

A Study of Alcohol Consumption in
Women Baccalaureate Nursing Students

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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ABSTRACT

This research study describes alcohol consumption in female baccalaureate nursing students at a midwestern university. The study examines the relationship among demographic data as age, marital status, place of residence, other occupants of the household, and level in college and number of days per week alcohol is consumed, the amount of alcohol consumed during an average week, alcohol consumption in one occasion, and in the heaviest drinking episode. Open-ended questions were included to identify reasons that the individual drinks and how alcohol makes them feel. Most of the subjects reported that they did not consume alcohol during an average week, during an average occasion, or during their heaviest drinking episode. However, there was a wide range of responses. There was no relationship found between age and alcohol consumption. No significant difference was discovered between alcohol consumption and marital status. A significant difference was not found between alcohol consumption and the category of other household occupants.

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A STUDY OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN
WOMEN BACCALAUREATE NURSING STUDENTS

CHAPTER I: PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

Alcohol use is widespread throughout college campuses in America (Berkowitz and Perkins, 1986; Engs and Hanson, 1985; and Saltz and Elandt, 1986). Many studies have been conducted concerning alcohol consumption among college students. Drinking patterns need to be examined to get a clearer picture of alcohol consumption among college students and attitudes toward drinking need to be identified to have a better understanding of the reasons that college students choose to drink.

Nursing students comprise a special segment of the population. The majority are female. At the midwestern university in which the study was conducted, one of the requirements for entry into the baccalaureate nursing program is a minimum grade point average.

RESEARCH STATEMENT

This study investigated alcohol consumption in women nursing students in a baccalaureate program at a midwestern university. The data were collected by a questionnaire, which involved questions of both quantitative and qualitative data. Permission

to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the university where the study was conducted. The questionnaires were handed to the professors who distributed the questionnaires at the end of class periods. The cover letter informed the students that completion of the survey indicated implied consent and that if they did not wish to complete the questionnaire, to return it to the researcher.

DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

Alcohol consumption was measured by inquiring about beer, wine, and hard liquor. The Standard Drink Equivalent (SDE) was used for the purposes of this study, as described in a study by Polich, Armor, and Braiker (1981). Beer is defined as 12 ounces, a glass of wine as four ounces, and hard liquor as one ounce. A mixed drink is generally considered to contain one ounce of hard liquor, the equivalent of a shot of hard liquor.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to describe the alcohol consumption and to examine if there is any significant correlation between the demographic data and the amount of alcohol consumed. The study also explored individual views on alcohol concerning reasons for alcohol consumption and how drinking makes the individual feel. The objectives of such data

were to identify drinking patterns and to gain a better understanding of the reasons that the subjects consumed alcohol.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to women baccalaureate nursing students at Ball State University during Spring Semester, 1996. Since the instrument used to obtain the data was a survey, it can only be assumed that the participants were telling the truth.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Heavy drinking has been identified as a common risky behavior among college students in numerous studies (Berkowitz and Perkins, 1986; Engs and Hanson, 1985; and Saltz and Elandt, 1986). In a study by Gonzalez (1986), the author reported that no other population in the United States has a larger proportion of drinkers than the college student population. Eighty-one percent of the students in a study by Kindorf, Sherman, Johnson, and Bigelow (1995) reported drinking at least once during the first two months of college. Ninety percent of the subjects in a study by Evans and Dunn (1995) had consumed at least one alcoholic beverage during the survey period. Alcohol was the most widely used substance in a study by Duitsman and Colbry (1995), with 96% reporting that they had used alcohol at least once in their lifetime.

Little research has been performed on drinking in college women. The reason for this is most likely that although studies have demonstrated that drinking is common among college students, drinking is usually found to be more common among men than women (Jenson, Peterson, Murphy, and Emmerling, 1992). The men in a study by Graves (1995) reported that they have consumed more alcohol than women during their heaviest drinking episode. Men are twice as likely to be heavy drinkers than women (O'Hare 1990). Males in another study (Prentice and Miller, 1993) reported an alcohol consumption rate over double that reported by females. Men reported drinking more than women both per day and

per occasion (Evans and Dunn, 1995). Schall, Kemeny, and Maltzman (1992) also found gender differences, with men consuming more alcohol than women. Therefore, since men are more likely to drink and to consume more alcohol than women, they are often the focus of research studies.

