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**PERCEIVED ALCOHOLIC DRINKS CONSUMPTION AMONG ADOLESCENT  
MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES IN UYO LGA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the perceived alcoholic drinks consumption among adolescent male and female athletes (athletic youths) in Uyo LGA. The objectives generated were the extent of gender differentiation in alcohol consumption; the types of alcoholic drinks consumed; the regularity of alcoholic drink consumption; and the socio-agents' influencing the young athletes in the initial and current alcoholic drinks consumption. Four research questions and hypotheses were respectively generated. The cluster survey design was used for the four clans, and 65% of the adolescent athletes were in Offot Clan which is in the largest Clan in the State capital; 10% in Etoi Clan, 10 % in Ikono Clan and 15 % in Oku Clan. A total of 600 adolescents (300 males and 300 females) between 15 to 25 years were used. They were found in the upper secondary school and lower University classes and at the playgrounds in the Uyo metropolis. They were randomly selected for the sample size. A researcher-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data, which were treated with descriptive (mean and percentage) statistics for the research questions and Chi-square statistics for the hypotheses tested at .05 alpha probability significant level. The findings gave the conclusions that both genders to a large extent do consume alcoholic drinks while the male athletic youths significantly consumed more alcoholic drinks. There is no significant gender difference in the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths. However, both genders consume alcoholic wine more than beer/stout; and further more than spirits. The males significantly consume alcoholic drinks daily and about weekly more than the females. The peers significantly have greater influence on both genders in the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks than their parents' influence. The study recommended among others that Governments at all levels should facilitate holding health talks and seminars on alcoholism to youths, who are the athletes. Government should tax alcoholic drinks more to turn away youths and reduce the urge for alcoholic drinks; and sales of alcoholic drinks should be regulated to adults only and hours of sales also be restricted.*

**KEYWORDS:** Alcoholic Drinks Consumption, Adolescent Male and Female Athletes, Uyo LGA

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**INTRODUCTION**

In some countries, use of alcohol is freely taken and has caused a lot of problems; even to those countries with some restrictions. Alcohol use leads to about 3 million deaths globally

according to CDCP (2017) and WHO (2020). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2021) and WHO (2021), reported that the alcohol industries had employed marketing strategies to establish their brands in the lives of young people at a time when addictive behaviors are initiated and reinforced. Alcohol use is therefore common among young people as with adults; including the adolescent sportsmen and sportswomen, but what actually leads to use of alcohol by the youths is not well understood. Loup (2013) had identified alcohol as a liquid that may be coloured, produced by natural fermentation of sugars and is the intoxicating constituent of wine, beer, spirits. It is used industrially as solvents, and as fuel.

The adolescent athlete (also known as an athletic youth) is a pre-adult person who take to active participation in sports; and the youthful age is considered to be between late childhood and early adulthood. They are considered to be without the level of physical and mental maturation, and of experience expected of an adult. As such use of alcohol in many developed countries is restricted to adult age due to the bad effects of alcohol. Alcoholic drinks are of various types including wines, beers and spirits (BAN, 2021), such that the percentage of alcohol content in drinks also differ in amount and that brings about the differences in taste and effects on the drinkers.

According to Swahn, Palmier and Kasirye (2018), the youth's think they cannot become alcoholics; thinking that it cannot happen. As they pass through some effects like anxiety, agitation, feeling unmotivated or flat, moody and changes to sense of reality, they feel 'high', described as 'being on top of the world'. They do not know that use of alcohol can increase the risk of developing mental health conditions such as depression and nervousness. Researchers also found that athletic youths have been influenced by certain factors including training-stress, social and environmental factors like peer pressure and parents who also indulge in drinking and the effects of modern social media as well (CDCP, 2017).

