



## CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY ACADEMIC NURSING: AN EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This research evaluates alcohol consumption among nursing students in an institution of higher education in the hinterland of Paraíba.

**Methodology:** We conducted a cross-sectional study with a quantitative approach with a sample of 70 nursing students.

**Results:** There was a prevalence of alcoholism of 84.29%. The main beverages used were 60% for beer, whiskey distilled and 7,15% with 7.1%. Consumption is higher among male students, the main reason why the experiences the influence of alcohol to friends. Conclusion Given the above, it was found that the prevalence of alcoholism among academics is high, requiring educational campaigns aiming to reduce alcohol consumption among students.

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### INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, alcoholism is a problem of public health and drinking among young students in universities has already become a cultural habit causing various problems in traffic and society.

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Alcoholism is a habit linked to the lifestyle and the social and material conditions of the people (Otano *et al.*, 2011). The global prevalence of psychoactive substance use is increasing (Lemos *et al.*, 2007). Drug abuse and dependence threaten political, economic and social values. In addition to contributing to the growth of expenses with medical treatment and hospitalization, as well as increasing rates of traffic accidents, urban violence and premature deaths (Carlini-

Cotrim *et al.*, 2000; Silva *et al.*, 2006). In Brazil there is a high prevalence of alcohol consumption, one of the reasons that leads to this high rate is unemployment since many of the residents of this region have low professional qualification currently required by the market. Unable to compete in an increasingly competitive labor market, they are gradually pushed towards social marginalization, depriving themselves of any social-psychological reference, encouraging a greater consumption of alcohol, which ends up driving them to desertion and loneliness, taking refuge in the beverage (Guedes *et al.*, 2010). Among young Brazilians, binge drinking or episodic heavy drinking has been growing, a concept that has been used to define the behavior of young people in relation to alcohol consumption (Pelicioli *et al.*, 2017). It is important to note that alcohol consumption in a given episode of alcohol consumption is higher in a single episode than in a single episode, regardless of the frequency of consumption (Nunes *et al.*, 2012; Shakesheft *et al.* 1998).

Alcoholism has great epidemiological relevance. Studies have shown that 90% of Americans have used at least one alcoholic beverage and 50% of their adult population are habitual users of alcohol (Devlin *et al.*, 2008). The alcoholic substance of interest in the present study is ethyl alcohol or ethanol (Devlin *et al.*, 2008; Kaplan and Sadock, 2007). It is known that alcohol abuse causes several health problems, many of which require specialized support for life and hospitalization. Among the urgencies, one can cite the alcoholic coma, but the most important complaint refers to the psychiatric problems that alcohol can induce. Alcohol consumption is the second most frequent cause of psychiatric hospitalizations (Marcal *et al.*, 2005). Studies by Barría *et al.* (2000) evaluated the behavior of undergraduate students in the biological sciences in relation to the use of alcohol and illicit drugs. Users of tobacco and illicit drugs were more likely to engage in socio-cultural activities and spend less time on academic activities than non-users. The students of the biological sciences should deserve a differentiated approach in relation to the use of alcohol and other drugs, since in the future it is they who will take the basics of health to the community (Mesquita *et al.*, 1995).

Thus, it is important to know the pattern of consumption, attitudes and knowledge regarding drugs among these students. The consequences of drug use among college students that may be highlighted are motor vehicle crashes, domestic violence, risky sexual behavior, academic impairments, decreased perception and stress (Chandlers *et al.*, 2003; Cerqueira *et al.* 2003). In addition, In another study it was described that the abusive consumption of alcohol among university students is related to the decrease in the life expectancy of this population. According to the authors, this is because risk behaviors associated with alcohol and illicit drug use may affect the overall sense and quality of life (Carlini-cotrim *et al.*, 2000; Carlin *et al.*, 2002). In the literature there are several studies demonstrated that the use of alcohol among university students, however in the state of Paraíba, there are few research on alcohol consumption among university students. Allied to this fact in the backlands of Paraíba, the rates of violence associated with alcohol consumption has increased in recent years. In addition, it is assumed that nursing students indiscriminately use alcoholic beverages due to the excess of charges imposed by the university, the family dwelling's long family living in the northeastern region where alcohol consumption is high. In view of this contextualization the objective of our work was to identify the profile of alcohol

use among the nursing academics of a higher education institution in the high Paraíba sertão.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

An analytical, cross - sectional study with a quantitative approach was carried out with academics of the Nursing College Institution of the Paraíba sertão. In order to calculate the sample size, the total population of 330 students enrolled in the nine periods of the Course was used. In this way, a group of 70 randomly chosen ninth semester students was initially obtained as an ideal sample for the development of this study. The study was carried out in a reference higher education institution in nursing teaching in the backlands of Paraíba. The volunteers were selected according to the following inclusion criteria: being over 18 and regularly enrolled in the IES Nursing Course. The instrument used for the data collection was a semi-structured questionnaire, containing easy-to-understand questions, and previously tested and based on previous studies (Cerqueira *et al.*, 2011). For the application of the questionnaire were selected and trained six students of the Nursing Course, who applied the questionnaires in classrooms at the same time. For the individual interview, prior written consent was obtained from all study participants. Data collection was performed by selected and trained students under the supervision of a teacher.