Women reported a decline in the average amount of alcohol consumed per occasion between their freshman and senior year of college (Klein, 1994). The frequency of drinking did not change, but the frequency of intoxication and the frequency of drinking solely to become intoxicated declined (Klein, 1994).

Kindorf et al. (1995) found that the majority of subjects drank beer rather than wine or liquor. This is also reported in a study by Engs (1977).

Duitsman and Colbry (1995) found that the perceived risk of alcohol was the most significant predictor of alcohol use. The authors also reported factors that did not contribute significantly to the predicted risk of substance abuse in their study: gender, age, marital status, parents' marital status, GPA [grade point average], class rank, major, place of residence, ethnic background, religious affiliation, and current employment (Duitsman and Colbry, 1995). However, in one study (Toscova, Miller, Sanchez-Merki, and Miller, 1990), the students' grade point average was found to be negatively correlated with volume of alcohol consumption. Engs and Hanson (1985) found that the higher the grade point average, the less likely the individual was to drink or to be a heavy drinker.

The legality of alcohol contributes to its social acceptance. Gonzalez and Haney (1990) propose that the general perception of alcohol as a socially acceptable drug in the United States causes it to be seen as a benign substance by college students, and, therefore, perceptions of risk regarding alcohol are not predictive of attitudes towards drugs in general.

According to a study conducted by Agostinelli, Brown, and Miller (1995), "College students, particularly those who drink heavily, tend to overestimate the prevalence of heavy drinking among their peers. A self-regulation model predicts that feedback of undesirable deviation from normative standards would result in correction of behavior toward perceived norms" (p. 31). If this is the case, it follows that if college students perceive that their peers are drinking heavily, they will increase their consumption to conform to the perceived norm.

There are consequences to misperceiving the social norm. Miller and McFarland (1991) defined pluralistic ignorance as a psychological state characterized by the belief that one's private attitudes and judgments are different from those of others, even though one's public behavior is identical. A study conducted by Prentice and Miller (1993) found evidence of pluralistic ignorance. They found that the students felt less comfortable with the alcohol drinking habits of students than what they perceived the social norm to be (Prentice and Miller, 1993). They also felt that other students, including both friends and the campus in general, were more comfortable with the alcohol use on campus than they were (Prentice and Miller, 1993).

Men exhibited an increase in the correlation between attitudes and norms over time, consistent with the expectations that individuals respond to perceived deviance by bringing their attitudes in line with their perceptions of the norm (Prentice and Miller, 1993). "The pattern of results in this study clearly indicates internalization on the part of men and alienation on the part of women" (Prentice and Miller, 1993, p. 249). Prentice and Miller offer two possible explanations for this. The first is that alcohol consumption is a more central or integral aspect of male social life than of female social life and men might be expected to feel greater pressures to be comfortable with alcohol. The second possibility is that men are simply more inclined to react to feeling deviant from the social norm with conformity, whereas women react to deviance with alienation (Prentice and Miller, 1993). "Pluralistic ignorance has traditionally been linked to two consequences: The social construction of emergency situations as nonemergencies and the perpetuation of unsupported social norms" (Prentice and Miller, 1993, p. 254). The continuance of pluralistic ignorance may result in alcohol continuing to be a part of campus social life because the individual perceives that this is supported by fellow students. Students may also conform to this norm. This may create internal conflict because the student is acting contrary to his or her feelings concerning alcohol consumption and has perceptions of himself or herself as deviant.