The findings presented in some articles in UNICEF (2018), confirm that alcohol use and abuse, as well as alcohol-related problems, continue to be highly prevalent among youths in many countries where drinking alcoholic drinks is not regulated by law and is a major source for concern. Nigeria is one such country. The findings showed that, excessive alcohol use and its associated problems appear to have increased in recent years. Moreover, the observations indicate that rates of alcohol use are equally high in almost all demographic groups (WHO, 2019b). Finally, the beliefs and attitudes of athletic youths who are mostly adolescents towards drinking (especially, drinking and driving) show a close association with drinking behavior.

Kivimäki, Kekkonen, Valtonen and Tolmunen (2017), investigated alcohol use among adolescents, aggressive behaviour, and internalizing problems in Finland ; noting that alcohol use is common among adolescents, but its association with behavioural and emotional problems was not well understood. The results concluded that aggressive behaviour was associated with alcohol use and a high level of alcohol consumption, while internalizing problems did not associate with alcohol use. Having problems in social relationships was associated with abstinence and lower alcohol consumption. Tobacco smoking, early menarche and attention problems were also associated with alcohol use. Kabwama *et al.* (2021) also conducted a research on alcohol use and associated factors among adolescent boys and young men in Kampala, Uganda. The outcome of interest was alcohol use within 30 days before the interview. They also asked about characteristics such as alcohol use by siblings, parents/ guardians, school status among others. The result showed a total of 2500 youths participated, of which 95 % had consumed alcohol within 30 days before the interview. Out-of-school had higher odds of consuming alcohol compared with their in-school counterparts. Compared with those whose parents/ guardians did not drink alcohol, those which both parents consumed alcohol had higher odds of consuming alcohol as were those with only a mother or female guardian who consumed alcohol. Those with siblings that drink alcohol had higher odds of

consuming alcohol. Those who possessed items with an alcohol brand logo had higher odds of consuming alcohol. The study recommended the need to regulate alcohol marketing and ensuring availability of alcohol dependence treatment services that build confidence among youth.

The Uyo Local Government area of Akwa Ibom is to a large extent the State capital with a combination of cosmopolitan areas and a large slum area. It is where alcoholic drinks would flourish abundantly and drinking alcoholic drinks is never restricted to adults alone as found in some other countries like the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Britain, Australia, etc. (Fanz and Hawkes, 2018). It becomes necessary to look at the perceived drinking nature of alcoholic drinks among adolescent sportsmen and women in Uyo LGA.

## **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

The review by Spear (2018); Springer, Selwyn and Kelder (2016), reported on the effects of alcohol use on the brain and behaviour among young people and noted that alcohol use was associated with difficulties in verbal learning, visual spatial processing as well as deficits in the development of the central nervous system. The results of these effects include a reduction in cognitive flexibility, behavioural inefficiencies, increased anxiety, dis-inhibition and risk taking. In addition, alcohol use is associated with other direct and indirect long term effects such as liver disease and obesity (Shelton and Knott, 2018; and Spear, 2018); particularly among men (McKellar, Ilgen Moos and Moos, 2018).

The harmful and hazardous uses of alcohol are risk factors both for being victimized and for committing youth violence. Youth violence takes many forms including bullying, gang violence, sexual aggression, and assaults occurring in streets, bars and nightclubs. The victims and perpetrators alike are young people, and the consequences of youth violence can be devastating in the society. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2019b), reported that across the world an average of 565 young people aged 10 to 29 die every day through interpersonal violence, with males at greater risk, and for each death there are an estimated 20 to 40 youth that require hospital treatment for a violence-related injury. The impact of youth violence reaches all sectors of society, placing huge strains on public services and damaging communities. Reducing harmful alcohol use and violence among young people should thus be considered a priority for policy makers (O'Malley and Wagenaar, 2019). In sports, young athletes who take alcohol tend to be very troublesome on and off the field of play. They become ready-hooligans if their team is defeated. For instance, compared with females, males are more likely to engage in binge drinking and to drive a vehicle while intoxicated. Males are also more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior after drinking alcohol (McKellar, Ilgen, Moos and Moos, 2018). These Ugandan and the Ghanaian surveys may not be quite different from that of Nigeria where alcoholic drinks are openly sold and taken without restriction.

