



## Prevalence of Alcohol Abuse among Boda Boda Riders in Juba Town South Sudan

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### ABSTRACT

Alcohol abuse by BodaBoda rider is closely associated with risky behaviors such as increased suicidal rate, violence, promiscuity, delinquency, greater risk of accidents and illicit drug use. Bodaboda Riders in Juba Town are abusing alcohol at a high rate resulting to frequent fights, antisocial behavior, accidents, aggressiveness, violence, crime that is having a toll on the society. The study was to investigate the prevalence of Alcohol abuse among Bodaboda riders in Juba Town South Sudan. This study adopted descriptive research design. The target population was 1,200 Bodaboda riders and the sample size was 291, which was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The study used self-administered questionnaires to collect data. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. The results showed that 84.8% of the riders had never used a drink containing alcohol. This was against 15% that reported to taking alcohol on monthly basis or less. The study recommends to different stakeholders to play different roles in psycho-educating and preventing Bodaboda riders from abusing alcohol in Juba, South Sudan.

**Keywords:** Prevalence, alcohol abuse, BodaBoda riders, Juba South Sudan

### INTRODUCTION

Alcohol abuse problem is increasingly becoming a health concern and attracting interest among researchers. Alcohol is the most abused and most widely used psychoactive drug and has been legalized in most countries (Inaba & Cohen, 2000). Alcohol is regarded as a drug due to its sedative, tranquilizing, as well as a hypnotic or anesthetic effect. An alcoholic is a person who consumes alcohol to such an extent that it interferes with their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. In the Bodaboda sector, alcohol abuse is rampant. Adamba (2019) attributes the high prevalence of Bodaboda riders who abuses alcohol due to ease of availability. It is therefore common for most riders to become drunk during working hours and most of them are unable to control the urge to abuse alcohol.

The global prevalence of alcohol abuse is on the increase. The global prevalence of alcohol abuse places Russia (2.61%) at the first position, followed by Australia at 2.58%; while Samoa has the least number of alcoholics, holding number 182 at prevalence of 0.00%. The association between alcohol abuse and psychological wellbeing has been investigated. Alcohol abuse places a very huge health burden on citizens across the world. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) indicates that 3.3 million deaths (5.9%) of all global deaths annually were attributed to alcohol abuse; while 5.1% of the global burden of disease and injury were attributed to alcohol abuse. The highest number of alcohol abusers is youth. According to Matara and Winga (2021), in Kenya, prevalence of alcohol abuse by youths aged 18-35 years was 17.6% against the national average of the general population, which is at 13.6%.

Mental illnesses associated with alcohol and substance abuse are on the rise. WHO (2022) notes that abusing alcohol is closely associated with risk of developing health problems such as mental and behavioral disorders including alcohol dependence. The harmful use of alcohol causes a high burden of disease and has significant social and economic consequences. WHO (2022) further observes that societal factors that contribute to alcohol abuse included level of economic development, culture, social norms, availability of alcohol, and implementation and enforcement of alcohol policies. Poorer societies are susceptible to adverse health impacts and social harm.

Psychosocial well-being, often referred to as mental well-being or emotional well-being, is a broad concept that encompasses the overall state of an individual's mental and emotional health. It involves a person's cognitive, emotional, and social functioning, reflecting their satisfaction with life, emotional resilience, and ability to cope with stress and adversity (Mason et al., 2023).

The prevalence of poor psychosocial wellbeing was 7.8% and females who abused alcohol were more emotionally unstable than males. In South Africa, Visser (2007) established that adolescents who abused alcohol significantly lower levels of psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction in general. In Nigeria, Omogun and Alli (2020) observed that many youths indulge in taking alcohol in order to belong or feel comfortable among their peers. Some

take solace in alcohol consumption as an escape route from feeling of depression or unhappiness. Some negative consequences of alcohol consumption include risky sexual behavior, increased suicidal rate, violence, Juvenile delinquency, greater risk of accidents and illicit drug use.

