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Social pressures to drink or drink a little more: the Nigerian experience

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Abstract

This study set out to investigate the pressures experienced by different individuals to drink, or drink a little more than intended, by someone who drinks or drinks more than they do. A total of 2099 Nigerian adults between the ages of 18 and 65 years were randomly sampled. The frequency with which they experienced such other drinkers encouraging them to drink or drink more than intended from various sources was examined. Logistic regression was used to identify significant individual predictors of receiving pressure by sources of influence. Focus group discussions were also held to examine how these pressures are applied in various settings. Results indicated that male friends or acquaintances were the sources respondents reported influenced them the most to drink or drink more. Significant predictors of pressure varied by source but tended to include religion (5 of 6 sources) and gender (3 of 6). Results showed that pressure to drink or drink a little more was seen to come more from males than from females. It raises the need to have a better knowledge of these factors, particularly as they may relate to heavy or problematic drinking, and their implications for prevention and treatment.

Keywords

Drinking; social influence; significant others

Introduction

The analysis presented here is grounded in the social learning perspective, and elaborates upon the thesis that the immediate social environment of an individual exerts strong influence on his or her alcohol consumption. The argument we advance is that one who is exposed to implicit pressures to drink (for someone wishing to abstain) or to drink a little more (for a drinker) is likely to adopt a permissive attitude, as well as behave in ways that are similar to those drinkers from whom the social pressures emanate. These pressures can

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arise from close personal ties (Bahr, Marcos, & Maughan, 1995), occupational culture (Cropper & Hughes, 1982), or the broader community norms (Akers & La Greca, 1991).

At each of these levels (intimate others, work and general social space) there are standards of behaviours expected of their respective members. Group standards or norms in themselves evolved from what a potentially vociferous majority of the members in the social group consider as morally correct and convenient way of behaving or doing things. The group may influence the individual to conform to implicit standards by proscribing or prescribing certain behaviours; either indirectly through norms that set the limits for expected behaviour, or by exerting direct pressures for the individual to conform. Where the individual does not readily conform to any of the norms, and instead deviates from or violates any of them, social sanctions may be applied. These sanctions may involve the individual being ostracised by other members; or in the extreme case being expelled from the group.

Earlier explanations of conformity pressure viewed it as resulting from social comparison and need for affiliation (Festinger, 1954). In more recent times Taylor, Peplau & Sears (1997), however, considered conformity to be the result of either normative social influence or informative social influence. The assumption in normative social influence is that our tendency to seek approval/avoid disapproval and embarrassment is what causes people to have this influence over us. In this instance, we would be conforming to the group's ways of doing things because we want to be liked and accepted by members of that group. With informative social influence, on the other hand, people have the influence over us because of our desire to be right. Regardless of the explanation for the phenomenon, it is by now well documented that norms are a powerful independent variable helping account for or determine individual behaviour (Perkins, 2002).

A review of literature focused on social influence and alcohol consumption points to the existence of a strong relationship between social factors and drinking in the general population. One aspect of social influence is that other peoples' drinking affects the focal individual's drinking, through processes such as peer pressure on, or modelling networks involving, the individual. Peer use of alcohol and peer norms have been found to be significant predictors of adolescent alcohol and drug use. (Baer et al, 1991; Curran et al. 1997; Lo, 1995; Jones-Webb et. al., 1997; Korcuska & Thombs, 2003; Kyri and Langley, 2003; Trockel, Williams, & Reis, 2003). In regard to alcohol consumption, however, recent research has shown pervasive differences between how peer norms are perceived by students and the actual peer norms (Perkins 1999). This finding applies to both attitudes and beliefs, as well as to the most commonly exhibited behaviours concerning drinking (Perkins, 2002). Students tend to perceive much more frequent consumption of alcohol around them than is actually occurring in their environment. Even in instances where these perceived norms are erroneous, the higher perceived norm is associated with higher levels of drinking (Thombs, 1997; Thombs, Olds, Ray-Thomasek 2001; Lewis & Neighbors, 2004)