Leigh (1987) conducted a survey on the beliefs about alcohol effects. The survey included possible effects of alcohol for the

participants to respond to: mean, fights, vulgar, sick, dizzy, can't think straight, good, sleepy, do things not done when sober, friendly, romantic, talkative, and sad (Leigh, 1987). "In almost all cases, and especially for behaviors that are particularly unacceptable socially, respondents report that alcohol effects are more likely to happen to other people than to themselves" (Leigh, 1987, p. 472). Leigh also found that the students in her study generally reported becoming more disinhibited and outgoing whereas the respondents from the general population reported more impairment and depressant effects (1987). Many respondents commented that experiencing these effects depended on the situation (Leigh, 1987).

Alcohol expectancies assessed during the first week of college correlated positively with both concurrent and subsequent assessments of self-reported beer consumption (Kindorf et al., 1995). In addition, the expectancies that alcohol enhances social assertion and promotes global positive changes were associated with increases in beer consumption during the first two months of college for male, but not female, subjects (Kindorf et al., 1995). Brown, Christiansen, and Goldman (1987) found that alcohol related expectancies can influence the behavioral effects of alcohol and decisions regarding alcohol use. Werner, Walker, and Greene (1995) stated in their study that during the year, students at low risk for problem drinking developed stronger positive attitudes toward the effects of alcohol use upon courage, became less concerned about potential behavioral impairment, and perceived less negative effects upon

self-perception. High risk students showed a significant decline in their positive attitudes towards the effects of alcohol upon their sociability (Werner et al., 1995).

Gustafson (1991) reported that there is a decrease in both shown and expected tolerance for socially unacceptable behaviors. Women showed less tolerance of the behaviors of others and expected less tolerance of their own behaviors while intoxicated than men; heavy drinkers were more tolerant than low consumers; and there was no significant difference between older and younger respondents in tolerance levels (Gustafson, 1991). Klein (1994) found that women are less likely to tolerate alcohol abuse as they progress through college. ". . . People expecting extreme tolerance from others obviously tend to misjudge other people's level of tolerance. They expect to meet increased tolerance for many specific unacceptable behaviors while most people, in fact, decrease their tolerance" (Gustafson, 1991, p. 73). Examples of behaviors are spilling food or drink on the table, using exaggerated bad language, speaking in a loud and disturbing manner, making inappropriate sexual passes, using sexual words in a provoking way, and kicking furniture and fittings (Gustafson, 1991).

Evans and Dunn (1995) reported problem behaviors ranging from relatively minor instances of public rowdiness to more serious reports of physical injury to self and others. Carey (1993) stated that "heavy drinkers are at greater risk in situations that involve social pressure to drink, pleasant times with others, pleasant emotions, and physical discomfort"

(p. 219). O'Hare (1990) wrote that the more a college student drinks, the more he or she is likely to experience alcohol-related problems such as injury, memory loss, fights/arguments, or academic problems. Over 50% of the college students surveyed reported nausea/vomiting and being tired/hungover at least once during the past year as a result of alcohol consumption (O'Hare, 1990). Students also reported other alcohol-related problems: depression, badly affected relationship, and problems with the law/arrest (O'Hare, 1990). Although the women in O'Hare's (1990) study constituted half as many heavy drinkers as men, they reported an equal amount of alcohol-related problems.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was descriptive and not experimental. The method of data collection was a questionnaire that allowed for self-report. No control was used because the design was not experimental. The questionnaire included a section for demographic data, a section with questions concerning the amount of alcohol consumed on the average and how frequently it is consumed, and a section for qualitative data. The section on qualitative data gave the subjects the opportunity to express some of the reasons that they consume alcohol and the way that alcohol makes them feel.

SAMPLING

The sample was drawn from all baccalaureate nursing students at a midwestern university. Sixty-three subjects completed questionnaires. The questionnaires of the six male subjects were not included because of the inequality of women and men participants. Previous studies have shown differences in the drinking habits of men and women, as related in the review of literature. The small number of male subjects was not thought to be representative for comparison of gender-related differences in drinking habits.