Motorcycles are known by different names in the African continent; from PikiPiki (Swahili term) and Bodaboda (East Africa), Okada (Pidgin English – Nigeria), Oléyiain Togo, to Bendskin in Cameroon. The two-wheeled medium has become a very popular means of transportation in many African villages, towns and cities. In fact, it is estimated that motorcycles make up more than 40 percent of all the automobiles (including cars, buses, trucks and so on) (Iwuoha, 2013). Globally, motorcycles have been the prime means of motorized transport. In Taiwan, around one out of four people use automobiles while the ratio of motorcycles use is about 1:2. Kenya, Bodaboda sector is thriving and has contributed to socio-economic development of the country. However, the riders' risky behaviour that is mostly influenced by alcohol abuse is associated with road accidents, injuries and death.

Sudan is at number 161 at 0.54% o in regard to abuse of alcohol (WHO, 2022). In Ethiopia, Ayanoet al. (2019) noted that the prevalence of alcohol consumption among university students was 38.88%. However, the prevalence of hazardous alcohol consumption was remarkably higher in men (11.58%) than in women (1.21%). Male gender was found to be a significant predictor of alcohol consumption.

Juba is the capital and largest city of South Sudan, a country that gained independence from Sudan in 2011. It is the political, cultural, and economic center of the nation and therefore plays a crucial role in the life and development of South Sudan. Historically, Juba has its roots dating back to the 1920s when it was a small trading post under British colonial rule. The city played a significant role during the Second Sudanese Civil War, which eventually led to the country's independence. The city was an important center for rebel forces fighting for independence from Sudan (Collins, 2023).

Geographically, Juba it is situated in the southeastern part of South Sudan, near the borders with Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is located along the White Nile River, making it an important transportation hub for the region. Economically, Juba is the economic hub of South Sudan. Its economy is primarily based on trade, government services, and the presence of various international organizations and aid agencies. The city has invested heavily in infrastructure and other development projects as the country seeks to rebuild after years of conflict. Culturally, Juba city is a melting pot of cultures, reflecting the ethnic and linguistic diversity of South Sudan.

The city is home to people from various ethnic groups, including the Bari, Lokoya, Mundari, Yangwara, PojuluOlubo and many others. Hence, Juba is a place where different languages, traditions, and customs come together, creating a unique cultural tapestry (Collins, 2023) Juba city is where the government of South Sudan is based at and therefore is the place where the country's political decisions are made and where international diplomatic missions are often located. The city has been a focal point for the country's ongoing political struggles and reconciliation efforts. Like the rest of South Sudan, Juba has faced challenges related to political instability, security issues, and economic development. The city has also experienced urbanization and population growth, putting pressure on infrastructure and services (Collins, 2023).

The use of Bodabodas (motorcycle taxis) in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, is a common phenomenon and popular means of transportation. Bodabodas are widely used for short-distance travel within the city, and they offer a relatively inexpensive and convenient way to navigate through Juba's often congested and poorly maintained road network (Magga&Ofori-Atta, 2012).

Alcohol abuse among the bodabodariders is a significant problem in Juba Town, South Sudan, as it is in many parts of Africa. Several factors contribute to this issue, and addressing it requires a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders, including government, communities, and healthcare providers. For instance, there are high levels of poverty and unemployment that lead some young people to seek solace or escape through alcohol consumption. Peer pressure and the desire to fit in with peers who use alcohol can also contribute to youth alcohol abuse. Similarly, alcohol is often easily accessible and widely available in Juba Town, which can make it more likely for bodaboda riders to experiment with it. There is also lack of awareness and education among the riders. There may be a lack of awareness about the risks associated with alcohol abuse, and education on responsible drinking and its consequences may be insufficient. Some riders may turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism for mental health issues, such as stress, depression, or trauma. Alcohol abuse also has health consequences as it can lead to a range of health problems, including liver damage, addiction, and a higher risk of accidents and injuries (Lien et al., 2016).

