

ALCOHOL BEVERAGES MARKETING AND YOUTH CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR: A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper was inspired by a review of literature on alcohol beverage marketing that exposes the world population was drinking in increasingly harmful ways that have resulted in a plethora of avoidable medical expenses, psychological and social harms, and have done damages to human lives leading to early deaths. It is astonishingly difficult to find evidence that can inform policy appraisals in sub-Saharan Africa especially Nigeria. The identified evidence requirements include; research evidence of the size of marketing effects on the whole population and for policy-relevant population subgroups including heavy and binge drinkers, research to show the balance between immediate and long-term effects by providing information on time lag, duration and cumulative build-up of longer-term effects and research to show a range of comprehensive and partial marketing restrictions on consumption and harm, including effect estimates for population sub-groups. This paper suggests that these knowledge gaps can impede the evaluation and appraisal of existing and new policy interventions in Nigeria. Without understanding these research needs,

researchers may neglect the required focus on this sub group. The cumulative effect of exposure across multiple marketing channels known as alcohol beverages marketing, targeting of messages at certain population groups and indirect effects of advertising on consumption have rarely been considered in Nigeria.. It is important that future research into marketing efforts in Nigeria are strongly anchored in theory that will help to measure effect that are well-justified so that the complexities of alcohol marketing efforts are fully recognised and appreciated in Nigeria.

Keywords: Alcohol marketing, youth consumption, Agenda

Introduction

Literature reveals that statistics on global alcoholic beverages consumption and its related consequences should call for the concern of various stakeholders. The general consensus is that alcohol beverages consumption has increased rapidly in most recent years, not just among young people, but across world societies and population.

The World Health Organisation by 2010 had confirmed that the world population was drinking in increasingly harmful ways that have resulted in a plethora of avoidable medical expenses, psychological and social harms, and have done damages to human lives leading to early deaths. It asserts that globally, 5.9% of all global deaths as at 2010 were attributed to alcohol beverages consumption (WHO 2015) and it also reported that as at 2010, 42% youth between the ages of 15-19 worldwide were reported to be current drinkers of alcoholic beverages.

As at 2010, alcohol beverages was said to account for 5.5% of the global burden of disease and injury and also caused 4.9 million deaths (Lim et al. 2013). Research also showed that by 2012, 6.4% of the deaths in Africa (224, 000 men; over 80, 000 women) were alcohol related, and 4.7% of people in Africa experienced disability-adjusted life years, due to alcohol consumption (Ferreira-Borges et al. 2016). Although African countries are said to have lower per capita alcohol consumption rates quoted by WHO's Global Health Repository, the related burden of disease is disproportionately higher in Africa (DeBrujin 2011).

The last few years have witnessed growing concern at the rising rates of alcohol consumption globally. Concomitant with this linear increase in alcohol consumption has been a 20% rise in hospital admissions among youth (Diment et al. 2007), equating to 20 children a day due to excessive alcohol use. Given the deleterious health and social impacts associated with problem drinking alcohol is now high on the social, political and public health agenda.

The Monitoring Alcohol Marketing Practices in Africa (MAMPA) Project was a public health surveillance program devoted to monitoring alcohol marketing activities in the African region as well as youth exposure to these marketing activities. The first project report was the subject of a World Health Organization (WHO) technical meeting in Brazzaville in 2012, where it was recognized

that MAMPA had methodological limitations that precluded definitive conclusions about the extent to which alcohol marketing in four countries within Africa violated international guidelines regarding the exposure of young persons to potentially harmful advertising content.

A combination of factors such as poor self-regulation of the industry in Africa (Mart 2011) and saturation of developed country markets is said to have subjected Africa to aggressive marketing efforts by western alcohol beverages marketers (DeBrujin, Ferreira-Borges, Engels, & Bhavsar 2014; Obot 2015). And the availability of home cooked brews tends to make the situation graver in Africa (DeBrujin et al. 2014). However, alcohol beverage marketing is majorly blamed by various stakeholders for youth consumption of alcoholic beverages (Babor, Caetano, Casswell, Edwards, Giesbrecht and Graham, (2010).

