

## Simplicity, Moderation and Sensitization as Preventive Measures to Excessive Alcohol Intake and Intra-Religious Conflicts in the African Context

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### **Abstract:**

The relationship between alcohol consumption and conflicts has been explored in several contexts. Little research has been conducted on the subject in Wa. The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between alcohol consumption and conflicts where alcohol consumption is on the increase. A quantitative research design is used to collect data from both primary and secondary sources for analysis using sphinx IQ software. Some questionnaires were used for data collection. The results show that alcohol consumption is associated with religious conflicts. It is suggested that consumers should adopt simplicity and moderation habits, while manufacturers and sellers should provide quality products and a sustainable sensitization to reduce alcohol abuse and conflictual situations.

*Keywords: Alcohol consumption, religious conflicts, Christians, Muslims, Traditionalists.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Alcohol is used as a beverage in normal daily activities across the world (Bazié, 2011 ; Nassè, 2018). It is also used in some religious activities as well as social functions (Dumbili, 2013 ; Porter, 2013 ; Nassè et al., 2019). In fact the alcohol industry has become one of the largest sectors of production in the world. However, research has shown that alcohol consumption has diverse effects on consumers, including conflicts. Research on alcohol consumption and conflicts has been done in many parts of the world including Africa (Valentine et al., 2010 ; Amankwaa et al., 2012 ; Dery & Diedong, 2014 ; Nassè et al. 2016). Ghana is one of the most alcohol consuming country in the West African region, after Nigeria and Ivory Coast (Ritchie & Roser, 2020). This is an indication that alcohol plays a very important role in the lives of the people in Ghana. While alcohol consumption may be widespread, certain factors such as culture, distance and time might moderate its prevalence rate in society (Adoma & Darko, 2020). Much of the literature on the effects of alcohol is dedicated to other effects of the substance. However, there is emerging literature that confirms some relationship between alcohol consumption and violent conflicts in intimate relationships (Murphy et al., 2005, Dery & Diedong 2014). There is not much work done on alcohol consumption and conflicts in the context of Wa. In the same vein, no work has concurrently shown one's level of alcohol consumption on religious conflicts. In addition, there is no a clear policy by governmental authorities, sellers and manufacturer that helps to minimize or eradicate alcohol related conflicts in the religious scenery. This research is to fill these research gaps.

Thus, the main objective of this research is to examine the association between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **The Economic Theory of Consumption**

These theorists argument state that consumers purchase decisions, and consumption decisions rely on some economic criteria (Ouédraogo, 2007), Kitchathorn (2009), Nassè (2019). Thus, some economic criteria such as the purchasing power, the consumer income also take into consideration that some emotional factors may affect consumption. In reality, the institution of the private property state with the emergence of entrepreneurial capitalism and free market systems has led to a natural imposition of economic class realism that regulates individual taste, purchasing power, purchasing decisions and choices.

### **The Research Concepts**

The research aims to define the concepts that are in line with the topic.

### **The Concept of Conflict**

The concept of conflict has been defined by several authors. In the western context, Goodhand and Hume (2009) have defined conflict as a disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differ in behavior, beliefs, and values or in needs. The concept of conflict as approached by Goodhand and Hume is limited by the fact that it does not involve the violent aspect of conflict, but it rather shows conflict to be a mere disagreement. In the African context, Nasse et al. (2016) have approached the concept of conflict in a religious environment, as a misunderstanding between individuals and groups due to a given misbehavior that affect a given religious community or group. The concept of conflict as approached by Nasse et al. (2016) depicts the social violence aspect of conflict and that is why recommendations have drawn the attention of political authorities and managers to help prevent these conflicts. In Ghana, Awedoba (2012) has defined the concept of conflict as a relationship between two or more parties centered on differences, disagreement and some issues of common interest or concern.

### **Alcohol Consumption**

Alcohol consumption problems are a global phenomenon, and its nature is very complex. The predisposition to alcohol abuse differs significantly from one distinct person to another and from one country to another. Alcohol consumption is contingent on the accessibility of alcohol, the nation's guidelines related to alcohol, the country's social and cultural background, religious tradition and its economics situation (Chen, & Yin, 2008).