It is also common for alcohol abusers to get involved in violence and criminal behaviour, which poses a danger to both the individuals involved and the community at large. It can also lead to criminal activities and interactions with law enforcement. Excessive alcohol consumption can disrupt a young person's education, leading to dropouts and reduced prospects for their future. Alcohol abuse can also strain family and social relationships, leading to conflicts and isolation (Lien et al., 2016).

Alcohol abuse is a global public health problem where the prevalence is increasing. For instance, the prevalence of alcohol abuse in Europe is critical. World Health Organization (2020) noted that the European region has the highest level of alcohol consumption and the lowest prevalence of abstainers in the population, with 62.3% of the adult population drinking at least once a year. Similarly, Europe has the highest share of alcohol-attributable mortality at 10.1% among all-cause. With alcohol abuse, a person is physically dependent on alcohol but still has a serious drinking problem. Symptoms include a failure to fulfil major work, school or home responsibilities, legal or social problems or drinking in situations that are dangerous, such as drinking while driving. Treatment may include support groups, counselling or medication to prevent relapse. Alcohol is a psychoactive substance with dependence-producing properties that has been widely used in many cultures for centuries. The harmful use of alcohol causes a high burden of disease and has significant social and economic consequences. The harmful use of alcohol can also result in harm to other people, such as family members, friends, co-workers and strangers.

Societal factors of alcohol abuse among the riders include level of economic development, culture, social norms, availability of alcohol, and implementation and enforcement of alcohol policies. Adverse health impacts and social harm from a given level and pattern of drinking are greater for

poorer societies. Individual factors include age, gender, family circumstances and socio-economic status. Although there is no single risk factor that is dominant, the more vulnerabilities a person has, the more likely the person is to develop alcohol-related problems as a result of alcohol consumption. Poorer individuals experience greater health and social harms from alcohol consumption than more affluent individuals.

The impact of alcohol consumption on chronic and acute health outcomes is largely determined by the total volume of alcohol consumed and the pattern of drinking, particularly those patterns which are associated with episodes of heavy drinking. The context of drinking plays an important role in the occurrence of alcohol-related harm, particularly as a result of alcohol intoxication. Alcohol consumption can have an impact on not only the incidence of diseases, injuries and other health conditions, but also on their outcomes and how these evolve over time. Lien et al. (2016) investigated alcohol use in South Sudan in relation to social factors, mental distress and traumatic events. The objective of this study was to describe the prevalence of alcohol use and risky drinking across socio-demographic factors in South Sudan and to determine the association between risky drinking, traumatic events and mental distress

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a medical condition characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences. It encompasses the conditions that some people refer to as alcohol abuse, alcohol dependence, alcohol addiction, and the colloquial term, alcoholism is considered a brain disorder especially among the Bodaboda riders. Hence, this study was investigate the prevalence of Alcohol abuse among Bodaboda riders in Juba Town South Sudan.

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## LITURATURE REVIEW

This study used Personality Theory of Drug Abuse is a psychological perspective that seeks to explain substance abuse and addiction in terms of an individual's personality traits and characteristics. This theory suggests that certain personality traits and predispositions may make some individuals more vulnerable to drug abuse and addiction. It is important to note that the Personality Theory of Drug Abuse is just one of several theories used to understand addiction, and addiction is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, including genetic, environmental, and psychological elements (Cermak, 2023).