It is a matter of debate if there is a causal relationship between exposure to alcohol marketing and young people's drinking behaviour DeBrujin (2011). Rehm, Mathers, Popova, Thavorncharoensap, Teerawattananon, and Patra (2009) and Nutt, King, and Phillips (2010), observed that as societal concern increases in relation to alcohol beverages consumption and alcohol-related harm, the attention on factors potentially influencing drinking behaviours of youths should also grow. This has become unsurprising to observers given the potential exposure to alcohol marketing experienced by young people in today's world.

Globally, evidence is pointing to alcohol marketing as one major factor that facilitates young people's drinking (Roberts et al. (2016); Smith & Foxcroft (2009) and Unger, Schuster, Zogg, Dent, and Stacy (2003). Several detailed consumer studies, using longitudinal cohort designs, have found small but significant associations between youth drinking behaviour and exposure to, awareness of, and involvement with alcohol marketing (Ellickson, Collins,

Hambarsoomians, and McCaffrey (2005, 2007) and McClure, Stoolmiller, Tanski, Worth, and Sargent (2009). This has led advocacy within the public health domain to demand a complete ban on alcohol beverages marketing, arguing that it is pervasive and linked with youth drinking initiation, consumption levels and continued drinking (Anderson, 2009; BMA, 2009; Godlee, 2009). Highlighting this point, Anderson et al.'s (2009) systematic review of the existing longitudinal research on alcohol marketing found that 10 of the 13 studies identified were from the USA, one was from New Zealand and only two from Europe; in Belgium and Germany. The European Commission department concerned with health, also acknowledged the lack of European studies, and in response funded a multi-country EU study called the 'Amphora Project' (European Commission, 2009) to under study this problem.

There seem to be a dearth of studies that explore youths drinking behaviour as it relates to alcohol beverages marketing in Sub-Sahara Africa on one hand and the possible effects and consequences of such behaviours. The few predominantly quantitative surveys that are available in the sub region do not explore the social meanings attached to drinking practices nor do they shed light on potential behavioural intents and how these intents are mediated by activities related to the marketing of these beverages in these countries. The few that attempted to look at this behaviour see consumption patterns that are exacerbated by alcohol-induced anxiety, social consequences in violence, accidents and self-inflicted injuries and how alcohol only contributes to risky sexual behaviours and mental health disorders. Abayomi, O., Babalola, O., Olakulehin, O., & Ighoroje, M. (2016); Chikere, E. I. C., & Mayowa, M. O. (2011); Dumbili, E. W. (2015); Odejide, O. A., Ohaeri, J., Adelekan, M. L., & Ikuesan, B. (1987). TO BE EVIDENCED

In line with World Health Organisation (WHO) agenda to generate population

specific data on sub groups globally, this paper merely highlights that marketing researchers in sub Sahara Africa countries such as Nigeria, should direct their research focus to examining the roles, influences and consequences of alcohol marketing programs and the impacts of cumulative alcohol beverages marketing as an integrative business model on youth alcoholic beverages consumption behaviour, their attitudes and outcomes and the sectoral and overall effects and consequences on theses on the economy of Nigeria.

Alcohol marketing

Meier (2010) define marketing as the process by which business brings its offerings and its customers' needs into alignment so as to maximise the satisfaction of the latter and profits of the former by classically using four tools to do this: product design, pricing, place and promotion. Cukier, Wettlaufer, Jackson, Minozzi, Bartholow, Stoolmiller and Sargent (2018) agreed that any form of marketing applied to alcohol is broadly in the 'paid, earned, and owned media' that are often used simultaneously to increase brand equity' for alcoholic beverages and that these categories of media though overlapping are not mutually exclusive.

