



---

## **Peer Pressure and Alcohol Use among Undergraduate Students of Wolaita Sodo University**

Yohannes Bisa Biramo<sup>a\*</sup>, Gedion Philipos<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a,b</sup>Wolaita Sodo University, P.O.B 138, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia

<sup>a</sup>Email: [yohabis.391@gmail.com](mailto:yohabis.391@gmail.com)

<sup>b</sup>Email: [gedionphilipos@yahoo.com](mailto:gedionphilipos@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

The study aims to correlate peer pressure and Alcohol use. Method: descriptive survey research design was used for this study. The researcher hypothesized and purposively determined two hundred (both males and females) representative samples from three bars (Enjory, Midreget and Central) and two groceries (Dumbulo and Jano). Places were selected purposively for their high attendants of university students. Using questionnaires data as collected from 200 sample students selected accidentally from the bars and groceries. Pearson product moment was used to test the relationship among the selected variables and Two-Way ANOVA was also used to test hypotheses. Results: The result showed positive and statistically significant relationship between Peer Pressure and Alcohol use, no significant difference between sex and batch (year level) on students alcohol use. It was recommended that Ethiopian Ministry of Education and the university management board should develop a curriculum on sex education for institutions of high learning beyond course level. Moreover parents should monitor and pay regular visits to their children in the universities.

**Keywords:** Peer pressure; Alcohol Use; Sex and Batch (Year level).

---

\* Corresponding author.

## **1. Introduction**

Peer pressure may be defined as the insistence and encouragement of the same age group individuals to make individual to do something [1]. When children move out from the family to child care centers, school, and the community at large, they begin to form attachments, and friendships emerge through their play. Even infants and toddlers are observed reacting to other infants by touching them, by crying when others cry and later by offering nurturance or comfort. By about age three, early friendships begin to form and children's peers begin to have a more lasting influence [2]. When this relationship persists children begin to copy and manipulate acts or behaviors of their friends and they start to feel and perceive that there are other values, opinions, and rules besides those set by their parents [3].

Reference [4], in his study, tried to elucidate peer group, peer influence and peer pressure. He noted that peer groups are among the most significant social contexts in adolescence. They help to establish norms of behavior and normally develop a culture that manifests itself in aspects like language, dress, hairstyle, sports, and drinking habits. On the other hand, peer influence is the pressure, planned or unplanned, exerted by peers to influence personal behavior and peer pressure is the persuasive influence your friends have over you, which can cause you to associate with certain people, to wear certain clothes, to use certain words and to use certain language.

There is little doubt that peers actually influence each other and that the effects of peer influence are stronger during adolescence than in adulthood. Indeed, one recent experimental study found that exposure to peers during a risk-taking task doubled the amount of risky behavior among middle adolescents, increased it by 50% among college undergraduates, and had no impact at all among [5]. The ability to resist peer pressure comes from a combination of many factors, including self-esteem, respect for others, and experience.

Peers can exert extraordinary influence over each other into the formation of certain behaviors, among which is alcohol consumption [6]. Alcohol consumption continues to be one of the most risk behaviors engaged in by the adolescents and young adults [7] and it is one of the common habits among peer groups that cause psychological and social problems.

In Ethiopia, there are an increasingly large number of adolescents and adults enrolled in both private and government universities and they often live away from parental guidance. As to the observation and interview made by the researcher, in Wolaita Sodouniversity, alcohol consumption among students is on the increase and becoming a major point of concern. Most students are influenced to start consuming alcohol by their friends. It is upon this background that this study is aimed at determining the associations between peer pressure and alcohol consumption.

### ***1.1. Statement of the Problem***

[8] reported that social interaction with peers is a key determinant that results into alcohol consumption among the adolescents and adults. Similarly [9], in their study, found that peer group influence is a key determinant in causing alcohol consumption and this influence could be enhanced by the drinking behaviors of the individuals

in peer groups themselves. In their part [10], argued that friends influence is a major factor in adolescent's alcohol use, which brings delinquent behaviors. However, Reference [11] observed that peer groups might influence an individual to shape his or her normative beliefs and interpretation of information regarding risk activities.

As studies indicate in Ethiopia substance use among adolescents is considerably rising. Of the young segment of the Ethiopian population, college and university students are at the most risk of using alcohol and other drugs [12]. Entering the university, often leads to new opportunities, independence from family control, self-decision making, and peer-pressures to use or abuse alcohol or other drugs. It is generally acknowledged that several factors are involved in the initiation of substance use among adolescents and young adults [12].