In the culture of the Uyo people as applied to other towns in Akwa Ibom State, a drunken youth is an embarrassment to self, family and community due to the associated stigmatization. Hence many youths may pretend as though they do not take alcoholic drinks. However, some religious doctrines have also helped to curb open use of alcohol. But, many are still drinking secretly.

Based on the foregoing, the present study investigated the perceived alcoholic drinks consumption among adolescent sportsmen and women in Uyo LGA, Akwa Ibom State; and sought to find answers to the consumption differences by the genders, types of alcoholic drinks consumed, regularity and what socio-agents that may influence initial and current alcoholic drink consumption among the youths.

### THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives used to guide the study are:

- To determine how gender will differentiate the extent of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.
- To determine how gender will differentiate the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.
- To determine how gender will differentiate the regularity of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.
- To determine what socio-agents will influence the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drink among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

### METHOD AND MATERIALS

The cross-sectional survey design was used for the study. For the sample frame, a cluster sampling was first taken with un-proportional subjects from the 4 clans of the LGA because some clans are more exposed in sports for being in the centre of the State capital. A total of 600 adolescent athletes found at the secondary schools, University, the Godswill Akpabio International Stadiums and playing fields in the Uyo LGA, consisting of 300 male and 300 female athletic youths were randomly selected for the sample size. The age range chosen for the present study was between 15 and 25 years of age. A researcher-structured questionnaire was used for the study. The subjects were to state if they drink alcoholic drinks; the types of alcoholic drinks mostly consumed, and the rating of consumption regularity of alcoholic drinks. The study instrument had face-and-content validation from experts in the University of Uyo, Uyo. The descriptive and Chi-square statistics were used respectively for the research questions and hypotheses.

### RESULTS (DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION)

The Demographic Data of the Respondents:

Age-range: 15 to 25 years of age.	$\bar{X} = 20 \pm 5$ years
Married	= 12 subjects
Unmarried	= 588 subjects.
<u>Total</u>	<u>= 600 subjects</u>

**Research Question 1:** How will gender differentiate the extent of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA?

Table 1: Descriptive (percentage) analysis of gender differentiation of the extent of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Yes	No	Total
Male	286 (95.3%)	14 (4.7%)	300
Female	172 (57.3%)	128 (42.7%)	300
Total	458 (76.3%)	142 (23.7%)	600

In Table 1, descriptively, the results are that 286 (95.3%) of the males agreed to consuming alcoholic drinks, while 172 (57.3%) of the females agreed to consuming alcoholic drinks. The result is that male youths markedly consume alcoholic drinks more than the female youths in Uyo LGA.

**Research Question 2:** How will gender differentiate the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA?

Table 2: Descriptive (percentage) analysis of gender differentiation of the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Wine (e.g. palm	Beer /Stout	Spirit (e.g. whiskey, ogogoro,	Total
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	wine).		kai-kai, etc.)	
Male	162 (56.6%)	100 (35%)	24(8.4%)	286
Female	88 (51%)	74 (43%)	10 (5%)	172
Total	250 (54.6%)	174 (38%)	34(7.4%)	458

In Table 2, out of those who agreed to be taking alcoholic drinks, descriptively, the results are that 162 (56%) of the males agreed to consuming more of alcoholic wine, while 88 (51%) of the females also agreed to consuming more of alcoholic wine. Then 100(35%) males and 74 (43%) females agreed to be taking beer/stout mostly. However, 24(8.4%) males and 10(5%) females agreed they take spirits. The majority in the two genders take alcoholic wine more followed by beer/stout and spirits being the least. The males still descriptively surpass the females in each of the three kinds of alcoholic drinks in Uyo LGA.