Perkins and Weschler (1996) controlled for the actual norms on the student's campus as well as the personal attitude of the student, and demonstrated that perceived norms had a significantly stronger influence than socio-demographic and contextual variables typically found to correlate with alcohol misuse, such as gender, age, fraternity/sorority membership and type of college housing. It is noteworthy that most of these studies have been undertaken with student populations. Nevertheless there is also some evidence that the norms play a role in shaping alcohol consumption beyond the college environment as well as in adult populations. (Ames, Grube, and Moore, 2000; Greenfield & Room, 1997; Wild, 2003)

Research on specific types of pressures on individuals to conform has, however, been sparse. Being offered a drink represents a more direct and active form of social pressure than social norms regarding drinking (Graham et al, 1991), and may elicit unique responses from individuals (Wood et al., 2001). The pressure that this places on the individual should be considered with regard to who is making the offer of “a drink”, or “yet another drink” (i.e., what relationship -- whether partner, friend, coworker, etc. -- they have to the individual), as well as the context and social setting in which this offer occurs.

Anthropological literature suggests that there are observable differences in drinking patterns and styles that vary widely across different cultures (Heath, 1995). Some cultures show patterns of solitary drinking, whereas in other cultures drinking is essentially a social phenomenon. Early studies in Nigeria (Netting, 1964; Odejide & Olatuwura, 1977) suggested the latter type of culture predominated, described the pattern of drinking as convivial or ritualistic, being associated festivals and ceremonies, and usually accompanied by rituals to affirm the hierarchies within a particular social group or community. Though this traditional pattern in contemporary times may have evolved and is not so much associated only with these festivals and ceremonies, drinking is still considered to be essentially a social act. Obot (1993) reported that two-thirds of the population sample reported more commonly drinking in bars than in private homes or social gatherings. Even when the drinking occurs in homes, it is usually done in groups with others (Ibanga et. al 2005); drinking as a solitary activity is still rare. As reported by Gureje (1996), the lay view is that drinking is a substitute for other forms of recreational activity. This may in part be due to the aggressive media presentations and alcohol advertising that portray drinking as a fun, modern and enlightening activity; drinking brings friends together, is for the successful, and comes with prestige (Obot & Ibanga, 2003; Obot, Ibanga & Karick, 2002). Gurujie (1999) reports a new trend in drinking that is emerging in which all-night parties to mark the death of an elderly person have become a common occasion for extensive drinking.

Among certain groups abstinence is the norm, involving a desired and extolled virtue, but in others places abstinence is viewed with suspicion, particularly for males. In this case the abstaining individual is considered a social misfit (Umana, 1967). The pressure to drink is usually very direct, as the expectations created in the group are that, besides just drinking, the person must drink in accordance to the demands of the situation or setting (Paton-Simpson, 2001). The atmosphere created around drinking is that it is a situation in which to showcase the person's social skills and his or her (but mostly his) ability to keep a gathering lively over a prolonged period of time. Drinking in these groups provides opportunities for making new contacts, establishing friendship, showing solidarity, establishing bonding; and networking with others — particularly for male drinkers. (Crundall & Weir, 1994; Oostveen, Knibbe and De Vries. Oostveen et. al., 1996)

Part of the culture in this setting involves offering and receiving hospitable gestures of a drink, or in some cases “another drink”. In this setting people may feel obligated to accept the offer to drink when offered. This influence may be more pronounced in Nigeria and some African countries, where a high premium is placed on offering and accepting hospitable gestures regardless of the context or form this may take, than elsewhere. This study acknowledges the specific, sometimes subtle and implicit, and sometimes direct, pressures that an individual in Nigeria may be experiencing, and aims to tease out the frequency with which individuals are placed in a situation where direct offers have been made for them to have “a drink” or to take yet “one more drink”.