Cukier, et al clarifies that 'Paid media' is any type of marketing that is paid for by the company that owns the product and it includes traditional image advertising like television and print media advertisements. While, 'Earned' media is marketing that result from customer engagement created by people other than those who work for the brand and published on channels not owned by the brand that include press coverage, mentions on social media, shares and re-tweets and blog posts by people who are not connected to the brand. The 'owned media' category includes content that is wholly owned and created by the company to provide some form of service or entertainment to a target group like social media channels -Face book page, Twitter feed, Instagram account etc and the brand's own blog posts and

website. This definition of alcohol beverages marketing by Cukier et al is seen as broad and encompasses marketing strategies identified in past and more recent literature on the subject of alcohol beverage marketing.

Alcohol Marketing and Research

Martino (2017) observed that the stated intent of marketing in alcohol beverage industry is primarily to influence choice of brand among legal users and it uses favourable perception about alcohol and persuasive techniques to affect alcohol purchase decisions (Austin 2006). This marketing could interact with other variables such as alcohol control system, price policy and physical availability to significantly impact on drinking behaviours from this systems perspective (Burton 2017). As such the alcohol marketing landscape has evolved from a passive presentation of advertisements (e.g. print media and billboards) to a dynamic interface where consumers interact with and form relationships with brands Casswell (2012) and Barry, Bates, Olusanya, Vinal, Martin, Peoples, et al. (2015). Additionally, marketing strategies in this area are now informed by advanced statistical analytics targeting specific populations, (Chester, Montgomery, Dorfman, 2016).

This sophistication though multi-faceted, operates across an ever increasing range of channels that includes: advertising (television, radio, cinema, press), sponsorship, new media (web pages, mobile SMS, social networking sites, pop-ups, email), branding, product design and packaging, new product development, price promotions and other promotional activity, branded merchandising, product placement, point of sale, distribution, experiential marketing and more (Casswell, 2004; Jernigan and O'Hara, 2004; McCreanor et al. 2005). Petticrew, Shemilt, Lorenc, Marteau, Melendez, Torres, O'Mara-Eves, et al. (2017) concluded that alcohol marketing effects are complex and need to be viewed from a systems perspective that is not limited only to one kind of study or a single set of outcomes.

They pointed out that these “systems” level considerations should go well beyond what could be covered in any one research, (Siegfried 2014). A full set of studies and outcomes on the matter that would include content analyses (to ascertain the plausibility of effects on behaviour), econometric studies of aggregate alcohol beverages consumption, individual-level, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies on behavioural intents, mediational analyses aimed at mechanisms, experimental studies of attention, brain cue-response, attitudinal response, and behaviour, and natural experiments are necessary and important (Cukier, Wettlaufer, Jackson, Minozzi, et al, 2018).

Alcohol Marketing in Nigeria

Nigeria is estimated to have the highest annual alcohol consumption in Africa. NOTED An average Nigerian who drinks is said to consume about 12.28 litres of alcohol per annum. The alcoholic beverage drink market of Nigeria is one of the striving industries of Nigerian manufacturing sector, despite the industry being at the maturity stage of its life cycle. This is as a result of increase in disposable income, urbanisation and an expansion of drinking occasions. With the largest population in Africa and growing middle class along with large number of drinking – age consumers, there is a present significant growth opportunities for the industry in Nigeria.

Nigeria's favourable demographics, with a populous and vibrant youth and growing middle class are contributing growth factors to alcoholic beverages marketing in Nigeria. The marketing communication by some alcohol beverages brands portrays these drinks as vitality enhancing beverage, thus attracting increasing number of youth to consume them. The country's rising middle class and the emerging young consumers are adopting consumption patterns similar to Western countries. The country's increasing urbanization and the rising number of female alcohol drinkers, especially in the large cities,

such as Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Abuja etc and aspiration spending habits have also offers expansion opportunities and generated the demand for premium drinks. These favourable market scenarios have lured various multinationals to strengthen their foothold in Nigeria.

The Nigerian cultural and traditional milieu is favourably inclined to and perpetuates alcohol use. Within this context, it is relatively difficult for various Nigerian government agencies to formulate, implement and enforce strong alcohol control legislation. This could be attributed to lack of reliable data for effective planning. As a result, the alcohol industry in the country leverages on this favourable milieu by presenting marketing actions in a cultural context; promote alcohol as a beverage associated with culture and celebration, as having medicinal values, exudes vitality, etc thus exacerbating the situation. In Nigeria, there are not very stringent policies or measures regarding production and marketing of alcohol this unwittingly undermine the policy formulation and may have weakened the implementation processes of any policy.