The questionnaire was applied directly to the students after clarifications and basic orientations about the objectives of the research in question, leaving the university free to decide on their participation; the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF) was signed. Prior to application, individuals were instructed on the voluntary nature of the study and were granted confidentiality by anonymity. For that purpose, a free and clarified Consent Form was presented to each participant in accordance with Resolution 466/12 (Brazil, 2012). Data analysis was of the descriptive type, in order to identify the prevalence of alcohol consumption. The chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) was applied to verify the association between the variables studied, at a significance level of 5%. The computer program "Excel" version 2003 was used for the organization of the database and as instrument of statistical analysis the application Graph Pad Prism version 5.0. This study was approved by the Committee of Ethics in Research with Human Beings of the Hospital of the Federal University of Paraíba (Protocol 67/2008), being derived from an umbrella project. This study was conducted in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and has no conflict of interest.

### Educational intervention

The strategy used for the educational intervention was after the interview with presentation of a pamphlet and orientation of the malefics caused by alcoholism. The researcher made interventions and asked questions, so that they reflected on what was said and added information to clarify knowledge and doubts, after the interview were shown ways to reduce alcohol consumption. In addition, in cases of heavy alcohol consumption the student was instructed to seek a doctor.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was verified that the majority of participants were female (57.15%), with a predominant age group between 19 and 20 years old (28%), with a mean age of 29.7 years, most of whom

were single (85, 71%) and self reported as Catholics (94%). It was observed that 84.29% of the participants consumed alcohol, demonstrating that there is a statistically significant difference in alcohol consumption in relation to gender, observing the higher consumption among the female population. ( $p = 0.0137$ ) (Table 1).

**Table 1. Alcohol consumption in relation to gender among students of Nursing Course of a higher education institution**

	Alcohol Consumption				$\chi^2$	p-value
	Yes		No			
	n	%	n	%		
Men	29	41,43	01	1,42	6,07	0,0137
Women	30	42,86	10	14,29		

Valores significativos  $p < 0,05$  pelo do Teste qui-quadrado

The most consumed drink was beer (60%), followed by wisc (7.15%), distillates (7.13%), vodka (4.3%) and wines (2.9%). Cider appears last, with 1.4% (Table 2). 14.3% ( $n = 10$ ) of nursing students at the institution of higher education investigated auto reported not having consumed any type of alcoholic beverage.

**Table 2. Frequencies of the main drinks consumed among students of the Nursing Course of a higher education institution**

Beverage	n	%
Beer	42	60
Wisque	05	7,15
Distillates	05	7,13
Vodka	03	4,3
Wines	02	2,9
Cider	01	1,4
Others	02	2,9

Table 3 illustrates the factors that led adolescents to use alcoholic beverages, and the following results were obtained: (51.42%) consumed alcohol on the influence of companions, (32.85%) self refers to drinking for fun; (2.9%) self report that they drink by fissure; and (4.3%) did not mention the reasons that lead to the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

**Table 3. Factors that influenced the consumption of alcohol among students of the Nursing Course of a higher education institution**

Factors	n	%
Companions	36	51,42
Fun	23	32,85
Cleft	02	2,9
Other reasons	03	4,3

Among the students investigated, there were no statistically significant differences in age and place of first alcohol consumption. Among the consequences after alcohol consumption, it was observed that (20%) that the students lacked college, (18,%) had different problems such as fights, accidents and lack of college, (11.42%), they drove after alcohol consumption (5.7%) suffered accidents, (4.3%) fought and (31.4%) had no problems (Table 4).

### Educational Intervention

One week after the educational intervention, 100% interviewees demonstrated the need to change their attitudes toward alcohol-related prevention and affirmed that they had decreased alcohol consumption.

**Table 4. Consequence of alcohol consumption among students of the Nursing Course of a higher education institution**

Main consequences	n	%
Missed college on influence of alcohol	14	20
Various problems due to the influence of alcohol	13	18,6
Directed on influence of alcohol	08	11,42
Automobile accidents on the influence of alcohol	04	5,7
He fought over the influence of alcohol	03	4,3

## DISCUSSION

The consumption of alcoholic beverages is the oldest and widespread social habit among the populations, being in Brazil a public health problem (Wesselovicz *et al.*, 2008). The purpose of this study was to identify the profile of alcohol consumption among nursing students at a higher education institution in the city of Cajazeiras, Paraiba. The results of this research indicate that there is a pattern of alcohol consumption, where these consumptions are shown to be high when compared to other studies conducted in Brazil. Our studies corroborate the studies carried out among the students of the Nursing Course of the city of Rio de Janeiro, who found an 84% consumption among the academics (MARCAL *et al.*, 2005) and diverge with the results found among the students of the Course of Nursing who observed a variation of 21 to 34% (Paz-filho *et al.*, 2001). The results in the literature show variations ranging from 89.57% for Brazil to 66.2% in Spain, 65.1% in Portugal, and 41.9% in Mexico on alcohol consumption among students in general (Bain *et al.*, 2006). In Brazil, alcohol consumption varies according to the region of 53% in the North Region and 71.5% in the Southeast of the Country (Carlini *et al.*, 2001).