Method

Sample

The sample was drawn from two out of the six geo-political zones in the country: the North Central and the South-South zones of the country. Three states in the Nigerian Federation and the Federal capital Territory (FCT) were selected in the North-Central zone (Benue, Nasarrawa, and Plateau) and two states in the South-South zone (Akwa Ibom and Rivers). Sampling involved a number of stages, the first being sampling the enumeration area. Of the 60 enumeration areas in each of the sampled states, 40 were chosen randomly. The second stage involved sampling ten household units from households listed in the each of the 40 enumeration areas. The third stage involved sampling of housing units where there was more than one housing unit at a household address. The final stage involved sampling the individuals within the housing unit. Representativeness was achieved through the selection of respondents based on other variables like sex. Because of the need to sample relatively equal number of males and females, each interviewer alternated from house to house between males and females in the choice of the adult member to interview. The data collection took place between October and November, 2002.

Altogether, 2,300 survey booklets were sent out in the field; a total of 2,191 were returned, and of these 92 were dropped for being incomplete or wrongly filled in. The total number entered into analysis was 2099 (see Table 1). The obtained sample consisted of 54.2% males and 45.8% females. A majority lived in the rural (61.7%) as opposed to the urban area (38.3%). They were divided into high, middle and low income groups constituting 9.4%, 14.2% and 76.4% respectively of the sample. Of the respondents, 29.4 % were within the 18–29 age group, 40% were 30–44 and 30.7 % were in the 45–65 years and above age group. A large percent were Christians (82.8%), with Muslims making up 14.6% and the remaining 1.8% indicating that they practiced other forms of religion (Hindu, Buddhism, idol worship etc).

Procedure

The male and female interviewers were recruited from the Federal Office of Statistics, and trained for the purpose of this study. The interviewers were trained in two separate locations for the separate regions of the country, with training provided by members of the research planning team and consultants.

Most of the refusals that would have come from community leaders in these situations were averted by engaging interviewers with reasonable experience and who were recognized by potential respondents due to their previous data collecting roles under the auspices of the Federal Office of Statistics.

Focus group discussions were later conducted to identify the various ways individuals use to make exert direct pressure on others to drink.

Measures

The questionnaire used in this study was a slightly modified version of the questionnaire designed by International Research Group on Gender and Alcohol (IRGGA) for use in GENACIS studies. It was a highly structured questionnaire with most items having defined response codes and specific time frames. For the influence questions, respondents were asked, “During the last 12 months, have you felt influenced to drink, or drink more by someone who drinks more than you do?” This question was followed by a list of significant others in the individual’s network; the respondents were to indicate for each category of

person how often they had been pressured by them to drink or drink a little more. The response was either: “No”, “1 or 2 times”, or “3 or more times”.

The questions about the frequency of taking alcoholic beverages was used to distinguish the current drinkers from abstainers: “*During the last 12 months, how often did you usually have any kind of beverage containing alcohol – whether it was wine, beer, liquor, or any other drink?*” The response alternatives to questions on frequency were:

Every day or nearly every day,
Three or four times a week,
Once or twice a week,
One to three times a month,
Seven to eleven times in the last 12 months,
Three to six times in the last 12 months,
Twice in the last 12 months,
Once in the last 12 months, or
Never in the last 12 months?

For the analysis these options were recoded into two categories as follows.

Current drinker
Abstained in the last 12 months

Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS for Windows version 13. Cross tabulations were done for gender, drinking status and source or pressure to drink or drink a little more than intended. Logistic regression was carried out with pressure to drink as the outcome measure, and nine of the predictor variables were included in all models. In carrying out these analyses the data was not weighted.

Qualitative Focus group notes

For investigating further the results obtained using quantitative methods, two focus group discussions were held. The first group was drawn from drinkers at a bar; who when approached were asked to participate in a discussion group on the next day. These individuals were approached at random in the drinking venue and were invited to talk about issues around alcohol consumption. There were 4 females and 6 males ranging in age between 28 and 63 years. The second focus group members were recruited from the university where individuals that drink were invited to discuss issues surrounding alcohol consumption. A total of 8 individuals (3 females and 5 males) took part in this group. The age range was between 23 and 27 years. They were to discuss issues related to what they have seen or heard or experienced when trying to influence others to start or continue drinking or what they have experienced from others trying to influence someone to start drinking or convince them to continue drinking. What are the ways the people have tried to influence you to start drinking or to continue drinking more than you had budgeted (intended)? Notes from these focus group discussions were then analysed for emerging themes and representations.