Nigeria Alcohol regulatory environment

A number of countries have developed national alcohol policies and implemented actions to decrease drink-driving prevalence, limit access to alcohol and implement restrictions on alcohol marketing [15]. This encouraging trend is expected to continue in light of the readiness to combat Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their risk factors, including unsafe use of alcohol. This section presents a review of alcoholic policies of two cases of countries that have made individual effort to adopt measures as recommended by the World Health Organisation.

The World Health Organization (WHO), has consistently pushed for member countries to give priority and accelerate the development of policies that will help to tackle the risk factors for Non-Communicable Diseases

(NCDs). Though the country has not developed a comprehensive policy in line with the WHO global strategy, there are existing policy documents from health and non-health sectors that proposed actions for alcohol control. These are the 2013 and 2015 National Policy and Strategic Plan of Action on Non-Communicable Diseases from the health sector [21, 22] and the Federal Road Safety Act (2007) from the safety and traffic management sector [24].

The document review of the Federal Road Safety Act (2007) was enacted by the National Assembly to guide and regulate the activities and functions of the Federal Road Safety Commission- a government paramilitary agency established in 1988 with the statutory functions of ensuring safety and traffic management in Nigeria. The Act only outlines actions aimed at promoting restricted access and availability of alcohol in order to counter drink-driving aside several other mandates for the agency. These proposed actions are in tandem with actions recommended in the World Health Organization global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol [13].

In Nigeria, there is no written national policy or action plan on alcohol control. Therefore, there is no national legal minimum age for on and off premise sales of alcoholic beverages, no restriction on on/off premise sales of alcoholic beverages as in hours, days, places, density, etc, legally binding regulations on alcohol marketing, of national monitoring system for alcohol beverages in country. The only national maximum legal alcohol concentration when driving a vehicle for all citizens set at 0.08 is abused with impunity.

The extent of use of Multi-Sectoral Action (MSA) for the formulation of the 2007 Federal Road Safety Act is low. The extent of use of MSA for the alcohol policy actions outlined is reflected in the 2013 National Policy and Strategic Plan of Action on Non-Communicable Diseases. Currently the status of alcohol policy implementation in Nigeria is extremely poor for both the FRSC Act and

the 2015 National Policy on the Control and Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases.

A typical initiative which reflects Nigeria's overdependence on donor organizations for funding its alcohol controls is an initiative which is couched in the "drink responsibly" campaign slogan by brewers. This initiative is championed and funded by brewers, multi-national alcohol industries and the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (formerly the International Centre for Alcohol Policy [ICAP]). The initiative promotes moderate alcohol consumption rather than abstinence even among drivers. According to Dumbili et al, 2013, the intervention is a charade that distracts and undermines efforts at proposing stronger legislation for alcohol control in Nigeria [12].

Nigeria Youth population and alcohol consumption

World Population Review, (2019) summarized Nigeria as an African country on the Gulf of Guinea that is one of the most populous countries in the world with multiple cities boasting populations exceeding one million. A country with a total of 36 states, 774 Local Government Areas that are spread across it, the country has an estimated 75% urban population with over half of her population living in rural areas. Many natives are moving into urbanized, developed areas to take advantage of job opportunities, education, transfer, conflict and civil issues and to avoid a life of poverty found in many of the smaller cities and villages in the country.

In Nigeria, and as observed around the world, youth migration has become a critical issue in rural and urban areas. This migration is a serious issue for both the origin and destination points. Internal migration within countries is on the rise and people move in response to inequitable distribution of resources, services and opportunities or to escape violence, natural disasters or increasing occurrences of extreme weather conditions. The age group of interest is the

15- 35 years age bracket. The population of this bracket is estimated to be around 64, 086,798 million.