Although the prevalence of alcoholism is high, not only among the general population (Paz-filho *et al.*, 2001) but also among students of the Nursing course. Its detection among the students is of great importance for the elaboration of policies to try to reduce the consumption of alcohol among the students, since in the future these professionals are multipliers of health actions to propose the decrease of the indices of alcohol consumption. We found that there was a higher consumption of alcohol among females than males. These results corroborate with the studies carried out in Minas Gerais and Santa Catarina, where a higher prevalence of alcohol consumption was found among women (Botti *et al.*, 2006), whereas Spanish researchers observed in their studies that consumption was higher among women only at weekends (Franco *et al.*, 2009). This situation is worrying because women can be of childbearing age with the possibility of pregnancy, since the consumption of alcohol during pregnancy produces severe effects, since the alcohol consumed by the pregnant woman crosses the placenta, leaving the exposed fetus to the same concentrations of alcohol from maternal blood (Oliveira *et al.*, 2009). However, the consequence for the fetus is more severe, since the metabolism and elimination of alcohol are slower, and the fetus is exposed for a longer period (Chaudhuri, 2000). Since the number of women is higher than that of university men and represents the majority of these, it is perceived that alcohol consumption is significant among them, as well as an early onset of its use. Frequent use of alcoholic beverages can lead to dependence and alcohol dependence syndrome can cause symptoms such as loss of ability to control drinking, increased consumption, tolerance

and withdrawal syndrome (Oliveira, 2000). As for the most consumed type of beer, we found that beer was the most consumed, in line with a more recently conducted study among Brazilian students (Galduroz; Caetano, 2004; Cerqueira *et al.*, 2011). It is probable that the high consumption of beer is influenced mainly by the exposure to the beer advertisements in Brazil (Laranjeiras *et al.*, 2007; Vendrame *et al.*, 2009). Among the main factors that influenced the consumption of alcoholic beverages were friends and university colleagues. Among the motivations for alcohol consumption and legal drugs by university students are the external motivations (family, media and friends) and internal motivations (personal characteristics, need for belonging, curiosity, pleasure and idleness) (Freitas *et al.*, 2007, Rodriguez *et al.*, 2008).

Recent research with students from the health sector (physical education, physiotherapy, nutrition and psychology) of a private university in Curitiba reveals for the first time the search for fun, or pleasure, and as motives to maintain consumption, breaking the routine, to enjoy the effects and to reduce anxiety / stress; the friends or acquaintances are pointed to the introduction in the use and as frequent company for the consumption of psychoactive substances (Rodriguez *et al.*, 2008). Regarding the consequences of drinking alcoholic beverages among academic nursing students, the following were verified: lack of college, fights, automobile accidents, and multiple problems. Our studies corroborate studies carried out in Brazil (Silva *et al.*, 2006). Alcoholism has been a major concern of public health in the world, being associated with several other problems such as: traffic deaths, family and affective disagreements, separation of couples, being also an inseparable companion of homicides, beatings of children and women, desertion of work, school among others (Portugual *et al.*, 2008). The use of psychoactive substances such as alcohol and other drugs by health academics is a worrying factor, since it damages the physical and mental health of the student, as well as of the social body (Portugual *et al.*, 2008). In relation to the educational intervention, our studies corroborate with studies carried out with health professionals, whose researchers observed that the respondents presented more positive attitudes towards alcohol consumption reduction (Soares *et al.*, 2013). Other studies that aimed to evaluate the impact of a training course on alcohol and other drugs in the attitudes of nursing professionals, mainly due to the fact that, according to the literature, continuing education has shown satisfactory results in improving the attitude of these professionals (Munro *et al.*, 2007).

## Conclusion

In this study, it can be verified that there is a pattern of consumption of alcoholic beverages among students of the Nursing Course, and that a large portion of students have a greater vulnerability to exposure to alcohol. According to the results obtained, it is necessary a greater reflection and search of knowledge on the part of the students of the Nursing Course on the use of alcohol and other drugs in their student and / or personal life. In this way educational campaigns become necessary in order to reduce alcohol consumption among students of the Nursing Course of a Higher Education Institution of the Paraíba sertão. New studies need to be developed to better explore the problematic relationship of alcohol use in nursing students, considering that the use of psychoactive substances is a multifactorial phenomenon and, as such, results from a combination of factors acting in an

interdependent manner. There is also a need to carry out educational intervention with greater intensity since there is a massive investment in beer advertisements in Brazil. Thus, educational measures would not reduce organic injuries caused by alcohol, but also traffic accidents caused by people who consume those beverages.

## Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest declared none.

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