The prevalence of alcohol use disorders is worrying in many African countries. For instance, Boua, et al. (2020) investigated the prevalence and socio-demographic correlates of tobacco and alcohol use in four sub-Saharan African countries. The reviewed study provides some important insights and understanding of the pattern of alcohol consumption in African communities. However, the reviewed study addressed the problem of alcohol abuse in different countries in Sub-Saharan Africa while the present study focuses on Bodaboda riders in Juba Town south Sudan. The study revealed that the lifetime prevalence of alcohol use among employees in the public sector in Kenya was 44.5%. This is an indication of a severe Alcohol Use Disorder that presents potential challenges of low productivity, increasing healthcare costs and high attrition rates of affected employees. The study recommended for implementation of target-specific interventions in the workplace. The reviewed study is vital in highlighting the dangers associated with Alcohol Use Disorders such as reduced productivity, increased accidents and high attrition rates, which can be easily generalized among Bodaboda riders in South Sudan. However, the review focused on public sector employees in Kenya and not the Bodaboda riders in South Sudan, as is the case with the present study. This is a literature gap to be filled by the present study.

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test questionnaire used to assess the prevalence of alcohol abuse. The study revealed that the prevalence of alcohol abuse among Egerton University students was 21.1 %. Hence, alcohol abuse found to be prevalent among university students. There was significant association between the prevalence of alcohol abuse and the year of study, marital status, family's economic status and the living arrangements. The study was important in showing the prevalence of alcohol abuse among youth in universities. However, the study focused on the university students in Kenya and not Bodaboda riders in South Sudan. This is, therefore, a literature gap to be filled by the present study.

Alcohol abuse is a major public health problem, which is made worse in poor and war-torn countries such as South Sudan. For instance, Lien et al. (2016) conducted a study on alcohol use in South Sudan and how it impacted social, mental and traumatic conditions. The study was a cross-sectional one carried out in the North-west part of South Sudan, where 500 respondents were randomly selected. Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test and General Health Questionnaire were used. The study revealed that the prevalence of alcohol abuse was 14.2%. It was also noted that being male, lacking regular income and psychological distress were significantly associated with higher alcohol abuse.

According to Anand (2020), in today's world, people talk far more openly about depression, anxiety and other mental health issues as explains. There is an understanding that these feelings are part of the human condition and that alcohol is not a solution. This showed that the majority of Bodaboda Riders were wish enough as their education level is concern do not like drinking or abuse alcohol rather they focused on their job since the government job cannot earn them enough for their needs. Moreover, the 15% use alcohol is their normal way of coping with a difficult time when they are on duty to cope with depression, anxiety or other mental health problems.

The overwhelming majority stated that they never needed a drink in the morning for this purpose. This finding suggests that the majority of Bodaboda riders surveyed do not exhibit signs of problematic alcohol use, at least in terms of needing alcohol in the morning to function. However, it is important to interpret this data with caution and consider other factors that may contribute to alcohol abuse and its effects on psychosocial well-being among this population. It's important to acknowledge the possibility of underreporting due to social desirability bias. Respondents may be hesitant to admit to problematic alcohol use, particularly in a research setting. This could potentially result in an underestimate of the true prevalence of morning drinking among Bodaboda riders. While the AUDIT question specifically addresses morning drinking, it's essential to consider other aspects of alcohol use and its impact on psychosocial well-being among Bodaboda riders. Factors such as overall alcohol consumption patterns, reasons for drinking, social and

economic factors, and mental health issues should be explored to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between alcohol abuse and psychosocial well-being in this population.

The frequency of feelings of guilt or regret after drinking can have significant implications for psychosocial well-being. Persistent feelings of guilt or regret may contribute to stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues, which can in turn affect overall well-being and functioning. It is also important to consider potential underreporting or social desirability bias in respondents' answers. In summary, while the majority of Bodaboda riders surveyed do not report experiencing memory loss after drinking, a minority do, with a notable proportion reporting occasional episodes of alcohol-induced memory impairment. This highlights the need for awareness and interventions to address alcohol-related risks and promote safer drinking behaviors within this population of about 15% who abuse alcohol. In a qualitative research, the study interviewed five Bodaboda riders official in Juba Town south Sudan within the Bodaboda sector and 291 quantitatively. These findings underscore the importance of raising awareness, providing support services, and implementing targeted interventions to address alcohol abuse among Bodaboda riders in Juba, South Sudan, in order to promote better psychosocial well-being and overall health outcomes within this community.

