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# ADVERTISING EXPOSURE AND YOUTHS ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA: A SOCIO- ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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#### **Abstract**

This work concerns exposure to alcohol advertising and youth consumption behaviour and the role of socio-ecological factors on youth in two states located in the southern part of Nigeria representing two geo political regions in southern Nigeria. The population of the study was the university students; and to achieve this objective, survey research was employed on a statistical determined sample of 300 respondents drawn from four universities in Anambra and Edo States. Questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the students and the questions range from dichotomous to multiple choice and to scaled questions. Advertising was used as the independent variables; alcohol consumption behaviour was the dependent variable while the five socioecological variables: income, age, tribe, religion and family served as the control variables. Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to analyse the hypothesis with the aid of SPSS 25. The finding of this study established that exposure to alcohol advertising does not significantly and positively affect youth alcohol consumption behaviour. The analysis found out that while family and religion have statistically significant impact on youth alcohol consumption, peer group, tribe and monthly income were not significant. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn based on these findings while practical implications as well as implications for further study were discussed.

**Keywords**: advertising exposure, youth, alcohol consumption behaviour

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the role of alcohol exposure to the consumption behaviour of young people has become a matter of much debate. This debate is mostly focused on the question of whether young people's exposure to alcohol

marketing increases their consumption of alcoholic beverages and risky drinking (Smith & Foxcroff, 2009). However, Meier (2010) suggested that the areas where research evidence is required are: effect sizes that will help to show evidence on the size of how advertising of alcohol beverages affects



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the whole population and subgroups of drinkers, heavy drinkers, binge drinkers and abstainers, the timing effects that will help to establish the balance between immediate and long-term effects that provide information on time lag deviations and on the cumulative build-up of longer-term effects of alcohol consumption on these groups resulting from its marketing (Chine, Nnedum & Ike, 2018; Ezeokana, 2005; Nnedum & Okorie. Nwaizugbo, Okeke, & Nnedum, 2021) and the Policy effect to interrogate the influence of comprehensive and partial marketing restrictions on alcohol beverage consumption and its relative harms on populations and their sub- groups.

To understand the complexities that may arise from research evidences highlighted above, it is essential that studies directed at understanding and measuring marketing effects of strategies and tactics in alcohol beverage marketing on populations and sub groups are strongly anchored in theories. Therefore, to translate the recognition that marketing exposure is casually linked to consumption at least in young people into policy action in Nigeria as recommended by WHO, (2010) there is a need for quantitative estimates and qualitative assessment of the likely effectiveness of these marketing activities. Research in this area needs to grow evidence that links alcohol consumption behaviour among the youth in Nigeria to the exposure they get from cumulative advertising efforts in the business environment.

Swahn, et al (2013) also noted that previous research conducted primarily in North America and Europe shows that exposure to alcohol advertising and ownership of alcohol promotional items has been found to increase the risk of alcohol use among adolescents and

based on extensive research, it is clear that alcohol marketing also influences youths' attitudes and perceptions about alcohol, which are related to expectancies and intentions to consume alcohol beverages. The totality of previous research indicates that cumulative alcohol marketing to youth is a growing public health concern and that this problem may be exacerbated among youth living in countries with limited alcohol policies and that rely on self-regulation by the alcohol industry (Jernigan, 2010). This may be the case because of the resources available to the alcohol industry for their adverting efforts. There is a dearth of information about cumulative alcohol advertising practices and their combined influence specifically on youth alcohol consumption behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa even though marketing in many countries in this region appears common and is perhaps also increasing in scope. This work is to address a gap on cumulative alcohol advertising exposure and alcoholic beverages consumption behaviour among youths in southern Nigeria by using a social ecological framework with findings intended to help upstream social marketing efforts, inform policy and regulation and targeted behaviour change interventions. Also, this work intends to contribute to the discourse that multiple levels behaviour affects and is affected by multiple levels of influence and reciprocal causation that individual behaviours shapes, and is shaped by, the social environment as propounded by the socio ecological model.

# 2. Literature Review2.1 Alcohol advertising

Alcohol advertising may be seen as any paid form of messages deployed by identified industries as sponsors in the alcoholic



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beverages market. Exposure to alcohol advertising is said to influence young people's beliefs and attitudes about drinking and it increases the likelihood that young people will start to use alcohol and will drink more if they are already using alcohol (Wilmore, 2012). This exposure to alcohol advertising on television and liking of those advertisements influences young people's drinking and the development of alcoholrelated problems (Grenard, et al. 2013). While TV advertising remains the most overt way of marketing alcohol beverages, a greater share of total marketing budgets is still spent in this channel despite the range of other communication outlets available.