Results

Quantitative Survey Results

Pressures to Drink—Table 2 shows the pressure from various sources to drink by respondent's gender and drinking status. Respondents were considered to be current drinkers if they had taken some form of alcoholic beverage within the last 12 months. Results show that women currently in a relationship more frequently experience offers to drink alcohol or to drink a little more if they were abstainers than if they were current drinkers.

As indicated in Table 2, the largest percentage of pressure (11.7% 1–2 times, 3.1% 3 or more times) was reported by female current drinkers who felt a male acquaintance tried to get them to drink or drink more than they intended. In contrast, however, a low percentage (1.9% 1–2 times, 1.1% 3+ times) of abstaining women indicated experiencing pressure from male acquaintances. This was the reverse in the case of pressures from partner or spouse. In this instance the female abstainers recorded a higher percentage (5.7%) than current drinkers (3.6%) for having felt pressure at all during the prior 12 months.

A high percent of male drinkers (10.7%) indicated being offered “another drink” by male friends or acquaintances, with a further 5.2% having experienced this three or more times. Again, abstaining males experienced any pressure to drink by their male friends less often (6.8% at any non-zero frequency). Quite a few female friends or acquaintances, on the other hand, seem to offer “yet one more drink” only to their female friends that were also current drinkers, as compared to abstainers (10.2% with any nonzero frequency). Conversely, only a rather low percentage (2.5%) of male current drinkers indicated being offered a drink or “yet another drink” by their female friends or acquaintances.

Logistic regression was carried out with experiencing any level of pressure in the last 12 months as the dependent variable, i.e., merging the category of 1–2 times with the category of 3 or more times. Thus analysis was on whether the pressure to drink occurred from a given source. Dummy variables were created for inclusion as predictors in the analysis; for age the groups Age 18–29 and Age 30–44 were included, with the 45+ group being the reference category. For household income, High Income and Middle Income were used, with the reference category being the Low Income group. For educational attainment, No Education and 1–9 Years Education were used, with 10 years or more education as the reference category. As the number of respondents in the different categories of marital status was small in some of the cells, marital status was collapsed to two categories. Those that indicated being married or cohabiting were placed in the category of Married and the others into Not Married. Similarly, because of the low number in certain cells for religious preference, this variable was coded as Christian versus All Others. Thus, all variables in the Logistic regression were entered as categorical variables.

Summary results of the logistic regression analyses are shown in Table 3. Taking Pressure to drink as the outcome measure, nine predictors were used: gender (male), urbanicity (urban), two income dummy variables, two education dummy variables, two age dummy variables, relationship status (married/cohabiting), and religion (Christian). Results show that the likelihood of being pressured by your spouse to drink was dependent on gender, income and religion. Males were 40% less likely than females to be pressured by their partners to drink. In the case of male friends/acquaintances making offers to drink, there were four significant predictive factors: gender, urbanicity, education and religion. Other factors being equal, males were twice as likely as females to be offered a drink or another drink by their male friends/acquaintances. Male acquaintances in the rural area were more likely to offer drinks than those in the urban towns. In regards to educational attainment, results show that individuals with no education were more likely to experience this offer being made to them

than individuals with 10 or more years of formal education. Also Christians were less likely to be recipients of offers of an alcoholic beverage than the people practising other forms of religion.

Qualitative Focus Group Results

Focus group discussions were also carried out to see the process by which these encouragements to drink are typically made. Results revealed different ways in which people tried to influence or felt influenced by others to drink or drink a little more than intended. It was possible to classify many of the statements that were frequently used in such instances into four categories as follows:

- a. It is recreational or a fun thing to do,
- b. it is masculine,
- c. It is functional, and
- d. It follows logically.

Each of these four categories will be presented separately. They will be illustrated with case examples taken from the focus group notes. Where necessary, verbatim quotes from participants will be used to illustrate a point. Where necessary they will be followed by translations in square parenthesis.