The pervasiveness of alcohol dependency also differs from one ethnic or traditional group to another (Chen, & Yin, 2008). For instance, in Ghana some ethnic groups and religious groups consume alcohol whilst others do not consume it. It is clear that natural disasters, religious conflicts, ethnic conflicts as well as political disputes do have made it impossible for some people to assess some opportunities in many countries.

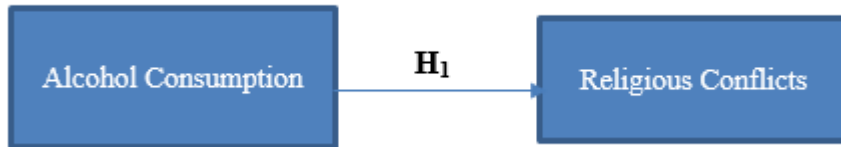
For Amankwaa, Reed, and Owens (2012), alcohol consumption is the intake of industrial alcoholic beverages. In Africa and particularly in West Africa, it is agreed by the research of Nassè et al. (2016) that the concept of alcohol consumption is also the drinking of industrial alcoholic drinks. Still, in the context of Burkina Faso, Bazié (2011) has approached the concept of alcohol consumption to be the drinking of traditional alcoholic beverages, in his study on understanding communication in the traditional environment, and the sociocultural characteristics of different ethnic groups.

### Research Hypotheses

From the literature review above the alternative hypothesis and the null hypothesis have been constructed as follows :

- **H<sub>a</sub>** : There is a relationship between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.
- **H<sub>o</sub>** : There is not a relationship between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.

### Research Model



**Figure 1-Research Model**  
(Source: adapted from Nassè, 2019)

## MATERIALS AND METHOD

### Epistemological Posture

This is quantitative research focused on postpositivist posture.

### Research Procedures

The quantitative sampling strategy consists of using a random sampling technique combined with the snowballing technique due to a lack of time and an insufficiency of resources. The questionnaire is pre-tested with the consumers of alcoholic beverages. This first test is done on a sample of 10 respondents. The pre-test results are used to draft a final version of the questionnaire. The designed questionnaire is administered again to the consumers.

This sample is a subset of the studied population. To set the sample size, the following mathematic formula is used:  $n = (p) (1-p) / (e / Z)^2$ , where p represents the selected proportion of an attribute, for example gender. Here, assuming 50-50 female to male ratio,  $p=0.50$  or 50%; e represents the level of precision or accuracy set for this research, here 5%, and Z is the number related to the degree of confidence, and in this case  $Z=1.96$  or 95% confidence (Ganassali, 2009: 51; Hejase and Hejase, 2013: 231). Then, in this case, the formula becomes:  $n = (0.5 \times (1-0.5)) / (e / 1.96)^2 = 0.25 / (e / 1.96)^2$ .

The number of people to interview for a maximum error of 6.0%, then is  $n = 0.25 / (0.06 / 1.96)^2 = 267$  people. A sample of 267 people is enough for a 6-point error estimate. Once the sample is determined, data collection is done through a questionnaire on a paper and it is filled by alcohol consumers. The total number of respondents is 308. Research context. The country where the research is conducted is Ghana. The research area includes the city of Wa.

### Research Participants

Participants are Christian, Muslim, and Traditional who consume alcohol, and who have consumed alcohol for at least two years. They are considered using the following criteria that include age, sex, religion, educational level, marital status, occupation, and social class. First, the age of participants ranges from 18 to 45 years old and above. Second, the gender of the

participants includes men and women. Third, the educational level of participants includes illiterates, and those with primary school, secondary school or university levels.

### Research Context

The research is carried out in the main regional city of Upper West that is Wa. The research period is two and half years. It has started before the covid-19 crisis, and as it has continued during the covid-19 crisis.

### Data Analysis

In this research, the quantitative data is analysed using the quantitative version of Sphinx IQ. The quantitative data is computed into the quantitative version of Sphinx IQ and then the statistical data such as descriptive statistics and correlations are generated.