Globally, for the youths, alcohol use is associated with poor school performance (Balsa 2011), increase the risk of injury, unplanned and unprotected sex (Hutton 2008) and contributes to a greater likelihood of developing alcohol use disorders later in life (De-Wit 2000). It was related that young people who begin drinking before age 15 are 5 times more likely to develop an alcohol use disorder compared with those who delay drinking (Grant, 1997). Moreover, youths who binge drink are also significantly more likely to engage in criminal activity and less likely to complete high school and be involved in clubs or activities as compared to non-bingers (Hill 2000). While, its use in adolescence may have acute and prolonged neurobiological effects, (Clark 2008; Squeglia 2009), alcohol use is said to be the leading risk factor for death among 15 to 19-year-olds, and 20 to 24-year-olds (Mokdad 2016).

Economically, the burden of this alcohol use among this group includes costs related to health care, law enforcement and justice, property damage, and social work, along with indirect costs, such as loss of productivity and unemployment (Anderson 2006). Accordingly, alcohol attributable annual costs #by 2010 was \$249 billion in the USA, \$207.4 billion in the European Union and \$12 billion in Australia by 2005 (Collins 2008; Sacks 2015 and Rehm, 2012). There are other costs attributable to alcohol use that are borne by non-drinkers and are more difficult to measure, such as harms from interpersonal violence, psychological distress, pain and/or suffering from domestic violence, marital separation and divorce, child and/or household neglect, poverty and abuse. All these have been termed "intangibles", and are said to contribute by reducing quality of life and induce suffering, both for the drinker and those around the drinker, (Anderson 2009; Navarro 2011; Thavorncharoensap 2009).

Implications for alcohol marketing research

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 Meier (2010). Meier suggests that the areas where research evidence is required are;

- i. On effect sizes: research that is to provide evidence on the size of how alcohol marketing effects the whole population and other policy relevant population subgroups that includes drinkers, heavy drinkers, binge drinkers and abstainers.
- ii. On timing effects: research that will help to assess the balance between immediate and long-term effects, provide information on time lags, deviations and on the cumulative build up of longer-term effects of alcohol marketing and alcohol consumption on the entire population and these sub groups.
- iii. On Policy effectiveness: research to articulate the effect sizes for a range of comprehensive and partial (e.g. bans on specific promotions, channels or watersheds) marketing restrictions on alcohol consumption and harm, that includes the effected estimates for population and sub- groups.

Without understanding the above complexities in measurement and to justify the measure of these effects on specific populations in Nigeria, it is essential that the local studies be directed at understanding and measuring the cumulative marketing effects of strategies and tactics that are strongly anchored in theories. The above knowledge gaps may impede the evaluation and appraisal of existing and new interventions policies in alcohol beverage marketing control programmes in Nigeria.

To monitor alcohol consumption across a population, it is crucial to evaluate if national policies and approaches are being effective at

reducing alcohol-related harm (World Health Organization: Regional Office for Europe, (2012); World Health Organization, 2010). Therefore, to translate the recognition that marketing is casually linked to consumption at least in young people into policy action in Nigeria, there is a need for quantitative estimates and qualitative assessment of the likely effectiveness of the range of possible counter measures. National research needs to grow an evidence base that will link alcohol consumption behaviour to cumulative marketing efforts in Nigeria.

The Research Agenda

Changes in policies that regulate marketing environment can only be achieved by enforcing regulation of marketing activities. To do this, policymakers across the country need a clear, rigorous and consensual evidence base before they can act because policy-relevant research findings can influence such decisions —involving millions of people and billions of dollars (Franke, 2001). For evidence to be convincing, a consensus among national experts is crucial and corporations will not willingly accept restrictions on their activities if they feel that the evidence base does not support them.

To drive an interest in empirical studies that will provide useful data for the design and development of population-specific policy programmes by the various national bodies such as the Federal Ministry of Sports and Youth Development, Ministry of Education in Nigeria and other partners in the country in order to inform policy decisions and to guide their implementation, national research needs to provide an evidence-based advocacy tool on behalf of the youth. This will provide data for update of National Youth Development Index and Serve as an advocacy tool for state and local governments on the need to mainstream youth issues into economic and social policies, strategies and programs at their levels.