Recreational or Fun Thing to Do

Drinking was seen as a fun thing to do, and just having good weather conditions was enough to trigger the call for friends to go for a drink. This is reflected by the statement that: *“Just see the weather, very good for drinking or make me take am with meat or suya! We suppose go club today o.”* [Look at the weather, it is perfect for going out for a drink, we should have ‘suya’ with the drinks. We should not miss the opportunity to go to the club today]. When you are in a social situation you are encouraged to drink as it helps you to appear social and a fun person, in the quotes it will *“make you drink so that you go fit flow well-well to get am.”* [The drinking will help you feel more part of the crowd and enjoy the fun more]. Thus drinking was seen not just as a fun thing to do but one that acted as a lubricant in social situations. To get the best out of this effect it was often necessary to take more drinks than one intended: *“Two (bottles of alcoholic beverage) will not give you the correct high you want.”*

Masculine Thing to Do

Different statements arising from the focus group notes point to the perception that drinking was predominantly a masculine thing, and that women did not necessarily have to drink or drink a certain amount to hold their own, but when they did drink they were credited as having been able to hold their own. Men however were expected in these settings to drink, and when they did not they were taunted as being feminine, as shown in the statement: *“Haba! Are you woman that you won’t drink?”* Or that if they did not it could easily lead to ridicule: *“What! Don’t allow guys to hear you don’t drink, they would laugh at you.”* Or *“No disappoint me like this, you want make this chicks think say you na weak man? Even if you no go drink just pour am for glass then sip am small-small, it won’t do you any harm.”* In this instances the man was encourage to do whatever it took not to be ridiculed, even at the risk of suffering negative side effects of a hangover. It was suggested that this could be taken care of later by medication, but that what was of greater importance was is being able to walk out of that situation without putting himself up for ridicule. *“Feel among my guys, nothing dey happen Highest if we reach house, you go swallow Panadol.”*

Functional arguments

These are arguments that were presented that point to the functional nature or role that an alcoholic drink could play. The person is made to feel that if, for instance, he refuses to drink it could give a bad impression, one of someone that has something to hide. As reflected in one of the statements: *"If you do not drink beer then I can not trust you because you can hide facts from me."*

It will give confidence in approaching people particularly in a social situation and therefore may be what is required to help you showcase your social skills. *"The beer will give you confidence in approaching people."*

Other statements point to the fact that it could have a relaxing effect, was good for the heart, and would help sleep: *"This beer just dey relax my system; make you try one glass now."* and *"This beer (stout) is good for your heart. It can relieve you of coronary heart disease."* And is *"Take more so that you will sleep well."*

Logical arguments

Closely related to the functional arguments are those that try to present some form of logic to encourage the other person to drink. Take the statement: *"O'boy, odd number no good make we make am even."* Or, *"Even number no good, make we make am odd."*

Where the person presents religion (Christianity) as a reason for not drinking, or even in cases where he does not profess any, it is sometimes quoted that: *"The bible says a little wine makes the heart rejoice"* or *"See, even Jesus turned water to wine"*.

Even if the person complains of possible tipsiness or of hangover, the person is encouraged by pointing out that if the person takes some medication it will clear everything. This is shown in the statement: *"Take some 'ALABUKUN' (analgesic) and it will be as if you have just begun."*

Discussion

This study set out investigate in Nigeria the frequency with which individuals felt influenced to drink or drink more than they intended to by others who drink more than they do. Additionally, we studied individual characteristics of those receiving pressure, in both bivariate (respondents' drinking status and gender) and multivariate analyses (9 personal characteristics). The findings lend credence to the earlier findings (Ibanga, 2005) that found that, although abstinence may be the norm and the extolled value in the Nigerian society, about a third of the population currently drink alcohol, many of them heavily, and these may influence others, particularly male drinkers, to drink more.

As indicated by the high percentages, both for abstainers and current drinkers, this pressure often came from male friends and acquaintances (see Table 2). This is in line with a previous study (Ibanga et al 2005) that suggested that drinking was still largely a male-dominated behaviour and done in the company of others; solitary drinking is still not popular. Individuals may, for example, arrive separately at the bar, but the drinking is often done in groups. Because of the rituals that surround drinking in groups, it is also not strange that it is among current drinkers that this pressure is most often observed as emanating from the group of male friends and acquaintances. These pressures are most reported by male and female current drinkers, and to a lesser extent by male abstainers and even less by female abstainers. It would appear that female abstainers either have few friends that do drink or do not put themselves in situations where drinking is occurring and would make them open to offers to drink from male friends and acquaintances.