### Ethical Implications

In this research, there are some ethical measures to be taken into account as what is normal to be considered for a scientific research (Creswell, 2009). In this research in order to increase participation, respondents are not requested to give their names, and information given by the respondents is kept confidential (Nassè, 2018).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

The statistical data about the different respondents is summarized in Table 1

**Table 1: Statistical data of the respondents**

Religious affiliation	Number of respondents	Percentage
Christians	224	72.7%
Muslims	12	3.9%
Traditionalists	72	23.4%
Total	308	100%

### Alcohol Consumption and Religious Conflicts

**Table 2: Relationships between 'Alcohol consumption' and 'Religious conflicts'**

Variable crossing	Results
"Alcohol consumption" and "Religious conflicts"	$p = < 0.01$ ; 108.67 ; dof = 11. The relationship is very significant.

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

- $H_a$ : There is an association between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.
- $H_o$ : There is not an association between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.

For the hypothesis testing, the correlation between the variable 'Alcohol consumption' and 'Religious conflicts' is the method used. The p-value  $p = < 0.01$ , the Chi-square value  $\chi^2 = 108.67$ , and the degree of freedom  $dof = 11$  are found to be significant (as indicated on the above Table 1). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is confirmed.

- $H_a$ : There is an association between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts.

## **DICUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

### **Alcohol Consumption and Religious Conflicts**

Some researchers underline in their studies the relationships between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts in different context (Murphy & al., 2005; Nassè, 2019; Nassè, Ouédraogo & Diop, 2016) with influence of some factors such as extreme poverty, business relationships, culture with Christian respondents. The present research depicts the same relationship between alcohol consumption and religious conflicts in the Ghanaian context with a particular concern on Christians, Muslims and Animists. Observation has shown that in the Ghanaian context the weight of Christian beliefs and Islamic beliefs affect both tradition and the consumption of alcohol. These religious beliefs are strengthened by some strong moral values that are strongly inculcated through education in school (Nassè, 2020).

The covid-19 crisis has some sensitive effects on consumption (Davis, 2021), on alcohol consumption and thus, on religious conflicts. The observation is that with crisis some consumers have been in desperation and they drink a lot of alcohol to forget their daily challenges what enhance conflictual situations and especially household conflicts and religious conflicts.

## **CONCLUSION**

The present research shows that alcohol consumption influences religious conflicts in a particular context.

### **Contributions**

There are some conceptual contributions that enrich the literature as the constructs of alcohol consumption and religious conflicts are redefined in a specific context. In terms of theoretical contributions, it also enriches the cultural theories on consumption in a new context, where there is a combination of multiple factors that moderate alcohol consumption.

In terms of managerial contributions, it is imperative for manufacturers to have a responsible advertising policy towards alcohol consumers by recommending moderation and simplicity in their consumption habits. Manufacturers and sellers should provide quality products to consumers, in addition to sustainable and responsible sensitization campaigns that takes into account their health concern. It is clear that consumers that are healthy can still purchase and consume alcohol. However, consumers with health-related problems might not purchase and might not consume alcohol beverages what could reduce income for manufacturers. It is also good for religious leaders to sensitize consumers to have responsible and ethical consumption habits.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Research observations have shown that there is less ethical concern in terms of consumption, thus, it is necessary to investigate ethical issues and consumption habits in the West African context

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## OTHER STATISTICAL DETAILS

**Table 2: Respondents' age**

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
10 - 25 years old	83	26.9%
26-35 years old	129	41.9%
36- 45 years old	84	27.3%
46- and above	12	3.9%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 3: Respondents' profession**

Profession	Number of respondents	Percentage
Public employee	06	1.9%
Private employee	230	74.7%
unemployed	72	23.4%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 4: Respondents' social status**

Social status	Number of respondents	Percentage
Very poor	6	1.9%
Poor	147	47.7%
Rich	149	48.4%
Very rich	6	1.9%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 5: Respondents' gender**

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Female	29	09.4%
Male	279	90.6%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 6: Respondents' marital status**

Marital status	Number of respondents	Percentage
Single	141	45.8%
Engaged	68	22.1%
Married	93	30.2%
Divorced	06	1.9%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 5: Respondents' level of education**

Level of education	Number of respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	79	25.6%
Primary school	60	19.5%
Secondary school	95	30.8%
University	74	24%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

**Table 6: Respondents' level of education**

Residence	Number of respondents	Percentage
Wa town	302	98.1%
Other areas	06	1.9%
Total	308	100%

(Source : fieldwork, 2019)

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