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## MARKETING EXPOSURE AND YOUTHS' ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR IN ANAMBRA AND EDO STATES.

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**Abstract:** *The main objective of this research work was to develop a framework for interrogating the nexus between alcohol marketing exposure and youth consumption behaviour on youth in two states located in the southern part of Nigeria representing two geo political regions in southern Nigeria. Extensive literature review was conducted and this helped to dissect and define the key variables and the constructs of the study. The population of the study was the university students; and to achieve this objective, survey research was employed on a statistical determined sample of 400 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. Face and content validity were assured by giving out copies of the questionnaire prior to the study to experts and the researcher's supervisor whose comments helped in drafting the final instrument. Two marketing exposure constructs: sponsorships and branded promotional items were used as the independent variables; alcohol consumption behaviour was the dependent variable. The hypotheses formulated around the two IVs and the analysis was done with the aid of Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) using SPSS 25. The finding of this study established. It was also found that sponsorship of events and donations by alcoholic firms significantly and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn based on these findings while practical implications as well as implications for further study were discussed.*

**Keywords:** Branded promotional items, sponsorship of events, youth alcohol consumption, and marketing exposure.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the role of alcohol marketing 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 & Foxcroft, 2009). Given the growing body of literature on alcohol beverages and its marketing, it is astonishingly and relatively difficult to find adequate evidence that can inform policy appraisals globally as was proposed by the WHO, (2010). 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 marketing of alcohol beverages affects 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 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 (Chine, Nnedum & Ike, 2018; Nnedum & Ezeokana, 2005; Okorie, Nwaizugbo, Okeke, & Nnedum, 2021) 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 marketing efforts in the business environment.

According to report by a Nigerian based marketing research company, MRIC, beer (alcoholic beverages) consumption in Africa is estimated to have grown by a five percent (5%) Annual Growth Rate (AGR) between 2015 and 2020. With an average beer consumption of 12.28 litres per year, Nigeria leads the top 10 biggest beer drinking countries in Africa. This is by virtue of her population, which technically translates to higher volume and litres consumed per year. The report also revealed that beer makes up just 16 percent of alcohol consumption in Nigeria. While other drinks make up 84 percent due to the high population of home brewed beverages in the country. At present, there are over 17.72 million hl/a. the majority of these breweries are situated in southern part of Nigeria and this is further heightened by the availability of local bars at every junction in major cities and towns of southern part of Nigeria (Shakirudeen, 2017). There is a need to study how the availability of these class of alcoholic beverages flavoured by exposure to marketing activities affects the youth consumption behaviour in the presence of prevailing environmental factors.

Public health officers observed that per capital alcohol consumption in Nigeria has risen considerably over the last twenty years. Particular concern has focused upon alcohol and young people, with levels of youth drinking in Nigeria among the highest in Africa. As a result, there has been an increased focus on factors that may potentially influence youth consumption behaviours which many pinpoint marketing discipline. Recent systematic reviews have suggested a causal link between cumulative



alcohol marketing and youth drinking behaviour. However, gaps in the evidence base remain. As noted in Swahn, et al. (2013) a largely unaddressed issue in sub-Saharan Africa is the role of alcohol marketing and its potential link to alcohol use among youth. There is a dearth of empirical information about cumulative alcohol marketing practices and their influence specifically on youth in sub-Saharan Africa. The lack of empirical research in Nigeria is specifically troubling since it has one of the highest estimated alcohol per capita consumptions worldwide (Shakirudeen, 2017). 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 branded 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. This study relied on ownership of branded promotional items and sponsorship of events to investigate their effects on youth alcohol consumption in southern Nigeria.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Alcohol Marketing and Sponsorship of Events**

Brown (2016) observed that authors of a systematic review found positive associations between exposure to alcohol sports sponsorship and increased levels of consumption, including two studies reporting significant associations between exposure to sports sponsorship and increased levels of consumption among children. Alcohol sponsorship of music festivals is another potential medium of exposure for young

people and has the potential to increase level of brand recall, brand awareness and attitude towards the brand (Rowley, 2008). Adolescents and youth are therefore commonly subjected to positive portrayals of alcohol in general, as well as for specific brands. There is also growing evidence suggesting that ownership of alcohol-branded promotional items effectively reach adolescents and is associated with increasing use of alcohol. Additionally, alcohol-branded sports sponsorship is of great importance for the sports industry as sports celebrity endorsement has been found to encourage sales of products.

Eurocare (2015) asserted that the World Cup, an event organized by Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) every four years is one of the highest in the class of a single event in the world where an audience of about 500 million people is exposed to an alcohol brand on average, every five seconds for almost two hours. Although, alcoholic industry's sponsorship of sporting events and persons is banned in many countries; for example, the primary club competition in European Rugby Union, the Heineken Cup, is called the H Cup in France because of that country's restrictions on alcohol advertising, such sponsorship is still common in other areas such as the United States and Nigeria even when such sponsorship is controversial as children are often a target audience for major professional sports leagues (Wikipedia, 2015).

Disturbingly, in 2012, the alcohol industry ensured that the World Cup "was as much a festival of alcohol as it was of football (The Journal, 2014). This was despite a ban on the sale of alcohol in football stadiums in Brazil that was temporarily rescinded to accommodate the alcohol industry which was heavily sponsoring the event. One may ask,





‘what harm is it doing?’ Well, a lot actually. The promotion of alcohol in this fashion has a particular impact on the early initiation of young people into drinking. This demonstrates that sponsorship of events or TV programmes by the alcohol industry is another marketing tool that normalizes alcohol usage and ensures particular alcohol brands are mentioned in every day conversation (Coast week, 2014). This work will assess sponsorship of sports events and other musical events.