Notably, as seen in Table 2, the female friends/acquaintances were seen to offer a drink or another drink to other females more often than they do to their male friends/acquaintances. And males who are abstainers report being asked by friends/acquaintances slightly more frequently than the current drinkers. This seems to reflect situations where women are together as a group, drinking amongst themselves. In these groups, they will be the ones to make the offer or buy a drink for another female. When they are in a mixed dyad group, however, women are not expected to pick up the bills, and therefore are in a situation where they expect the offer to be made to them, and not to be the one making the offer. But in instances where the male present is an abstainer, it would lead to a higher percentage of such offers emanating from females, as seen in this data.

Logistic regression analyses revealed that high income was a predictor for increased pressure to drink or drink a little more in family settings i.e., it was a predictor for spouse, child and female family member. It would appear that the high income may have been indicative of the probability of having alcoholic beverages in the home, leading to a greater likelihood of a person experiencing pressure from these sources. Religion was a predictor in five out of six sources; the only instance where it was not among the significant factors was Female family members, where it failed to reach significance. In each of these instances, being a Christian was associated with the individual's being less likely to have been influenced to drink or to drink more. This may be a reflection of the fact that alcohol consumption is proscribed by religion. Those that profess to be Christians are thus not offered alcoholic beverage by others. This seems to run counter to early findings of drinking behaviour in this population that showed Christians to be more likely to report current drinking than those indicating another religion (Ibanga et al, 2005). One possibility is that although these individuals may drink alcoholic beverages, this may be done in the confines of a small group of friends, whereas the majority of work colleagues and religious friends may be unaware that they do drink alcoholic beverages. Thus they may not meet together in a drinking context where they might be exposed to offers of alcoholic beverages, so that there is a difference in private and public domains of their life. This however, is speculation, and further research is needed to arrive at conclusive evidence in this regard.

The qualitative data further illustrates the findings obtained in the quantitative phase of the work. Some of the data obtained from the focus group discussion lend credence to the view that drinking was viewed as a male behaviour, and further serves as a criterion within the drinking circle for measuring maleness. The notion commonly espoused was that drinking is for “*real men*”, and you could therefore become a “*laughing stock*” as a man for not drinking. This becomes a point of emphasis in pressuring someone to drink more than intended and perhaps indulge in heavy drinking, as reflected in the statement “*You be woman, even my friend wey be woman dey take 5 bottles*” [“Are you a woman? Even my friend that is a woman can drink 5 bottles”], meaning that the person being spoken to should do what is considered masculine by drinking significantly more than that. Statements of this nature not only highlight that drinking is considered the masculine thing to do but that ability to drink and do so heavily establishes “true masculinity”.

Furthermore, this ‘masculinity’ is seen as worth protecting even at the cost of experiencing possible negative effects of a hangover. This was highlighted in the statement: “*...Highest if we reach house, you go swallow panadol.*” [“The worst case scenario is that you will take ‘panadol’ (an analgesic) when we get home”]

Qualitative data further points to findings in this and other work that solitary drinking is not common. Drinking occurs largely in the company of others, and is predominantly recreational in nature, with subtle rituals surrounding it. For instance having friends with whom you drink together increases the likelihood of getting more frequent offers to take a

drink or yet another drink. This is in addition to the rituals that usually take place when drinking in groups where, in attempts to show and establish wellbeing, participants enter a subtle competition to outdo each other in buying rounds of drinks for everyone. It is reflected in the invitation given to a friend which may also justify going out to have a drink: “*Boy, make you shatti-O! Today na my day, I go spoil you today.*” [you should drink! Today is my day to play host, and I intend to be the best host”]. The implication here is that the protagonist feels that he has on a previous occasion been a recipient of a hospitable gesture, and feels obliged to return that gesture today. In returning this gesture, however, he commits himself to outdoing his companion, in an effort to showcase his skills and ability to be hospitable.