The questionnaire was distributed in classes enrolled with only baccalaureate nursing students. The classes were selected randomly from a list of baccalaureate nursing classes and permission was obtained from the instructors to distribute the questionnaire during the last portion of the class period. The questionnaire was also distributed to random subjects in the student nurse lounge after it was confirmed that the subjects were enrolled in the baccalaureate nursing program. The results of the survey were analyzed by the SPSSx program at Ball State University. The significance level chosen was 0.05.

The sample size was 63. Of those, six were men and were excluded. Fifty-seven participants were women. The response rate was 100%.

INSTRUMENT

The data were collected by questionnaire survey. A copy is contained in Appendix A. The questionnaire included demographic data: sex, age, marital status, type of residence, other household occupants, and level in college. Questions regarding reasons that the individual consumed alcohol and how alcohol makes them feel were also obtained.

The questionnaire was reviewed by five colleague undergraduate students prior to distribution to the potential participants. These were college students who were not qualified to be involved in the study due to the fact that they were not baccalaureate nursing students. The suggestions given were taken

into consideration and the questionnaire was revised based upon their suggestions.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The first section of the questionnaire included questions regarding demographic data. The information regarding the male participants was not included in the analysis. Therefore, all 57 of the subjects were female. The majority of the participants were single, comprising 63.2%. Nearly 30% were married. The remainder of the participants were equally divided between those who were living with their boyfriend and those divorced or separated with 3.5% in each category. Of the participants, 54.4% resided in a house, 28.1% in an apartment, and 17.5% in a residence hall. Fourteen percent of the participants live with parents and/or siblings, 45.6% live with friends, 10.5% live alone, and 29.8% live with their spouse and/or children. Most of those surveyed were senior level nursing students, with 66.7%. Fourteen percent were juniors, 17.5% were sophomores, and 1.8% were freshmen. There was only one freshman participant. The above data are illustrated in Table 1. The participants varied widely in age, as shown in Table 2. The youngest was 19 and the oldest was 43. The majority of the participants were 22 years of age or older. The mean age was 24.46 (SD=6.23).

TABLE 1
 FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF
 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	57	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	36	63.2
Married	17	29.8
Living with Boyfriend	2	3.5
Separated/Divorced	2	3.5
Place of Residence		
House	31	54.4
Apartment	16	28.1
Residence Hall	10	17.5
Other Household Occupants		
Friends	26	45.6
Parents/Siblings	8	14.0
Live Alone	6	10.5
Spouse/Children	17	29.8
Class Level		
Freshman	1	1.8
Sophomore	10	17.5
Junior	8	14.0
Senior	38	66.7

TABLE 2
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF AGES OF PARTICIPANTS

Age	Frequency	Percent
19	5	8.8
20	9	15.8
21	8	14.0
22	10	17.5
23	8	14.0
24	2	3.5
25	1	1.8
26	1	1.8
27	3	5.3
31	2	3.5
32	1	1.8
37	2	3.5
38	2	3.5
40	2	3.5
43	1	1.8
M=24.456		SD=6.231

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

One day per week was the most frequent response regarding the number of days the participants consumed alcohol per week. Twenty-two participants responded in this manner, which comprises 38.6%. The second most frequent response was that the 21 participants consumed no alcohol per week. Three participants reported that they consumed alcohol four days during an average week. The mean was 1.02 (SD=1.08). This information is presented in Table 3.

The next question required the participant to answer how many cans of beer, glasses of wine and shots or mixed drinks containing hard liquor the person consumes during an average week. This was separated into the three types of alcohol for analysis and is shown in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6. Some of the participants wrote down ranges, so these were averaged for analysis. The majority of participants responded that they drank no beer during an average week, with 56.1%. Twenty was the largest value that was given. The mean was 2.24 (SD=4.37). Very few of the respondents reported that they drank wine during an average week. Eighty-six percent responded that they drank no wine during an average week. The largest value reported was an average of two glasses of wine consumed during an average week. This was reported by two participants. The mean was calculated as 0.17 (SD=0.46). Most of the participants answered that they drink no hard liquor in the form of shots or mixed drinks during an average week, with 70.2%. However, one participant reported a

value of ten shots of hard liquor or mixed drinks consumed during an average week. The mean was 0.66 (SD=1.60).