To translate the recognition that marketing is casually linked to alcohol beverages

consumption at least in young people into policy action in Nigeria, there is a need for quantitative estimates and qualitative assessment of the relationship or association between alcohol marketing and youth population and their consumption behaviour. To monitor alcohol beverage consumption across this population group is crucial in the effort to evaluate if national policies and approaches are being effective at reducing alcohol-related harm (World Health Organization: Regional Office for Europe, (2012); World Health Organization, 2010).

Researchers should consider the National Strategic Plan. They should assess the various programs that derive from all these strategic plans. Youth consumption behaviour to alcoholic beverages should be considered as an input in order to ensure that alcohol beverage research is not seen in isolation. It must be reflected in terms of interpersonal, intra personal and wider society and within national frameworks so as to draw conclusions for public health model and to improve the ecological circle (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

Most of these studies should be approached from the perspective of a five-level framework based on the ecological approach, namely the intrapersonal, the interpersonal, the institutional, the community and policy levels. Research could be directed to focus on these five ecological factors mentioned above. Further research could be directed towards exploring in more detail the impact that the ecological factors are likely to have on the development of the young people as isolated factors or combined influence from their application.

A reason for the proposal of this ecological approach is the relative ineffectiveness of national policies on alcohol consumption and lack of focus by these strategic plans. The impact of these social forces cannot be over emphasised. Therefore it is important to seek new approaches that will focus on youth and alcohol beverages consumption within the

family context while maintaining the broad public health approach. There is a need for research into parental engagement in youth alcohol consumption and use as it is being undertaken in western countries. As this problem is under-researched, this approach will sought both new insights and generalisable findings by national research focus on this area.

Although various strategies have been used in different ways in an attempt to reduce youth alcohol use, the problem has not been fully addressed. Adopting mixed methods research can help to fill some knowledge gaps related to patterns of and attitudes to alcohol consumption among youths, determined how selected national and local environmental factors are related to their alcohol consumption and established some relationships between parental engagement and youth alcohol behaviour in Nigeria.

Youths are the future of any society and adolescence is a unique and complex time of life. Therefore, examining the needs and risks of this group is crucial for helping them develop healthy lives and remaining healthy through life. Studies could be conducted to explore in more detail those aspects related to community involvement and to find new ways to prevent young people from accessing alcohol, or, at least, to make sure that those who already consume alcohol are aware of the dangers involved and act responsibly. With the help of policies designed to promote the health and wellbeing of the young people affected by drinking, the community can find new ways to mitigate the risk of alcohol consumption.

It is important to acknowledge that despite the need for high level policy action and further research in Nigeria, there are government and non-government agencies already involved in programmes trying to address youths' alcohol use problems. Understanding the problem is important. To do this effectively, research results need to be generated and communicated to this audience. Research findings should be disseminated to

community practitioners working in the field of alcohol and youth consumption.

It is important to restructure the health care system in Nigeria to develop wellbeing in youths. The need for positive youth development to improve their competencies and capabilities and explained the responsibilities of parents, families, policy makers, professionals and communities to achieve these goals. These researches would provide substantial new information on parental engagement, youth behaviour in relation to alcohol and other factors associated with their health. The information arising from these researches, and the public health and ecological frameworks in which it will be set and policy guidance from the Ministry of Health, will be particularly useful for those interested in improving the lives and health of youths in Nigeria.

Thus, to deepen the understanding of these associated factors future research is strongly suggested. A prevention program for the risky social factors, the lifestyle of youths and alcohol marketing effects which strongly influence the adolescent alcohol consumption behaviour in a positive or negative way could be promoted. Objective and independent comparative research, between countries, to measure the effectiveness of advertising and marketing bans, statutory regulation, and self regulation, would be very informative and help guide appropriate policy responses.