A large part of this hospitality is providing an unlimited supply of alcoholic drinks, and the person is encouraged to “... *just drink the beer....*” This statement came on a day when the friends had nothing of importance to do, a day that would otherwise have been a boring routine. It was thus presented as the recreational thing to do, staving off boredom.

Individuals in this setting were consciously reminded not to spoil the fun by getting up early to leave. In this setting they would not be encouraged to just nurse a drink, but rather to finish it along with others so that the next round of drinks could be brought. Subtle fines are sometimes imposed, depending on the drinking group that one has joined. Such is the implication of the statement that emerged from one of the focus groups: “*I have ordered for I carton, if you will take just two, then you have to return my money.*”

One limitation to the research, implied by the relatively low numbers reporting being influenced in this study, is the wording of the questions on pressures to drink more. The question as asked is one about being influenced to drink or drink more by someone who drinks more than you do. It is possible that in responding to this question the individual respondents first make a subjective judgment regarding whether the other person (source) actually drinks more than they do, and secondly whether the fact that he was asked or offered the drink or “yet one more drink” actually implies that he was influenced by that significant other to take the drink. It could be that the original intent, not to drink, or to drink a specific amount, changed in conjunction with his assessment of the situation, and he/she would rather not think of it, or report it, in terms of being influenced by someone. For example, peer pressure in adolescent research is not a very popular reason given for drinking, hedonistic reasons being much more strongly endorsed. Reporting one’s drinking as being influenced by someone else connotes being controlled to some extent by the other person, and may imply not being able to make your own decisions. Affirming such pressure to drink more may therefore carry some social undesirability, so results could be downwardly biased. Some respondents may not have viewed the kind of situation where suggestions to drink more occur as involving influence, and may have thought of such drinking invitations simply as a good gesture which they reciprocated by accepting. This thought is highlighted in the statement emanating from notes from one of the focus groups: “*Just see the weather, very good for drinking or make me take am with meat or suya! We suppose go club today-O.*” In this statement we can see that it is not just the offer of the beer, but also the existence of precedents, which set the possibility of drinking in motion. Such extended causal sequences may serve first of all to get the individuals into a situation where drinking knowingly will occur. In such circumstances the individual is not likely to consider he/she is doing something against his will. Yet going along in the first place is an indication of acknowledged or unacknowledged willingness to drink. He ventures to go to where there is, so to speak, an unwritten agreement for the purpose of drinking. However, in that sense may it may be difficult to conceive of such event chains as implying one has been influenced.

These results also highlight the fact that drinking is male dominated, and that in turn males, to a large extent, are the ones applying pressure on others to drink. The offers to drink (which may involve a kind of pressure) are made more often to male and female current drinkers, and less frequently to male abstainers as well as to women that the men are currently in a relationship with. Females may be particularly vulnerable to inducements to drink as they are encouraged both by partners in a relationship to start drinking and by women friends.

The research question not addressed in this work is whether these predictors vary depending on the individual's drinking status. For instance, would there be different predictors of pressures for current drinkers as opposed for abstainers, or would pressures on heavy drinkers differ in any way from those on occasional drinkers? These are questions of interest that are beyond the scope of this paper. This paper does point to the fact that males are reported as being the major source of influence for others to drink or to drink beyond the desired limited. More in-depth studies would need to be conducted to examine if the results obtained here would be similar for those who drink heavily, and possible implications this may have for prevention and treatment.

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Table 1

Demographic information of respondents

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender (2099)	Male	1137	54.2
	Female	962	45.8
Residence (2083)	Urban	797	38.3
	Rural	1286	61.7
Age (2081)	17–29 Years	608	29.4
	30–44 Years	827	40.0
	45+ Years	635	30.7
Religion (2081)	Christianity	1737	83.5
	Muslim	306	14.7
	Other	38	1.8
Income (2050)	High	193	9.4
	Middle	292	14.2
	Low	1565	76.3
Education (2081)	no education	787	37.8
	< 9 years	1043	50.1
	> 10 years	251	12.1
Relationship Status (2083)	Married	1485	71.3
	Cohabiting	46	2.2
	Widowed	121	5.8
	Divorced	24	1.2
	Married but Separate	35	1.7
	Never Married	372	17.9
Drinking status (2084)	Abstainer	1406	67.5
	Current Drinker	678	32.5
Drinking Status (554)	Non-Heavy Drinkers	298	53.8
	Heavy ^a	256	46.2

^a heavy drinkers were those who took 5+ drinks on any occasion.