TABLE 3
NUMBER OF DAYS ALCOHOL CONSUMED
DURING AN AVERAGE WEEK

Days/Week	Frequency	Percent
0	21	36.8
1	22	38.6
2	9	15.8
3	2	3.5
4	3	5.3
Mean=1.018	SD=1.077	

TABLE 4
NUMBER OF CANS OF BEER CONSUMED
DURING AN AVERAGE WEEK

Cans of Beer	Frequency	Percent
0.0	32	56.1
0.5	1	1.8
1.0	6	10.5
1.5	1	1.8
2.0	3	5.3
3.0	4	7.0
4.0	2	3.5
4.5	1	1.8
7.0	1	1.8
8.0	1	1.8
12.0	1	1.8
13.0	1	1.8
14.0	1	1.8
15.0	1	1.8
20.0	1	1.8
Mean=2.237		SD=4.372

TABLE 5
NUMBER OF GLASSES OF WINE CONSUMED
DURING AN AVERAGE WEEK

Glasses of Wine	Frequency	Percent
0.0	49	86.0
0.5	1	1.8
1.0	5	8.8
2.0	2	3.5
Mean=0.167		SD=0.456

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF MIXED DRINKS OR SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR
CONSUMED DURING AN AVERAGE WEEK

Mixed Drinks/ Shots	Frequency	Percent
0.0	40	70.2
0.5	4	7.0
1.0	4	7.0
2.0	4	7.0
2.5	1	1.8
3.0	1	1.8
4.0	2	3.5
10.0	1	1.8
Mean=0.658		SD=1.601

The participants were asked about the number of cans of beer, glasses of wine, and shots or mixed drinks of hard liquor they consumed on the average during one occasion. These data are presented in Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9. The number of cans of beer consumed during an average occasion ranged from zero to seven. The most frequent response was zero, with 47.4 percent of the responses. The mean was 1.79 (SD=2.11). The most frequent response for glasses of wine consumed during an average occasion was also zero, with 73.3%. The largest value given was 4.5. The mean was 0.52 (SD=1.04). Thirty-two people (56.1%) responded that they did not drink any hard liquor in the form of shots or mixed drinks on the average occasion. The range was from zero to ten. One shot or mixed drink consumed was the second most frequent response, with 12.3%. The mean was 1.12 (SD=1.85).

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF CANS OF BEER CONSUMED
DURING AN AVERAGE OCCASION

Cans of Beer	Frequency	Percent
0.0	27	47.4
1.0	2	3.5
1.5	2	3.5
2.0	5	8.8
2.5	2	3.5
3.0	9	15.8
4.0	2	3.5
5.0	2	3.5
5.5	1	1.8
6.0	3	5.3
6.5	1	1.8
7.0	1	1.8
Mean=1.789	SD=2.109	

TABLE 8
NUMBER OF GLASSES OF WINE CONSUMED
DURING AN AVERAGE OCCASION

Glasses of Wine	Frequency	Percent
0.0	42	73.3
0.5	1	1.8
1.0	4	7.0
1.5	1	1.8
2.0	5	8.8
2.5	2	3.5
4.0	1	1.8
4.5	1	1.8
Mean=0.518		SD=1.035

TABLE 9
NUMBER OF MIXED DRINKS OR SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR
CONSUMED DURING AN AVERAGE OCCASION

Mixed Drinks/ Shots	Frequency	Percent
0.0	32	56.1
0.5	1	1.8
1.0	7	12.3
1.5	1	1.8
2.0	7	12.3
3.0	4	7.0
3.5	1	1.8
4.0	1	1.8
5.0	1	1.8
6.0	1	1.8
10.0	1	1.8
Mean=1.114		SD=1.852