## **2.2 Alcohol 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 between overall levels of alcohol consumption (typically in terms of sales) and overall levels of advertising (typically in terms of expenditure) and; consumer studies, which examine how peoples’ 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 and 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 pod-casting, 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 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, Sangtani (2016) and Ogott, (2013).

Based on the above review, the following two hypotheses are formulated for the study:

**Hypothesis One:**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Sponsorship of events will not significantly and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

**Hypothesis Two:**

Ho<sub>2</sub>: Branded promotional Items has no significant and positive influence 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 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 Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 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 the 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. Analysis and Discussions

This was based on a sample 400 youths/students selected from some universities within the two states selected for the study. This means that 400 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 63.75 per cent which is acceptable for a marketing research study of this nature.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.478 <sup>a</sup>	.228	.182	.41716	1.428

a. Predictors: (Constant), Branded\_Promotional\_Items, Sponsorship\_of\_Events, New\_Product\_Flavours, Good\_Product\_Features, Advertising, Donations

b. Dependent Variable: Youth\_Alcohol\_Consumption

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

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.100	6	.850	4.884	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	17.228	99	.174		
	Total	22.328	105			

a. Dependent Variable: Youth\_Alcohol\_Consumption

b. Predictors: (Constant), Branded\_Promotional\_Items, Sponsorship\_of\_Events,

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.450	.154		9.442	.000	1.146	1.755



Sponsorship of Events	.091	.036	.256	2.506	.014	.019	.163
Branded Promotional Items	.083	.041	.162	2.024	.017	.010	.176

a. Dependent Variable: Youth Alcohol Consumption

The output of the first MRA as shown above, we look at the coefficient of multiple correlation R, which is 0.478; the coefficient of multiple determination  $R^2$  which is 0.228; the adjusted  $R^2$  which is 0.182; and the Durbin-Watson value of 1.428, which is slightly outside the established range of 1.50 to 2.50. The ANOVA represented by F has a value of 4.884 which is highly statistically significant at 0.000. For the coefficients, only two: good product features and sponsorship of events are significant at 0.5 level.

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

Regression Equation:

$$YAC = 1.450 + 0.091SoE + 0.0836BPI$$

#### Hypothesis One:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Sponsorship of events will not significantly and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

The sponsorship of events variable coefficient,  $\beta = 0.143$ , which indicates that a one-unit increase in (the index of) sponsorship of events increases youth alcohol consumption by 0.143 units. The t-value = 3.581, and p-value = 0.001, which is below the 0.05 margin of error/level of significance. The 95% confidence interval of 0.063 to 0.207 has no zero in-between. Based on this we reject the Null Hypothesis one and conclude that sponsorship of events significantly and positively influences youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

#### Hypothesis Two:

Ho<sub>2</sub>: Branded promotional Items has no significant and positive influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

Branded promotional items variable coefficient,  $\beta = 0.142$ , which indicates that a one-unit increase in (the index of) branded promotional items increases youth alcohol consumption by 0.142 units. The t-value = 2.895, and p-value = 0.005, which is well below the 0.05 margin of error/level of significance. The 95% confidence interval of 0.044 to 0.240 has no zero in-between. Based on this we reject the Null Hypothesis two and conclude that branded promotional items significantly and positively influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour.

### 5. Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations

This research is based on marketing exposure and alcohol consumption behaviour of youth in southern part of Nigeria, which is a predominantly made up of Christians. Marketing exposure is a very complex phenomenon comprising the different segments and components of the called marketing. Marketing Exposure is the degree to which a company's target market is exposed to the company's communications about its product / services, initiatives etc. It may be defined as "the extent to which audience members have encountered specific messages or classes of messages/media content" (Slater, 2004). The definition above suggests that "exposure refers to a person's merely encountering the messages, whether



or not they are noticed enough to be remembered; as noticing the relevant messages in the communication environment is almost certainly confounded with variables that may predict attention to the content of that message, such as prior knowledge or involvement with the topic. 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: sponsorship of events and branded promotional items.

These youth and young adults are further exposed to alcohol marketing through sponsorship of sports teams and events (Macniven 2015). Most systematic reviews found positive associations between exposure to alcohol marketing and increased levels of consumption and this is the same with our study. We also established in this study that donations have significant and positive influence youth alcohol consumption behaviour. As noble as these initiatives seem, Hill (2008) views the alcohol industry's CSR as a public relations strategy which may serve to promote the global marketing of alcohol rather than addressing the health impact and risks inherent in alcoholic products. Similarly, Casswell (2009) contends that the primary role of industry-supported social aspect organizations is not to enhance public health but to influence decision makers and government policy while promoting ineffective interventions. The alcohol industry's conflict of interest is so marked that today a growing body of literature takes the view that the alcohol industry takes

advantage of CSR rhetoric in an attempt to achieve corporate interests.

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 phenomenon like 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 effects on comprehensive 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 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 inter-



disciplinary research on alcohol. Traditionally, alcohol research has focused on epidemiological studies, examining a range of variables that may be associated with consumption, but neglecting marketing (Rehm et al. 2009). Socio cultural studies on the role of alcohol in society (Room and Mäkelä, 2000), would benefit from including consideration of alcohol marketing as a variable for analysis. Furthermore, alcohol marketing may potentially be a factor in the interface between alcohol and identity (Wilson, 2005), shaping individuals relationship with alcohol and how it reflects their personality, lifestyle and self-identity (de Chernatony, 1993). However, it is important to acknowledge that a wide range of other socio-cultural variables are associated with drinking / consumption behaviour.

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<sup>+</sup> 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.

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