Table 2

Frequency of reported pressure to drink more from various sources by respondents' drinking status and gender

Source e	Gender	Drinking Status	N	Frequency		
				No	1-2 Times	3+ Times
Spouse/Partner	Male	Abstainer	640	96.3	3.1	.6
		Current Drinker	444	96.8	2.5	.7
	Female	Abstainer	734	94.3	5.2	.5
		Current Drinker	196	96.4	2.6	1.0
Your Child	Male	Abstainer	652	97.4	2.1	.5
		Current Drinker	441	98.6	1.1	.2
	Female	Abstainer	740	97.8	1.9	.3
		Current Drinker	197	98.0	2.0	.0
female member of family	Male	Abstainer	654	97.2	2.0	.8
		Current Drinker	440	97.7	2.3	.0
	Female	Abstainer	743	97.6	2.2	.3
		Current Drinker	197	96.4	3.6	.0
Male member of family	Male	Abstainer	653	97.1	2.1	.8
		Current Drinker	442	93.9	4.8	1.4
	Female	Abstainer	743	97.6	2.2	.3
		Current Drinker	197	98.0	2.0	.0
Colleagues in workplace/school	Male	Abstainer	654	96.6	2.4	.9
		Current Drinker	440	95.5	3.2	1.4
	Female	Abstainer	743	97.7	1.6	.7
		Current Drinker	198	96.5	3.0	.5
Female Friend/Acquaintance	Male	Abstainer	654	96.0	2.9	1.1
		Current Drinker	440	97.5	1.1	1.4
	Female	Abstainer	743	96.5	2.4	1.1
		Current Drinker	196	89.8	9.2	1.0
Male Friend/Acquaintance	Male	Abstainer	654	93.3	5.4	1.4
		Current Drinker	440	84.1	10.7	5.2

Source e	Gender	Drinking Status	N	Frequency		
				No	1-2 Times	3+ Times
	Female	Abstainer	743	97.0	1.9	1.1
		Current Drinker	196	85.2	11.7	3.1

Table 3

Summary Logistic regression results for pressure to drink, by source^a

	Variables in Equation	B	S.E.	Odds Ratio	Model Nagelkerke R-sq
Spouse	Male Gender *	-.504	.244	.604	
	High Income ***	-1.152	.305	.316	.057 ***
	Christian Religion *	.951	.440	.386	
Child	High Income ***	-1.502	.397	.223	
	Age 18–29 *	-.933	.433	.393	.114 ***
	Married **	-1.429	.557	.240	
Female Member Family	Christian Religion *	-1.449	.739	.235	
	High Income ***	-1.323	.391	.266	.050 *
Male Family Member	Male Gender *	.598	.283	1.819	.038 *
	Christian Religion *	-1.172	.530	.310	
Colleague in Office/School	Christian Religion	-1.335	.603	.263	.041 *
	Male Gender *	.675	.185	1.964	
Male Friend or Acquaintance	Urban ***	-.786	.204	.456	
	No Education **	.729	.280	2.072	.052 ***
	1–9 Years Education *	.535	.246	1.709	
	Christian Religion *	-.547	.281	.579	

* p<.05,

** p<.01,

*** p<.001.

^aFor the 9 predictors, only where the prediction was significant is the category and value shown. All models included: male gender (vs. female); Urban urbanicity (vs. other); High Income, Medium Income (vs. Low); No Education, 1–9 Years Education (vs. More); Age 18–29, Age 30–34 (vs. Age 45+); Married/Cohabiting (vs. Other status); and Christian (vs. Other Religion).