The last question of a quantitative nature was regarding the greatest quantity of alcohol that the participant had consumed of beer, wine, and hard liquor on their heaviest drinking episode. These data are illustrated in Table 10, Table 11, and Table 12. Nearly 50% of the participants answered that they had not consumed any beer on their heaviest drinking episode. The answers of the other participants ranged from one to twelve cans of beer. The mean was 3.05 (SD=3.74). Most of the people did not drink any wine on their heaviest drinking episode, with 73.7% answering in this manner. The largest value was eight. The mean was 0.97 (SD=1.85). Twenty-six of the 57 participants did not drink any hard liquor on their heaviest drinking episode. However, 14.1% responded that they had consumed ten or more shots or mixed drinks of hard liquor on their heaviest drinking episode. The largest value given was sixteen. The value of the mean was 3.58 (SD=4.43).

TABLE 10
NUMBER OF CANS OF BEER CONSUMED
DURING HEAVIEST DRINKING EPISODE

Cans of Beer	Frequency	Percent
0	28	49.1
1	3	5.3
3	2	3.5
4	4	7.0
5	5	8.8
6	6	10.5
7	1	1.8
8	2	3.5
9	1	1.8
10	2	3.5
12	3	5.3
Mean=3.053	SD=3.744	

TABLE 11
NUMBER OF GLASSES OF WINE CONSUMED
DURING HEAVIEST DRINKING EPISODE

Glasses of Wine	Frequency	Percent
0	42	73.7
2	5	8.8
3	3	5.3
4	3	5.3
5	2	3.5
6	1	1.8
8	1	1.8
Mean=0.965	SD=1.851	

TABLE 12
NUMBER OF MIXED DRINKS OR SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR
CONSUMED DURING HEAVIEST DRINKING EPISODE

Mixed Drinks/ Shots	Frequency	Percent
0	26	45.6
1	1	1.8
2	3	5.3
3	3	5.3
4	4	7.0
5	5	8.8
6	4	7.0
7	1	1.8
8	2	3.5
10	2	3.5
12	3	5.3
14	2	3.5
16	1	1.8
Mean=3.579		SD=4.432

As illustrated in Table 13, the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, with two-tailed significance, was used to examine the relationship between age and alcohol consumption. The number of cans of beer, glasses of wine, and shots or mixed drinks containing hard liquor consumed during an average week, during an average occasion, and on the heaviest drinking episode were the values representing alcohol consumption. As shown in Table 13, there was no significant relationship between age and alcohol consumption.

TABLE 13

PEARSON'S CORRELATION COEFFICIENT WITH TWO-TAILED SIGNIFICANCE:
AGE RELATED TO ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Variables	Age	P
Beer/Week	-0.1341	0.320
Wine/Week	-0.0272	0.841
Hard Liquor/Week	0.0061	0.964
Beer/One Occasion	-0.0687	0.612
Wine/One Occasion	-0.0123	0.927
Hard Liquor/One Occasion	-0.0433	0.749
Beer/Heaviest Episode	-0.0148	0.913
Wine/Heaviest Episode	-0.0605	0.655
Hard Liquor/Heaviest Episode	-0.2406	0.071

The Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) test was another test conducted. No significant difference was found among marital status groups and the amount of beer, wine, or hard liquor consumed during an average week. Nor were there significant differences found among the marital status groups and the amount of beer, wine, or hard liquor consumed during an average occasion or during the heaviest drinking episode.

MANOVA was also conducted to determine if there was a significant difference among alcohol consumption and the category of other household occupants. No significant differences were found between participants living with friends, parents and/or siblings, alone, or with spouse and/or children, and the amount of beer, wine, or hard liquor consumed during an average week, during an average occasion, or during the heaviest drinking episode.

CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF
QUALITATIVE DATA

REASONS GIVEN FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

The participants were able to give some of the reasons that they drink alcohol. The list of responses can be found in Appendix B. Four participants did not respond to this question. Some people responded that they do not drink alcohol.