Though alcohol consumption, have become common practices among college and university students in Ethiopia, only very few studies have assessed their magnitude and the associated factors. Even if substance use has become a common problem among university students in Ethiopia, there is no or little has been explored about the relationship between peer pressure and alcohol use in the higher institutions of Ethiopia in general and in Wolaita Sodo University in Particular. The present research will be conducted to assess whether there is association among peer pressure and alcohol use.

The researcher's motivation for this study originates from the observation, as an educator, of the students who are engaged in alcohol. The researcher's interest also deepened when the researcher interviewed some alcohol using students in the pubs, bars and restaurants around the university. As to the interviewees response occasionally they drink alcohol at least four times in a week. Besides, they responded that they learned to engage in this behavior as a result of persuasion from their peers. Thus, it is important to put this problem in to the perspective of whether there is an association between the stated variables.

## ***1.2. Research Questions***

The following research questions are formulated to guide the researcher in the study.

- ❖ Is there an association between Peer Pressure and Student's Alcohol Consumption?
- ❖ There are no significant sex and batch (Students year level) differences in Alcohol consumption among the students

## ***1.3. Objectives of the Study***

### ***1.3.1. General objectives***

- ❖ The general objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between peer pressure and alcohol consumption in 3rd year students of Wolaita Sodo University.

### ***1.3.2. Specific Objectives***

Based on the above general objective, the study is intended to:

- ❖ Investigate the association between Peer Pressure and Student's Alcohol Consumption
- ❖ Identify whether there is no significance sex and batch (level of year) difference in alcohol consumption among students

### ***1.4. Significance of the Study***

The findings of this study will provide knowledge on peer group influence and alcohol consumption and if students read this information, it can help them change their behavior.

Guidance and counselors as well as psychosocial support centers in universities and schools could also use the findings of this study as they carry out guidance, counseling and psychosocial support among students who may be under the influence of peers and alcohol. It is hoped that this study is going to contribute to the stock and scope of literature existing on peer group influence, alcohol consumption, and premarital sex among university students.

The findings of this study might help future researchers to direct more research in related fields like to find out the effects of peer groups and alcohol consumption on university students academic performance and the likes. And finally, this thesis will act as a reference material for future researchers.

### ***1.5. Delimitation***

This study is delimited to investigate the relationship between peer pressure and alcohol consumption among 3rd year students in WoliataSodo University.

### ***1.6. Operational Definition***

#### ***1.6.1. Peer Pressure***

In this study it was referred to as a subjective feeling of being pushed, urged, or dared by others to do something only because of expectations from others

#### ***1.6.2. Alcohol Consumption***

In this study it was referred to as use of alcohol such as beer, Tej, Tela and Whisky, in an individual's life time to alter mood or behavior.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Design**

In this study a descriptive survey research design was used. The idea behind choosing this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. The design was to allow the study to obtain a deeper analysis of issues as they happen in the study area. It also allowed generation of unknown issues central to the study topic

### **2.2. Population**

The target populations of this study are all regular undergraduate students of Wolaita Sodo University in the year 2007 E.C. There are 6 colleges and 3 schools in the university. Thus all colleges and schools students were focused in the present study

### **2.3. Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

Fundamentally the researcher could not find available data on the population of alcohol users on university. For this reason the researcher hypothesized and purposively determined two hundred (both males and females) representative samples from highly known Bars and Groceries. Three bars (Enjory, Midregenet and Central) and two groceries (Dumbulo and Jano) were selected purposively for their high attendants of university students. Based on the response obtained from the managers and owners of the bars and groceries, usually in each of these bars and groceries on average 70-100 students attend from Monday to Friday and 150-200 students attend on weekend (Saturday and Sunday).

In each pub, 40 students (both males and females) were selected using accidental sampling technique. The reason for using this sampling technique is it was very difficult and impossible to meet students who are drinking alcohol on the needed time of the researcher so that only students found drinking alcohol at the time of visit were selected and administered questionnaire. So as to ensure complete administration of the questionnaire several visits were made.

### **2.4. Methods of Data Collection**

In this study the researcher was used a self-report questionnaire to collect data from sample students regarding peer pressure and alcohol consumption. The researcher visited the five pubs mentioned and the research instrument (questionnaire) was self-administered to alcohol drinkers after approval had been gotten from them. In line with the instructions on the instrument, the questionnaire was answered and returned.