Another traditional form of alcohol marketing is press advertising. Advertising in newspapers and magazines or other press mediums, collectively known as 'press advertising ', can encompass everything from media with a broad readership such as national newspapers, to the more narrowly targeted outlets such as local press or trade journals covering specialised topics (Young, 2005). The use of billboards and posters, often known as outdoor advertising is commonplace in Nigeria with sites generally chosen to target footfall, (pedestrians, car users, users of public transports, schools, parks). Outdoor media campaigns are general in their audience reach, but act as an effective way to publicise a brand (Crosier, 2003). In the case of alcohol marketing, posters can often be targeted to bars, pubs and clubs where a particular target audience frequent. A robust body of evidence demonstrates alcohol advertising (television, cinema, press) exposure influences drinking norms, perceptions and expectations around alcohol use, intentions to drink and drinking behaviours, especially among youth and young adults, (Siegel, et al. (2016).

A 2006 study found that youth in markets with greater alcohol advertising expenditures drank more where each additional dollar spent on alcohol advertising raised the number of drinks consumed by three percent (Snyder, et al 2006). In their observation, Collins et al (2007), said youth exposed to high levels of alcohol advertising are 50 percent more likely to drink than children with low exposure to such marketing. Therefore, Youth are 96 times more likely to see an ad promoting alcohol than an industry ad discouraging underage drinking, (CAMY, 2009). Again, it was observed that Between 2001 and 2009, the average youth exposure to alcohol advertising on television increased by 71percent. (CAMY, 2012) and nearly half of youth exposure to TV alcohol ads in 2009 came from ads shown on youth-oriented programming (programs with disproportionately large audiences of 12 to 20-year olds).

The behaviours and attitudes of significant others in alcohol adverts are thought to influence perceived norms about alcohol use and motivation and the desire to comply with those in one's social world which, in turn influence a young person's social normative beliefs about alcohol use (Obanua & Ekeanyanwu, 2010). It is also important to note that messages in alcohol advertising are particularly appealing youth to influential in developing their intentions to drink (Waiters, et al. 2001). Alcohol advertising has also been found to influence positive expectancies about alcohol use, which in turn, influences intention to use alcohol for under-age youth (15-20 years old) and adults 21 and older (Fleming et al 2004). This work will focus on TV advertising, billboards, radio adverts etc.



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# 2.2 Alcohol Advertising, Marketing and Youth Consumption

The issue of the impact, if any, of alcohol beverages marketing on drinking behaviour began to be explored in the early 1980s. The evidence concerning the influence of alcohol marketing on consumption primarily comes from two separate lines of inquiry; econometric studies, which involve a statistical examination of the relationship overall levels alcohol between of consumption (typically in terms of sales) and overall levels of advertising (typically in terms of expenditure) and; consumer studies, which examine how people's drinking knowledge, attitudes and behaviour vary with their exposure to alcohol advertising.

This impact has received considerable attention, both in terms of research and public policy. In reality, the marketing of alcoholic beverages is a complex process, comprising four well-established and interconnected domains: pricing, product launch development (characteristics, image and branding), promotional activity (including both above and below the line advertising) and placement (point of sale marketing or distribution) (Hastings et al, 2005; Sheron and Gilmore, 2016). A growing body of literature, including two systematic reviews, has reported an association between exposure to aspects of alcohol marketing and initiation or progression (continued use) of alcohol use among young people (Anderson et al., 2009; Smith and Foxcroft, 2009).

Promotion as a marketing mix element in alcohol marketing can roughly be split into two - above-the-line (television, print, radio and outdoor) and below-the-line (point-of-sale and sponsorship) media. In reality, marketing of alcohol makes use of the two to link alcohol brands to sports and cultural activities, sponsorships and product

placements and evolve new marketing techniques such as e-mails, SMS and podcasting, social media and other communication techniques.

However, evidence strongly suggests that alcohol marketing increases the likelihood that youths start to drink alcohol at a young age and may increase alcohol use for those who already consume alcohol. Behavioural experts therefore suggest that self-efficacy drawn from the media on whether to use or avoid alcohol use is thought to originate from personality, social competence, and sense of self as mirrored by the media. This is the opinion of Social cognitive theories. Generally, social competence and sense of self are thought to influence a youth's social skills and self-determination about his or her ability to use or avoid alcohol, which, in turn, influence the youth's level of self-efficacy to use or avoid alcohol.

