Exploring the characteristics of family violence relative to packaged liquor outlet density using ambulance attendance data

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Introduction and aims:
- Family violence is a worldwide public health issue.
- Family violence occurs between related individuals or intimate partners.
- In Australia, it is estimated that up to 50% of family violence incidents involve alcohol.
- Alcohol has been shown to increase both the incidence and severity of family violence.
- The density of alcohol outlets within suburbs and communities has been associated with multiple harms, including; risky drinking in adolescents, intentional and un-intentional injuries, assaults, and family violence.
- Previous studies have predominantly considered family violence as a single outcome, without consideration of sub-types of violence.

This study aimed to analyse the role of packaged liquor licence density (i.e. alcohol purchased from supermarkets or bottle shops) on family violence, grouped by:
- The type of violence
- The relationship between parties
- Whether alcohol was acutely involved in the incident

Results (Table 1):
- Packaged liquor licence density did not have a significant effect on threatening behaviour.
- As packaged liquor licence density increased, more cases of physical family violence were attended by ambulances.
- These results were consistent for both intimate partner violence and other family violence.
- Packaged liquor licence density did not have a significant effect on family violence that did not involve alcohol.
- As packaged liquor licence density increased, more cases of family violence were attended that either involved alcohol or alcohol intoxication.

Table 1 – results of regression modelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coef</th>
<th>z-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family violence – threat</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.91</td>
<td>0.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family violence – physical</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimate partner violence – threat</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimate partner violence – physical</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other family violence – threat</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>0.423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other family violence – physical</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family violence – alcohol involved</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family violence – alcohol intoxication</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family violence – no alcohol involved</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions:
- We found a consistent association between serious family violence and the density of packaged liquor outlets.
- Findings are consistent with the hypothesis that alcohol influences violence severity.
- A more robust public discussion is needed about the relationship between alcohol and family violence.
- Policies that target reductions in alcohol consumption and availability may be effective as family violence interventions.

References:

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