The self-report questionnaire has two parts where the first part consist the items asking the background information about the participants i.e. age and sex. The second part contains a measure of alcohol consumption with sub section for identifying the influence of peer pressure on alcohol consumption.

### **2.5. Data Analysis and Presentation**

Descriptive statistics was calculated in order to describe the demographic characteristics of the selected participants. The scores on the items used to identify the age, sex and batch (year level) of participants were summed then the frequency and percentage of the items were calculated.

According to the research question, concerning with investigating the association between "peer pressure and alcohol consumption" Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used.

To test sex and batch difference and sex by batch interaction effect on the alcohol consumption, a factorial analysis (Two-Way ANOVA) was computed.

### **3. Results**

This study aimed at investigating the association among peer pressure and alcohol use and whether there is no significant sex and batch difference in alcohol consumption. Thus in this part the data collected through self-report questionnaire were analyzed and presented. The findings are presented in accordance with the sequences of research questions and hypothesis.

#### **3.1. Demographic Information**

This section gives the bio-data information from 200 students taken from the the 5 sample pubs in wolaitaSodo Town. It helps to know the type of sample used in the study. It shows their age, sex and school or college.

**Table 1: Age of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent
19-21	21	10.5
22-24	129	64.5
25-27	49	24.5
above 27	1	5
Total	200	100.0

Results in Table 1 show the different ages of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were between 22-24 years, forming 64.5% of the total respondents.

**Table 2: Sex of the Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percent
female	70	35.0
Male	130	65.0
Total	200	100.0

In relation to sex of the respondents Table 2 shows that female students formed 35.0% of the total, and male students account the rest 65.0 %.

### 3.2. Association of Peer Pressure with Students Alcohol Consumption

The research question ruled out under this subsection of analysis part is examining the association between peer pressure and the global measures of student's alcohol consumption.

So as to detect whether a significant correlations between peer pressure scores and scores on measures of alcohol use, for its convenience and better stability nature, a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was computed and the results displayed in Table 4 below.

**Table 3:** Pearson's Correlation of Peer Pressure with Measures of students Alcohol Consumption

Variables	Peer pressure	Alcohol use
Peer pressure	1.00	0.610*
Alcohol use	0.610*	1.00

\*Significant at  $P < 0.05$  (two-tailed)

As depicted in Table 3, the scores of the students on peer pressure were positively correlated with their scores on alcohol use ( $r = 0.610$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ).

This correlation coefficient indicates that the students pressure from their peers and their alcohol use have positive and statistically significant relationship. Moreover, the coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = 0.37$ ) between these two scores indicated that the pressure from peer group accounted for 37 % of the variance in the students alcohol consumption.

### 3.3. Sex and Batch Difference Scores on Alcohol Use

Table 4 bellow, presents the mean and standard deviations of alcohol use by Sex and Batch (student's year of attending university).

To find out a possible variation on Alcohol Use a 4x2 analysis of variance was conducted for sex and Students year level, which used as independent variables.

Table 5 presents a summary of results for analysis of variance computed based on the data presented in table 4.

In Table 5 the result of the analysis of variance performed on alcohol use reveals that there is no significant main effect of sex  $F(1,190)=0.062$ ,  $p=0.688$ , and also Batch (students year level) level  $F(4,190)=0.600$ ,  $p=0.188$  and the interaction effects  $F(4,190)=0.135$ ,  $p=0.845$  were found to be insignificant to affect alcohol use.

**Table 4:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Alcohol use by sex and Batch (student's year level)

Sex	Students year level	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Female	first year	1.5000	.57735	4
	second year	1.3333	.51640	6
	third year	1.4375	.71561	32
	fourth year	1.3636	.50452	11
	fifth year	1.7059	.91956	17
	Total		1.4857	.71714
Male	first year	1.6000	.54772	5
	second year	1.4167	.65386	24
	third year	1.2444	.48409	45
	fourth year	1.3333	.49237	12
	fifth year	1.5000	.59062	44
	Total		1.3846	.56217
Total	first year	1.5556	.52705	9
	second year	1.4000	.62146	30
	third year	1.3247	.59475	77
	fourth year	1.3478	.48698	23
	fifth year	1.5574	.69581	61
	Total		1.4200	.62091

**Table 5:** Summary Table of Two-Way ANOVA for the Effect of Sex and Students Year Level on Alcohol Use

Variable and Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Sex	.062	1	.062	.162	.688
Batch	2.399	4	.600	1.554	.188
Sex * Batch	.538	4	.135	.349	.845
Error	73.294	190	.386		
Total	480.000	200			

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.