The three most frequent reasons given for drinking were social, to relax, and to relieve stress. "To have fun" and "enjoy the taste" were other reasons given. Other reasons given were "nothing else to do," "hard/bad day," "escape," and "get out of reality."

HOW ALCOHOL MAKES PARTICIPANTS FEEL

The participants were asked to express how alcohol makes them feel. The responses are listed in Appendix C. The responses to this question were much more varied than the reasons given for drinking alcohol. Again, some responded that they do not drink. The same four participants who did not answer the first question of a qualitative nature also did not respond to this one.

Some of the respondents said that it depended on the quantity consumed. Others said that sometimes it might make them feel one way while another time it would make them feel

differently. Some of the positive responses were "happy," "giddy," "euphoric," and "fun." One person wrote that it made her feel "wild" and several others responded that it makes them feel "uninhibited" and "carefree." Still another stated that it made her feel "like the person I would like to be." Many people wrote that it made them feel "sick" or "out of control," "lousy," "sluggish and impaired," and "depressed."

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to describe alcohol consumption among women baccalaureate nursing students in a midwestern university. Also, it endeavored to discover reasons that this population drinks alcohol and how alcohol makes them feel.

A questionnaire was formed and distributed to obtain such information from the subjects. The questionnaire required the subjects to describe their drinking patterns in terms of averages, rather than describing it in terms of alcohol consumption in the past week, month, or other time period. This was in hopes of lessening the possibility that the time period chosen was not typical of the person's drinking pattern. However, some of the participants gave responses in ranges, so the average was calculated. It can only be assumed that the subjects were telling the truth.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that although the majority of the subjects consume little, if any alcohol during an average occasion and an average week, there are some definite outliers. This probably contributed to the fact that there were no significant findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would recommend that further research be done regarding nursing students and alcohol. One possible study could involve distributing a survey to both women students enrolled in a baccalaureate nursing program and also to other women at the same university and compare the results to see how the two groups differ. Many of the participants in this study responded that they do not drink alcohol. It would be interesting to note if these findings would be significantly higher or lower than the rest of the female population at the same university.

The study was limited to one population in one school in one town. It could be given to other female nursing students at other schools in more towns and more states. It could also include associate degree nursing students. Perhaps the associate and baccalaureate students could be compared.

Male and female nursing students could also be compared. However, since nursing is still predominately female, it may be difficult to recruit enough males to be relatively equal to the number of female participants.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Dear Student,

My name is Merri Pallatin and I am an undergraduate nursing student and Honors College student at Ball State University. One of the requirements of the Honors College is to write a thesis. Therefore, I am conducting a survey about college students such as yourself. My advisor is Dr. Nagia Ali, who is also co-investigator in my study.

You are being invited to voluntarily participate in my study. The study is concerning how students feel about alcoholic beverages. If you agree to participate in my study, you will need to complete the survey. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. I will be back to pick up the survey or you can return it to me via campus mail to my address below. If you decide not to participate in the survey, please return the blank survey to me.

There are no risks for participating in the survey. This study is confidential and I am asking you not to put your name on the survey. Your participation is voluntary and without know risk. You may withdraw from the study at any time. You may benefit from the study by recognizing your behaviors and attitudes towards alcoholic beverages. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call me or my advisor, Dr. Ali. Thank you for your participation.

(Signature)

Merri Pallatin
Campus #
Home #
Address:

(Signature)

Dr. Nagia Ali
Office #
Home #

Survey of College Students

For items 1-5, please place a checkmark in the blank of the appropriate response.

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Marital Status

- Single
- Married
- Living with boyfriend/girlfriend
- Separated/Divorced

3. Place of Residence

- House
- Apartment
- Residence Hall
- Fraternity House

4. Other Occupants

- Friend(s)
- Parents/Siblings
- Live alone

5. Level in College

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

For items 6-10, please fill in EACH of the blanks with the appropriate number.