The present study intends to investigate young people's exposure to a cumulative effect of a number of promotional elements (advertising, sponsorship, social responsibility and innovative product design) in alcohol beverages marketing as identified by the researcher from an audit carried out on the promotional environment in Nigeria. These are the most prevalent.

While many researchers have relied upon self-report of exposure, especially when measuring alcohol marketing, an important limitation of memory-based measures as in these self-reports is the profound underestimation of exposure to alcohol marketing. For example, some respondents might have been exposed to a given alcohol advertisement that they were unable to label or recognize. Additionally, memory-based measures are affected strongly by the respondents' interpretations. For this reason, self-reported exposure measures will be



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complemented in this study with more objective measures of exposure to alcohol marketing. This will be attempted by modelling alcohol marketing exposure as a latent variable and as a construct. These measures will be adapted and modified from those used in previous studies as in (Ogott, 2013).

The measurement of media exposure is crucial for studies on uses and effects of media in communication science, political science, sociology, psychology, and economics. There is no generally accepted conceptualization and operationalization of this concept (Prior, 2009). People are exposed to information, entertainment, and messages almost any time anywhere (Napoli, 2011).

Questionnaires are used to collect exposure data in epidemiological studies by putting the same set of questions to each study standardized participant in a Questionnaires can be self-administered or may be administered by an interviewer. The aim of a research questionnaire is to obtain, with minimal error, measurements of the exposure variables of interest for the study. Self-administered questionnaires distributed to study subjects who are asked to complete them. Such questionnaires are particularly appropriate when small amounts of reasonably simple data are required, or for documenting sensitive or socially undesirable behaviour. They are one of the cheapest ways of collecting information, but have the limitation that they can be used only in literate populations.

Dichotomous questions used by Gordon *et al.* (2011) will be adapted to measure the frequency of exposure to alcohol marketing in advertising, sports sponsorship and innovative product design with a 5-point Likert scale (1, never; 2, rarely; 3,

sometimes; 4, often and 5. often). Ownership of an alcohol-branded promotional item was determined by asking respondents. Exposure to alcohol advertising was measured by asking respondents about the frequency with which they had seen a selection of eight television programs in February 2010 (30 days before the survey). Respondents indicated their frequency of watching with a 5-point Likert scale (1, never; 2, rarely; 3, sometimes; 4, often and 5 very often), which was recorded into a score from 0 to 4.

The study will be guided by one conceptual hypothesis stated in null form and five control variables as below:

## **Hypothesis:**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Exposure to alcohol advertising will not significantly and positively effect youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

# 3. Methodology

When considering the appropriate research paradigm for this work, the focus will be on answering the research question concerning the influence, if any, of alcohol marketing exposure on young people's consumption behaviour of alcoholic beverages. This required use of a range of methods of inquiry. This work is a quantitative research design that is intended to describe, diagnose and hypothesise testing of variables. Again, the work is descriptive as it is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular population sub group concerned with specific predictions, narration of facts as they affect the group and characteristics concerning individual, group or situation, (Kothari, 2011). This study is also diagnostic in nature as it sought to determine whether certain variables are associated and test hypotheses



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of casual relationships between the variables and constructs. The aims of this study necessitated exploratory research. This research is to help generate an understanding of specific alcohol marketing communications elements in Nigeria and to facilitate an exploration of young peoples' exposure in their involvement with the marketing of alcoholic beverages.

A cross sectional survey design was adopted for this study so as to obtain the opinion of young consumers on the adoption of online shopping, evaluating the influence of unified theories of acceptance and use of technology and perceived risk. A cross sectional survey design was appropriate because it will help the researcher to look at data at a single point. This study adopted the single methods for data collection, where quantitative methods (survey) were used in order to enhance greater validity of the research by ensuring that there are no gaps to the information or data collected (Saunders, et al, 2009). The study employed cross sectional survey research design study because it provided numeric descriptions of the population and described events as they were (Oso & Onen, 2009).

The researcher used primary data collection method which was questionnaire to elicit marketing exposure and youth alcohol consumption behaviour in Anambra and Edo states. The was based on a sample of 400 respondent youths: 200 each from Anambra and Edo States. Questionnaire for data collection and each of the two independent variables and the dependent variable were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (uncertain or not

applicable) to 5 (strongly agree). Five questions were used to measure the depending variable which is intention to purchase. Research questionnaire consisted of a 5 Point Likert Scale (1=Strongly (SD), 2=Disagree Disagree 3=Uncertain/Not applicable (U), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree) (SA). The Likert scale is a scale that is commonly used for questionnaires, and is mostly used in survey research. The administrations of instrument were through personal distribution by the researcher and field assistant. The researchers visited some of the institutions at his disposal while using his colleagues for those at far reach to administered the copies of questionnaires. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses and SPSS version 25 software was used to run the analysis.