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## METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research design. The target population for this study was 1,200 registered bodaboda riders and a sample size of 291 participants which was obtained using Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The Bodaboda riders are mostly under 35 years of age (Memo, 2022). However, the study only targeted those registered and operating in the Central business districts (CBD). These participants believed to have the information being sought by this study. The study used self-administered questionnaires to collect data. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. The results were summarized and presented with percentages.

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## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study was to examine the prevalence of Alcohol abuse among Bodaboda riders in Juba Town South Sudan. The results reported that 84.8% of the riders had never used a drink containing alcohol. This was against 15% that reported to taking alcohol on monthly basis or less. This implies that majority of the rider respondents had no critical problem with alcohol. The highest number of the respondents (99%) reported using 1-2 drinks on a typical day when drinking compared to 1% that took 3-4 drinks. This implies that most of the riders did not have a critical problem with alcohol. This finding suggests that the vast majority of respondents, specifically 99%, reported consuming a relatively low amount of alcohol, typically 1-2 drinks on a typical day when they do drink. Only a very small percentage, 1%, reported consuming a higher amount, specifically 3-4 drinks. This implies that the majority of the riders surveyed have a moderate approach to alcohol consumption, as they are not exceeding the generally recommended limits for moderate drinking. Overall, this suggests that most of the riders surveyed do not have a critical problem with alcohol and tend to drink in moderation, which could have implications for their overall health, safety, and well-being.

The findings of this study contradicted the findings of Boua, et al. (2020) who investigated the prevalence and socio-demographic correlates of tobacco and alcohol use in four sub-Saharan African countries and found that the lifetime prevalence of alcohol use among employees in the public sector in Kenya was 44.5%. The findings were also in disagreement with findings of Lien et al. (2016) who conducted a study on alcohol use in South Sudan and how it impacted social, mental and traumatic conditions. The study was a cross-sectional one carried out in the North-west part of South Sudan, where 500 respondents were randomly selected. Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test and General Health Questionnaire were used. The study revealed that the prevalence of alcohol abuse was 14.2%. It was also noted that being male, lacking regular income and psychological distress were significantly associated with higher alcohol abuse.

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## CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the majority of Bodaboda riders surveyed in Juba Town South Sudan did not exhibit signs of problematic alcohol use, at least in terms of needing alcohol in the morning to function. However, it is important to interpret this data with caution and consider other factors that may contribute to alcohol abuse and its effects on psychosocial well-being among this population, while the AUDIT question specifically addresses morning drinking, it's essential to consider other aspects of alcohol use and its impact on psychosocial well-being among BodaBoda riders. Factors such as overall alcohol consumption patterns, reasons for drinking, social and economic factors, and mental health issues should be explored to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between alcohol abuse and psychosocial well-being in this population.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

There may be collaborative efforts between government agencies, community organizations, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders to implement comprehensive alcohol abuse prevention and intervention strategies among those few riders who abuse alcohol.

There may be a continuously evaluation of the effectiveness of implemented interventions and adjust strategies as needed based on ongoing monitoring and feedback from the community to change the life of the BodaBoda holistically.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can work towards reducing alcohol abuse and promoting healthier behaviors among Bodaboda riders in Juba, South Sudan, ultimately contributing to improved individual and community well-being as a whole.

For Boda-boda association, every rider must wear a helmet and the passenger must have a helmet. There are Boda-bodas that used to carry luggage, and those individuals are advised to transport only luggage without any passengers to avoid accidents, they are not to drink or speed.

Families provide a safety net for their members (BodaBoda Riders), offering a protective layer against societal issues such as alcohol, drug abuse and personal difficulties. This support structure is a significant part of why societies (Riders) function effectively.

Agencies such as NACADA may give some guidelines recommend abstinence for high- risk groups such as people with alcohol dependence, youth and pregnant women within the bodaBoda sector to avoid accidents.

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