6. Age _____
7. How many days do you drink alcohol during an average week?
_____ Days/Week
8. How many of EACH of the following do you consume during an average week?
- _____ Beer (Cans)
- _____ Wine (Glasses)
- _____ Hard liquor (Mixed Drinks/Shots)
9. How many of EACH of the following do you consume on the average during one occasion?
- _____ Beer (Cans)
- _____ Wine (Glasses)
- _____ Hard liquor (Mixed Drinks/Shots)
10. How many of EACH of the following did you consume on your heaviest drinking episode?
- _____ Beer (Cans)
- _____ Wine (Glasses)
- _____ Hard liquor (Mixed Drinks/Shots)

Please respond to the following questions in the space provided:

11. What are some of the reasons that you drink?

12. How does alcohol make you feel?

APPENDIX B

REASONS GIVEN FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

APPENDIX B

REASONS GIVEN FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

To relax

To have a good time

To be social

It tastes good

To relieve anxiety

Do not (Did but quit several years ago)

To celebrate

Like taste of mixed drinks

I don't drink most of the time. If I drink, it's just to relax with friends. We may go to the bars to talk (the ones that don't card)

Become more outgoing

Environment at most social gatherings includes drinking

Relieve stress

Nothing else to do

Depressed

It's a release

Rarely do now, used to socially

I drink socially for the most part. I have one or two drinks at a time when with friends.

Hanging out with friends (usually socially)

Feel free

For fun

Feels good

Watch basketball game

Hard/bad day

I don't drink. I drank once to see what it was like.

I don't drink so I will just explain some of the reasons why I don't drink. I don't drink because I think that I am a really fun person without alcohol. Another reason why I do not drink is that I don't think that it is good for me.

I don't. Only for special occasions.

I enjoy the taste of beer

I drink socially. I rarely have alcohol in my home only. Only when other people come over that drink.

Socially acceptable

Ice breaker

Escape

With meals on some occasions

I usually don't. Occasionally I drink a mixed drink with dinner.

I drink very rarely, at times with my friends when we go to the bar. Maybe once every 2-3 weeks and it's just for fun.

Get out of reality

Relieve stress and try to forget my worries at least for one night

*Four people did not respond to this question

APPENDIX C

HOW ALCOHOL MAKES PARTICIPANTS FEEL

APPENDIX C

HOW ALCOHOL MAKES PARTICIPANTS FEEL

Relaxed

Comfortable

Less anxious

Happy

Depends on how much I drink

Happy-go-lucky

Happy/a little risky

Sick

DID: Calm and more comfortable around others

Uninhibited

Festive

Wild!

Fine if I don't drink too much.

Good

Like the person I would like to be

Most of the time it makes me feel good and I don't worry about anything. All your worries are gone.

Out of control

Allows me to think about other things than school

I usually don't drink to get drunk. So I usually don't feel anything. When I do get drunk I want the feeling to go away quick. It makes me sick to my stomach and annoys me.

Relaxed and free-spirited

When drinking too much, which isn't often, sick!

In excessive quantities I do not like it because I feel out of

control, sick, very hung over the next day. But if I do not
drink excessively I feel GREAT!

Without worries

Mellow

If too much-sad

Out of control, that is why I don't drink

N/A

I don't drink enough [to know]

More fun

Sometimes relaxed, sleepy. Other times happy, fun, uninhibited.

If I drink enough it makes me feel carefree but I rarely get to
that point.

"GIDDY" (my definition of giddy is not "horny")

Carefree

Relaxed and sleepy

Tired and silly

Warm, fuzzy, tingly

It makes me feel relaxed and then tired.

OK

Depends:

-Sad

-Tired

-Happy

Unresponsible [sic]

Depends on occasion and how much.

relaxed-with small amount

good occasion-happier

bad reason-more depressed

a lot-sluggish and impaired

Goofy

Inebriated

Euphoric

Lousy if I have too much

I have a very high tolerance to alcohol and I rarely drink
enough to "feel" anything but normal.

It makes me laugh and enjoy a night out. Although sometimes it
makes me nauseated and vomit!

Drunk!

Talkative

Horny

*Four people did not respond to this question

