009.)

- MMCs have a very low prevalence of alcohol consumption.
- The Eastern Mediterranean region has the lowest per capita consumption (11%) out of all WHO regions.

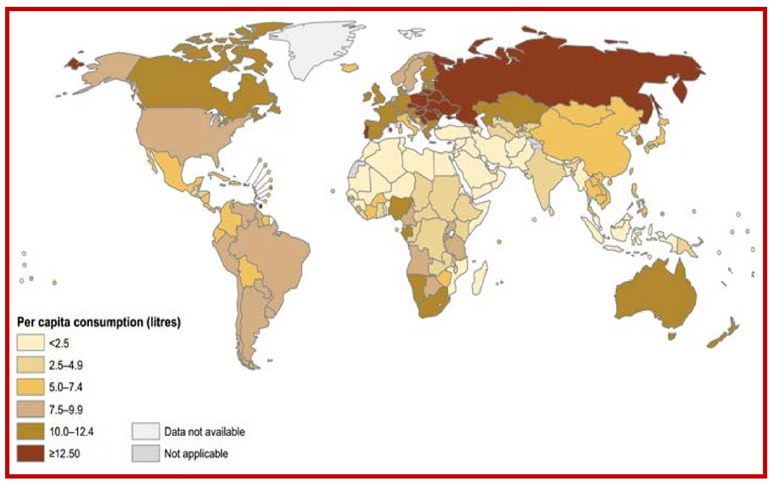

Figure 3: Total alcohol consumption per capita (15+ years; in litres of pure alcohol, 2010

WHY IT IS AN ISSUE IN MMCs?

- Overall consumption has increased compared to two decades ago
- Moreover, people who do consume alcohol in MMCs may drink large quantities
  - e.g. prevalence of heavy episodic drinking in Guinea and Indonesia is **19.2%** and **31.9%**, respectively

ORIGINS OF ALCOHOL PROHIBITION IN ISLAM

- Arab culture was alcohol consuming culture before Islam
- Alcohol prohibition has accrued in a number of stages within two decades of the creation of a Muslim society
- The gradual Islamic steps towards prohibition succeeded in largely eliminating alcohol from Arabic culture

RESULTS: DIFFERENT CIVIL ALCOHOL POLICIES ADOPTED IN MMCs

Countries with 50%+ Muslim population (N: 50)

Total prohibition N: 5

Total prohibition of alcohol consumption and trade
e.g. Saudi Arabia

Prohibition with concessions N: 10

Prohibition is present in the country but minority groups are excluded
e.g. Iran

Restriction N: 17

Some sub regions or districts have prohibition of consumption and trade while others do not
e.g. UAE & Malaysia

-Only non-Muslims can drink
-Policy differ based on the non-Muslim % in a suburb

A licence is required for purchasing and consuming alcohol

Regulation N: 11

Alcohol is available and consumption is permitted for all
e.g. Turkey

Some regulatory policies exist, such as age limit, taxes and drink driving

Figure 4: Civil alcohol policy in MMCs

CHALLENGES FACING MMCS

- Muslim population reject alcohol
- Globalisation and alcohol demand/ alcohol policy
- MMCs new to alcohol policies
- Experienced global alcohol industry and their influence
- Global health and alcohol policy institutes have given limited attention to MMCs

KEY MESSAGES

- MMCs have adapted new civil alcohol policies in recent years
- MMCs need more appropriate tools to assist them in developing alcohol policies
- There is a pressing need for strengthening of the infrastructure and global support for health policy research in MMCs.
- MMCs would benefit from customised, policies that are sensitive to religion and culture

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REFERENCES

- Al-Ansari, B., Thow, A. M., Day, C. A., & Conigrave, K. M. (2016). Extent of alcohol prohibition in civil policy in Muslim majority countries: the impact of globalization. Addiction, 111(10), 1703-1713. doi:10.1111/add.13159