Given the wide range of potential research topics, it is recommended that a systematic approach to determining priorities areas be developed to guide the research community in Nigeria. Research into different parental styles, youth behaviour and the social and national factors affecting their behaviour may be related to marketing factors. As there are research models, constructs and instruments based on developed economies, Nigeria researchers should work either to adapt research questionnaires from other places or develop and validate new ones to use in Nigeria, given her complex nature.

Exploratory research examining the role of alcohol in social networking communications would enrich the knowledge base. The proliferation of alcohol marketing in below the line channels such as new media, sponsorship and viral marketing generates opportunities and indeed a requirement for good quality research to examine the extent, nature and impact of this activity. In Nigeria and as in many African countries, a major component of the alcohol marketing mix consists of sports and music sponsorship. A survey of current alcohol sports sponsorship using questionnaires to measure sponsorship activities within sports venues and clubs are necessary. Given that much of the annual spending on alcohol marketing in the Nigeria is tending towards channels such as new media and sponsorship, there are considerable opportunities for future research in these areas. Indeed, research on areas not traditionally regarded as alcohol marketing such as sponsorship of music, traditional festivals, schools programmes etc is also warranted.

Although there is research in the US which suggests young people can be over exposed to alcohol marketing (Jernigan et al. 2007; Chung et al. 2009; King III et al. 2009), this has yet to be replicated elsewhere and the influence of level of exposure to alcohol marketing on drinking behaviour is largely unexplored. Recently the European Commission has commissioned research on the level of exposure of youth to alcohol marketing across certain media including television and new media, in several EU countries. Aside from this, the focus on alcohol marketing typically centres upon content rather than frequency of messages deployed on these various media. There is need to Conduct researches that would involve interrogating data to assess the reach and potential exposure to alcohol marketing mix elements in Nigeria and survey research with various population strata to estimate levels of exposure.

Future research could also consider the role alcohol marketing may play in normalising

alcohol in our society. Research in the field of tobacco control has demonstrated that in the past, smoking was considered a normal behaviour, and that alcohol marketing contributed a normalisation effect (DiFranza et al. 2006; Brown and Moodie, 2009; Brown et al. 2010). Survey research could be useful to assess whether alcohol marketing does have a normalising effect, and whether certain policy and regulatory controls can be initiated to de-normalise alcohol use among the youth in the Nigerian society.

Research in this area could benefit from the inclusion of ethnographic research to help make sense of quantitative findings and understand the wider social context within which alcohol marketing and alcohol consumption operates. These ethnographic research can generate greater understanding and insight because it can often be carried out in a more naturalistic setting, for example by using observation techniques (Bryman, 2008). A holistic approach to research on factors influencing alcohol consumption and drinking cultures, utilising expertise from anthropology, psychology, sociology, marketing, biology and public health, could facilitate a more complete understanding of its role in society and identify interventions that would be more informed and improve policy responses.

Longitudinal and cohort studies examining the impact of alcohol marketing on youth consumption behaviour are still possibilities for further research. These studies can measure data across several time points, including tracking young people into adulthood would be useful, indeed, if funding is permitted. Tracking research of this nature would be particularly valuable, especially given the dearth of research exploring the impact of alcohol marketing on adult drinking behaviour in Nigeria. In addition to these consumer studies, scholars such as Meier (2011) and Saffer (2011) have revisited the utility of econometric research on alcohol marketing and youth drinking. Future research could investigate this applicability, potentially leading to a re-evaluation of the

validity of econometric studies in this area in Nigeria.

Conclusion

An important consideration in relation to any suggestion on research in alcohol marketing and its effect on young people is the funding environment. There is demand for baseline data and expectations by policy makers, Jones (2011) has rightly pointed out that the difficulty of obtaining long-term funding to conduct such research may be a barrier. Indeed, the funding environment in Nigeria for academic research may currently be extremely poor, policy makers and research managers, have the ability to shape the funding environment, so that various studies outlined above can be attempted with local content. It is therefore imperative that researchers in the field of alcoholic marketing research, state their case strongly to support their research proposals. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that although this work tries to offer a number of suggestions for future research on alcohol beverage marketing and youth drinking behaviour in Nigeria, the research list is not and cannot be exhaustive.

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