## **4. Discussion**

### ***4.1. Association of Peer Pressure with Students Alcohol Consumption***

In the present study, to investigate the association of peer pressure and students alcohol consumption a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was computed and results were presented in the previous analysis section. In order to make the discussion of results more clear scores used to measure peer pressure were summed on the way that larger values indicate higher rate of peer pressure, medium value indicates medium rate of peer pressure and lower value indicates lower rate of peer pressure. On the other hand, scores for alcohol consumption summed to indicate the extent of students agreement whether or not they use alcohol. Therefore, the following discussion of the results should be read in line with the direction, variables score treated.

In relation to the associations of the above two variables, the result of the present study shows that pressure from the peer group of students and alcohol use have positive and statistically significant relationship. The result in general indicates that the student's engagement in alcohol is depends up on the level of pressure from peers. Even though there are earlier research findings found to be inconsistent with the present study result; for instance the study conducted by [3] revealed that peer group influence is not significantly related to alcohol consumption. But still the previous results of some scholars found to support the current result. For instance [16] in their study pointed out that peer group influence is a key determinant in causing alcohol consumption that may result into getting into fights, engaging in sexual promiscuity, and missing school. Similarly, [10] noted that friends encourage their peers to engage in undesirable acts, one of which is alcohol consumption, but school rules normally prohibit students from falling into such misbehavior, though some students still fall victims. Moreover [5] also pointed out that children who are friends to one another influence each other to engage in habits like alcohol consumption.

### ***4.2. Sex and Batch (Year Level) Differences in Alcohol Consumption Among the Students***

As mentioned earlier in the result section, there exist no significant difference of sex and year level in alcohol consumption and the interaction effects were found to be insignificant to affect alcohol consumption. This result is inconsistent with the earlier comprehensive study of alcohol use among youth in both urban and non-urban areas was conducted in 1994 [17]. The results of that study revealed that 42.5% of the respondents reported having used alcohol at some stage during their lives. Overall, males were more likely to have consumed alcohol than females in both the urban areas (50.9% versus 40.9%), and the rural areas (47.2% versus 29.3%). For males, rates of lifetime alcohol consumption were slightly higher among those from the urban areas, while urban females were far more likely to have used alcohol than were their female counterparts. With respect to year level difference the finding of the present study is also inconsistent with the study made by [13]. In their study the repeated measures ANOVA identified students in the cross-sectional sample reported a significant difference in their alcohol consumption between year groups ( $F = 71.64$ ,  $df = 2, 6864$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). A priori mean comparison tests showed significant differences ( $p < 0.01$ ) between each year group with consumption decreasing from Year 1 to Years 2 and 3. Similarly, [14] in their study reveals that the drinking patterns of students changed by year in school ( $p < .001$ ,  $X^2=227.77$ ). Among drinkers, there was a gradual decrease, however, in the percent of Heavy

Drinkers from the first to the fourth years of college ( $p < .05$ ,  $X^2 = 8.1$ ). Despite the significant reduction across year of study, nearly a third of students were still drinking above recommended levels in Year 3 and those who reported drinking within the high risk category during year one were more likely to still be at high risk in subsequent years. Supporting this a study made by [15] shown that variation was not seen on alcohol consumption experience among the respondents of different years of study in Haramaya University.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the analysis and discussion of data collected from selected undergraduate students in Wolaita Sodo University the following conclusions are made:

1. The present study established an association between peer pressure and alcohol consumption. This means the pressure from the peer group of students and alcohol use have positive and statistically significant relationship. Students were more likely to use alcohol when there was pressure from peers.
2. The present study recognized there is no significant difference of sex and batch (year level) and the interaction effects were found to be insignificant to affect alcohol use of undergraduate students of Wolaita Sodo University. In view of this phenomenon sex wise only, the result indicated that there is no significant sex difference in students alcohol use. Regarding batch (year level) there is also no significant difference in students alcohol use. Also there is no significant main interaction effect of sex and batch (year level) on students alcohol use. This means both male and female students equally use alcohol and similar result was found across batch (year level) in using alcohol.