## 4.1 Data Analysis and Discussions

This was based on a sample 300 vouths/students selected from some universities within the southern part of the country, Nigeria. This means that 300 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents out of which 255 copies were returned as duly filled and usable. This gives a response rate of 85 per cent which is high and adequate for a marketing research study of this nature. The high response rate was informed by the method of distribution employed by the researcher which involved self-administered and the use of research assistants who were given orientation on the importance of the study.

# Multiple Regression Analysis with Control Variables Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

				Std. Error of the	
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.624a	.389	.302	.38095	1.551



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a. Predictors: (Constant), Religion1, Monthly income range, Tribe, Family, PeerGroup,

b. Dependent Variable: Youth\_Alcohol\_Consumption

#### **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.129	11	.648	4.466	.000b
	Residual	11.175	77	.145		
	Total	18.304	88			

a. Dependent Variable: Youth\_Alcohol\_Consumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Religion1, Monthly income range, Tribe, Family, PeerGroup, Advertising

The output of the first MRA as shown above, we look at the coefficient of multiple correlation R, which is 0.624; the coefficient of multiple determination R<sup>2</sup> is 0.389; the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> which is 0.302; and the Durbin-Watson value of 1.551, which is within the established range of 1.50 to 2.50. All these global statistics output from the second MRA are serious improvements over those in the first MRA without the control variables. This is an indication that the control variables significantly improved our MRA model. The ANOVA represented by F has a value of 4.466 which is highly statistically significant at 0.000.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence	Interval for B
							Upper
Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Bound
(Constant)	.854	.294		2.905	.005	.268	1.439
Advertising	.035	.017	.036	2.034	.006	.021	.058
Tribe	030	.045	075	663	.509	119	.060
Monthly income range	.012	.035	.035	.345	.731	058	.083
Family	.230	.060	.414	3.834	.000	.110	.349
PeerGroup	083	.043	182	-1.917	.059	169	.003
Religion	101	.039	245	-2.580	.012	179	023

a. Dependent Variable: Youth\_Alcohol\_Consumption

The MR model for this second regression analysis is given thus:

Regression Equation:

YAC = 1.729 - 0.011Ad - 0.030T + 0.012MI + 0.230F - 0.083PG - 0.100R

Where: YAC = Youth Alcohol Consumption;

Ad = Advertising;

T = Tribe;

MI = Monthly Income;



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F = Family;

PG = Peer Group; and

R = Religion.

Based on this we proceed to use the outputs of the second MRA to test/analyse our research

hypotheses. The hypotheses validation was conducted at 5% level of significance hence the decision rule (**df**) is that any P-Value above 5% or 0.05, the null hypothesis will be accepted while it will be rejected if the P-Value is below the 0.05 level of significance.

# **Hypotheses Testing**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Exposure to alcohol advertising will not significantly and positively effect youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

The Advertising variable coefficient,  $\beta$  = .035, which indicates that a one-unit increase in (the index of) advertising activities increase youth alcohol consumption by 0.35 units. The t--value = -2.034, and p-value = .006, which is well below the 0.05 margin of error/level of significance. The 95% confidence interval of 0.0211 to 0.058 has no zero in-between. Based on this we reject the Null Hypothesis and conclude that Exposure to alcohol advertising will significantly and positive effect youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

This research is based on advertising exposure and alcohol consumption behaviour of youth in southern part of Nigeria, which is a predominantly made up of Christians. Advertising exposure is a very complex phenomenon. Exposure may leave an affective if not a cognitive impression of some kind, even if the messages have not been attended too well enough to be remembered. Processing of messages can seriously impact recall, and exposure be self-reporting (Slater, 2004). The marketing

exposure constructs used in the study are: advertising; good product features; sponsorship of events; donations; new product features; and branded promotional items. The study was based on socioecological model which has some of its components as: tribe; monthly income; family; peer group; and religion. This study found that exposure to alcohol advertising will not significantly and positive effect youth alcohol consumption behaviour. This finding agrees with Austin and colleagues (2006) that exposure measures were weaker predictors of progression to alcohol use than response variables, such as ad identification and liking of beer brands

The (Austin 2006). finding however disagrees with Stautz, (2016),which concluded that exposure to alcohol advertising, but not portrayals of alcohol use on television or in movies, influenced immediate drinking. They found a positive association between exposure to alcohol portrayals, but not alcohol advertising, and explicit alcohol-related cognitions, like attitudes, outcome expectancies or intentions to consume alcohol. Advertising is a multifaceted phenomenon and as such while certain types of advertising influence direct alcohol consumption others do not cause direct consumption.