**Research Question 3:** How will gender differentiate the regularity of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA?

Table 3: Descriptive (percentage) analysis of gender differentiation of the regularity of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Daily	About Weekly	About Monthly	Total
Male	211 (73.8%)	68 (23.8%)	7(2.4%)	286
Female	8 (4.7%)	23 (43%)	141 (82%)	172
Total	219 (47.8%)	91(19.9%)	148(32.3%)	458

Results: In Table 3, out of those who agreed to be taking alcoholic drinks, the results descriptively are that 211 (73%) of the males and 8 (4.7%) of the females agreed to consuming alcoholic drinks daily. Then 68(23%) males and 23 (43%) females agreed to be taking alcoholic drinks about weekly. Furthermore only 7(2.4%) males and 141(82%) females agreed to be taking alcoholic drinks about monthly. While male youths consume alcoholic drinks daily more, the female youths consume about monthly. The males still surpass the females by taking alcoholic drinks about weekly, 68 (23.8%) against 23 (43%) respectively in Uyo LGA.

**Research Question 4:** How will socio-agents influence the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uyo LGA?

Table 4: Descriptive (percentage) analysis of socio-agents' influence the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Peers	Parents	Total
Male	160 (55.9%)	126 (44%)	286
Female	138 (80%)	34 (20%)	172
Total	298 (65%)	160 (35%)	458

In Table 4, descriptively, the results are that 160 (55.9%) of the males and 138 (80%) of the females agreed to be influenced by peers into initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks. A fair margin of 126 (44%) males and a much smaller 34 (20%) females were influenced by the parents into initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks. A total of 298 (65%) of the youths got influenced by peers into initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks, while 160(35%) youths got influenced by the parents. The result is that the youths markedly are influenced more by peers more than by their parents into initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks; with the male athletes still influenced by peers and parents more than the female athletes in Uyo LGA.



**TESTING THE HYPOTHESES**

**Hypothesis 1:** Chi-square statistical analysis of no significant gender differentiation of the extent of alcoholic drinks consumption among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Yes Fo	No Fo	Fe	Fo -fe	$\frac{(Fo-fe)^2}{Fe}$	$X^2$	Result
Male	286	-	229	57	14.2	120	*Significant
Male	-	14	71	-57	45.8		
Female	172	-	229	-57	14.2		
Female	-	128	71	57	45.8		
Total	458	142			120		

\*Significant at  $P \leq .05$  df 1 = 3.84  $X^2$  critical value.

**Finding:** In Table 5, there is significant difference in the extent of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA. Males significantly consume alcoholic drinks more than the females.

**Hypothesis 2:** Gender will not significantly differentiate the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

**Table 6:** Chi-square statistical analysis of no significant gender differentiation of the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Wine Fo	Beer/Stout Fo	Spirits Fo	Fe	Fo -fe	$\frac{(Fo-fe)^2}{Fe}$	$X^2$	Result
Male	162	-	-	156	6	0.2	3.5	Not significant
Male	-	100	-	108.7	-87	0.7		
Male	-	-	24	21	3	0.4		
Female	88	-	-	93.9	-59	0.4		
Female	-	74	-	65.3	8.7	1.2		
Female	-	-	10	12.8	-2.8	0.6		
Total	250	174	34			3.5		

\*Significant at  $P \leq .05$  df 2 = 5.99  $X^2$  critical value.

**Finding:** In Table 6, there is no significant gender difference in the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA. Across the three types of alcoholic drinks male and female athletic youths consume each of the three types of alcoholic drinks with no significant difference. Each gender consumes alcoholic wine more than beer/stout; and consume spirits the least.

**Hypothesis 3:** Gender will not significantly differentiate the regularity of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA.