## **6. Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

- ✓ It would be better if Ministry of Education enforce dress codes in all higher institutions of learning through legislation. This will reduce sexual urge, rape and temptations that are in some instances facilitated by provocative and sexy dresses that some students put on.
- ✓ Students should be encourage by the university authorities to organize seminars, debates, symposia and other related activities to help them build their academic potentials and resist deviant activities.
- ✓ Parents should as a matter of responsibility, monitor and pay regular visits to their children in the universities and provide them with basic materials that will make their stay comfortable.
- ✓ The Wolaita Sodo University particularly the office students' dean should inform the students, especially freshman students, about the health, psychological, socioeconomic and academic problems associated with alcohol use and pre-marital sex.

## **Reference**

- [1] Barbour, C., Barbour, N.H., & Scully, P. A. ( 2002). Peer Group Influence, retrieved on January 10, 2016 from <http://www.education.com/reference/article/peer-group-influence/> Santor, D. A.,

- [2] Messervey, D., & Kusumakar, V. (2000). Measuring peer pressure, popularity, and conformity in adolescent boys and girls: Predicting school performance, sexual attitudes, and substance abuse. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29(2), 163–182. doi:10.1023/A:1005152515264 Barbour, Barbour & Scully 2002
- [3] Evarist M. (2010). Peer Group Influence, Alcohol Consumption, and Secondary School Students Attitudes towards School. M.A. thesis, University of Makerere, Kampala
- [4] Palmer, M. (2008). Peer group influence and selection in adolescent school burnout: a longitudinal study, retrieved on January 10, 2016 from <http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-180028341/peer-group-influence-and.htm>
- [5] Kandel, D. B., & Andrews, K. (1987). Processes of adolescent socialization by parents and peers, *International Journal of Addictions*, 22, 319–342.
- [6] Yeh, M.Y. (2006). Factors associated with alcohol consumption, problem drinking, and related consequences among high school students in Taiwan, *Journal of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 60, 46-54, retrieved May 12, 2016 from <http://www.Blackwell-synergy.com>
- [7] Arata, C. M., Stafford, J., & Tims, M. S. (2003). High School Drinking and its Consequences, retrieved May 6, 2015 from <http://findarticles.com>
- [8] Foxcroft, D. R., & Lowe, G. (1991). Adolescents' alcohol use and misuse: The socializing influence of perceived family life, retrieved on November 12, 2016 from <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content=a790879843&db=all> oxcroft and Lowe (1991)
- [9] Chalder, M., Elgari, F. J., & Bennett, P. (2005). Drinking and motivations to drink among adolescent children of parents with alcohol problems. University of Bristol, UK
- [10] Steinberg, L., & Silverberg, S. B. (1986). The vicissitudes of autonomy in early adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*. NY: Harper & Row Barcett et al. (1988)
- [11] Kimberly, A. M. (2002), The role of peer influence across risk behaviors, *Journal of Youth and Adolescents*, retrieved May 4, 2016 from <http://www.questia.com/library/psychology/peerpressure.jsp>
- [12] Bekana Fekecha, Bosen Tebeje and Hirut Megersa (2014) Prevalence of Pre-marital Sexual Practices and Associated Factors among Jimma Teacher Training College Students in Jimma Town, South West Shoa Zone, Oromiya Region, Ethiopia-2013. *J Women's Health Care* 4: 221.
- [13] Bridgette, M.B., Brendan, M., Michael, B., Karen, T., Andrew, J.H., & William, B.S. (2008). Changes in undergraduate student alcohol consumption as they progress through university, *Journal of BMC Public Health*, 8, 163, retrieved on May 6, 2016 from

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2405793/>

- [14]Ruth, C. E., Hanson, D.J., & Diebold, B. (1997). The Drinking Patterns and Problems of a National Sample of College Students, 1994: Implications for Education. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education*. Spring 199, retrieved on February 12, 2016 from <http://www.indiana.edu/~engs/articles/jade.htm>
- [15]AndualemDerese, AssefaSeme, ChalachewMisganaw (2014):Assessment of substance useand risky sexual behavior among Haramaya University Students, Ethiopia. *Science Journalof Public Health*, 2: 102-110 retrieved on May 2, 2016 from <http://article.sciencepublishinggroup.com/html/10.11648.j.sjph.20150304.12.html>
- [16]Chalder, M., Elgari, F. J., & Bennett, P. (2005). Drinking and motivations to drink among adolescent children of parents with alcohol problems. University of Bristol, UK
- [17] Rocha-Silva L, De Miranda D, Erasmus R. (1996). Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among black youth. Pretoria: HSRC Publishers.