As already mentioned, five control variables were used in this research in analysis and in producing the model output for the research. Out of the five control variables used in this second MRA, only two: family and religion are statistically significant. While one, peer group is partially significant or statistically significant at 0.1 level of significance, the remaining two, tribe and monthly income



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range are not significant at all. The model for the study is as shown already above. The chosen areas for this study represent the major tribes with diverse customs and traditions and are also homes to institutions that may provide institutional roles that may affect family settings and receptivity to communication within marketing selected areas. There are the Ibos of the South East and Edos of the South - South. The import of these is that there is a difference in their levels of tolerance for young people handling of alcoholic beverages as a result of religious, cultural and environmental tolerance. Religion is one of the five control variables used in our analysis and as an influencing factor on alcohol consumption, has received increased research in years as reviewed in literature.

## 5. Conclusions

This study established that exposure to alcohol advertising affects consumption but the conclude that Exposure to alcohol advertising will not significantly and positive effect youth alcohol consumption behaviour. It also concludes that Exposure to good product features significantly and positively influences youth alcohol consumption behaviour. equally concludes sponsorship of events significantly and positively influences youth alcohol consumption behaviour. **Donations** important components of marketing campaigns and we conclude that donations have significant and positive influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour. Based on our analysis, we conclude that new product significantly flavours and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour. Based on our MR analysis we new product flavours conclude that significantly and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour. Five control variables were used in our MRA, and we conclude that family and religion are statistically and significant impact youth alcohol consumption. We also conclude that while peer group is partially significant, tribe and monthly income range have no effect on alcohol consumption.

This study made quite a number of findings which we believe have far reaching implications for the practice of marketing and its impact on youth alcohol consumption in the southern part of Nigeria where this study was conducted. This study established that advertising has effect on youth alcohol consumption but that this effect is not significant. Advertising is a multi-faceted like phenomenon marketing itself. Advertising was treated as a single variable here hence the implication of this for practice is that there is need for more emphasis on social responsibility advertising that explain to the youth the ills of excess alcohol consumption. Alcohol marketing exposure to the consumption behaviour of young people has become a matter of much debate mostly focused on the question of whether young people's exposure to alcohol marketing increases their consumption of alcoholic beverages and the associated risky drinking hence evidence as in this study should inform policy appraisals alcohol marketing globally. This study also has implications on the policy comprehensive effects on or partial restrictions on alcohol beverages marketing as it effects the youths.

The findings have contributed to the scientific evidence base. The socio ecological theory approach employed has provided an insight into the effects of cumulative alcohol marketing across a number of channels their impact on youth alcohol consumption behaviours. The use of this approach



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influenced by the theory tried to facilitate a critical deconstruction of commercial alcohol marketing in southern Nigeria. Alcohol consumption is a sophisticated social phenomenon, and the findings from this current study have implications for interdisciplinary research on alcohol. This study established that advertising has effect on youth alcohol consumption behaviour but that the effect is not statistically significant. Based on this it is recommended that alcohol marketing organisations should lay serious emphasis on social responsibility advertising like Drink Responsibility, and 18+ which means that alcohol can only be taken by people from 18 years and above. To reduce this global burden resulting from the use of harmful alcohol by the youths, we agree with the earlier recommendations by the WHO on three best buys that include -enforcing bans on alcohol marketing to youths, restricting the youth access to alcohol and increasing alcohol taxes in member countries. But it can be stated that a comprehensive alcohol marketing restriction is a cost-effective strategy that will help to reduce the harmful use of alcohol if they are well enforced. On the other hand, our study shows associations between exposure to alcohol marketing and drinking behaviour on the youth. Given the high prevalence of risky drinking and alcohol-related harm among young populations, delaying alcohol initiation and preventing heavy use by young people has become a public health priority. Banning alcohol marketing and sale to underage youth is also recommended. This is necessary as the call for stronger marketing regulations or an outright ban of marketing of alcohol to the youths has continued to rise. This study found out that good product features, new product extensions and gifts influence and effect youth alcohol consumption. Based on

this it is recommended that alcohol manufacturers and marketers should make their packaging and product features less attractive to the underage populations. The family, religious groups should also continue to harp and extend their teachings on the importance of alcohol abstinence especially as it affects the youth and the underage populations. Religion is an influencing factor on alcohol consumption. It has received increased research in years and the general consensus is that being religious reduces alcohol consumption.

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