**Table 7:** Chi-square statistical analysis of no significant gender differentiation of the regularity of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Daily Fo	Weekly Fo	Monthly	Fe	Fo -fe	$\frac{(Fo-fe)^2}{Fe}$	$X^2$	Result
Male	211	-	-	136.8	74.2	40.2	191.5	*Significant
Male	-	68	-	56.8	11.2	0.2		
Male	-	-	7	92.4	-85.4	78.9		
Female	8	-	-	82.2	-74.2	67		
Female	-	23	-	34.2	11.2	3.7		
Female	-	-	141	55.6	85.4	1.5		

Total	219	91	148	191.5
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\*Significant at  $P \leq .05$  df 2 = 5.99  $X^2$  critical value.

Finding: In Table 7, there is significant difference in the regularity of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uyo LGA. Males consume alcoholic drinks daily and about weekly more than the females. The females consume alcoholic drinks about monthly.

**Hypothesis 4:** Socio-agents will not significantly influence the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

**Table 8:** Chi-square statistical analysis of no significant influence of socio-agents on initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA.

Gender	Peers Fo	Parents Fo	Fe	Fo -fe	$\frac{(Fo-fe)^2}{Fe}$	$X^2$	Result
Male	160	-	186	-26	3.6	27.8	*Significant
Male	-	126	99.9	26.1	6.8		
Female	138	-	111.9	26.1	6.1		
Female	-	34	60	-26	11.3		
Total	298	160			27.8		

\*Significant at  $P \leq .05$  df 1 = 3.84  $X^2$  critical value.

Finding: In Table 8, there is significant difference in the influence of the socio-agents on the athletic youths for initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks in Uyo LGA. Peers influence both the male and the female youths in the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks more than the parents.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of findings is as follows:-

### The extent of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uyo LGA.

The finding is that there is significant difference in the extent of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uyo LGA. Both genders consume a reasonable amount of alcohol. Males consume alcoholic drinks more than the females. The same trend was noted among the youths in Ghana and Uganda respectively by Kwame, (2017); Swahn *et al.* (2017); and Kabwama *et al.* (2016). Their studies showed that the majority of adolescents even under the age of 18 years have consumed alcohol drinks. Same trend is noted in American youths, although the minimum legal drinking age is 21 years (O'Malley *et al.*, 2020). They had noted the drinking rates may even have increased in recent years in some age groups. This could also be applied to Uyo youths in which drinking rate would also be increasing.

Young males by nature within the culture of the people do drink more alcoholic drinks than the females; just like among the adults, according to Kandel, and Yamaguchi (2019). The cultural perception is from the societal way that looked at females who drink alcoholic drinks as 'bad' women. For the youths, females who consume alcoholic drinks are seen as irresponsible and wayward people. Therefore male youths tend to enjoy more societal freedom than female youths as regard the societal view of consumption of alcoholic drinks.

### Gender difference in the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA.

There is no significant gender difference in the types of alcoholic drinks consumed among the youths in Uyo LGA. Across the three types of alcoholic drinks male youths consume each of the three types of alcoholic drinks more than their females but were not significant. Each gender however consume alcoholic wine more than beer/stout; and further more than the spirits. The alcohol content of alcoholic drinks however does differ and youths would prefer types of drinks differently according

to Manthey *et al.* (2019). The present study showed male youths do consume the spirit type of alcoholic drinks more than their females.

As noted by McKellar *et al.* (2018) the higher the alcohol content the more readily one is intoxicated. Women by nature would avoid intoxicating drinks. It appears religion also dictate choice of alcoholic drinks. For an example, Uyo people are mostly Christians and the communion wines used by Christians would contain little or no alcohol for perseverance and many people follow suit in taking little or no alcoholic drinks. For the finding that the athletic youths are consuming most of alcoholic wine, followed by more of beer and least of spirits is common to avoid getting seriously intoxicated.

Regular intoxication with alcohol carries serious stigmatization in the society especially in a typical Uyo society. To call one 'a drunkard' is synonymous to saying the person is 'an irresponsible fool' in the society. Sports performances are also hindered by drinking much alcohol. It affects the liver. As noted in the study on Ghanaian youths by Kwame (2017), spirits are taken excessively in the cold, rainy weather of the sea-sides and so do the Uyo people and other places in Nigeria.

Wines are however sweeter whether alcoholic or non-alcoholic and women would prefer wines which is one of the findings of the present study among the female athletic youths. Beer and stout beer are also enjoyed more by the male athletic youths than the female athletic youths in Uyo; as noted among the Ugandan youths. The free and open availability of these alcoholic drinks for everyone in Uyo is a cause for concern. Many of the drinks have been reported to be adulterated with harmful chemicals and are neither detected nor inspected by the Government agency called NAFDAC that controls production of consumable food items and drugs in Nigeria (Egbho and ason, 2017).

#### **Gender difference in the regularity of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the youths in Uruan LGA.**

The finding is that there is significant gender difference in the regularity of consumption of alcoholic drinks among the athletic youths in Uyo LGA. Males consume alcoholic drinks daily and about weekly more than their female counterparts. The females consume alcoholic drinks about monthly than the males. The same was noted among the Ghanaian youths (Kwame, 2017) and the Ugandan youths (Swahn *et al.*, 2018), generally. Same trend was further noted by and Mealey (2018) and O'Malley, Johnston and Bachman, (2020); that male youths generally take to alcoholic drinks than their female youths. In these studies it is also observed in the Uyo society that young female rarely drink alcoholic drinks openly as young males would do. There is no doubt that male athletic youths would drink more regularly than the females. Regularity of alcoholic drink intake has its adverse effects on the body. Those who indulged regularly in taking alcoholic drinks will in time become addicted and it becomes a serious public health problem to the society, the family and the individual drinker. Alcoholic drinks' advertisements have been associated with the compulsion to take alcoholic drinks (PAHO, 2017 and Jernigan, 2017). It makes the drinker to feel high and happy as advertised and marketed, not minding the adverse effects of excessive alcoholic drink consumption.

#### **The influence of the socio-agents on the youths for initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks in Uyo LGA.**

The finding is that there is significant difference in the influence of the socio-agents on the youths for initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks in Uyo LGA. Peers have greater influence on both the male and the female athletic youths in the initial and current consumption of alcoholic drinks than the parents. The study of Olsson *et al.* (2019) has also shown that compared with youths whose parents/ guardians and siblings did not drink alcohol, the youths who had parents/ guardians or siblings that consume alcohol had significantly higher odds of also consuming alcoholic drinks.



According to the Health Belief Model, engagement in behaviour is predicted by risk perception, perceived benefit of engagement in the behaviour, self-efficacy, perceived barriers and cues to action (Rosenstock, 1974). Cues to action refer to the internal and external enablers that facilitate engagement in certain behaviour. In this case, alcohol use by siblings and parents/ guardians is a cue that inadvertently certifies and inculcates positive attitudes towards the behaviour of drinking to the youth at the age at which they are vulnerable to being influenced by what they experience in their environment. Familial alcoholic problems have been previously documented to be significant predictors of alcohol use among youth (Gupta and Simonsen, 2017). However, in the Uyo society peers seem to influence the youths more than parents. Therefore parents however also contributed less than the peers to the youths consuming alcoholic drinks. Strategies for the control and prevention of alcohol use among the adolescent boys and girls as suggested in Uganda should adopt a whole of societal approach by recognizing the role of the family, school and the community at large in the prevention of alcohol use in this age group. There is a need for the establishment of a legal framework that will protect the youth from the influence of the alcohol industry through strategies such as prohibition of sale to minors, prohibition of alcohol in educational institutions, limiting density of outlets, limiting alcohol promotion and sponsorship among others. An assessment by the World Health Organization established that banning alcohol advertising to reduce alcohol consumption is cost effective and can have incremental benefits when coupled with taxation as recommended by WHO (2019b) and Loup (2018).

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