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Pattern of Alcohol Consumption and Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being of Seminarians in Selected Religious Formation Houses in Nairobi County, Kenya

¹Filiyanus Ekka, ²Dr. Maria Ntarangwe and ³Dr. Emmanuel Bazimaziki

¹Marist International University College, Masters Programme of Counselling Psychology and Spirituality, Kenya, 2- Lecturer Masai Mara University – Kenya, 3- Lecturer Tangaza University and Marist International College.

ABSTRACT:

Some seminarians in Nairobi County, Kenya's Formation Houses have a pattern of alcohol usage. The study looks at the connection between the psycho-spiritual welfare of seminarians in Nairobi County, Kenya, and their alcohol intake. This research effort has a single goal that guides it: Francis Galton's (1874) Nature and Nurture theory and Morten Jellinek's (1960) Disease theory of alcoholism serve as the foundation for the research's goals.

It focusses on the stress of rigorous training and how substance use affects spiritual growth. A correlational design was used to collect the study's data. 128 seminarians from five distinct religious formation homes belonging to various denominations are the target population. With a sample size of 97 seminarians determined by the Slovin Formula, the researcher employed the stratified random sampling technique. Standardised questionnaires (AUDIT and P-SWBS) have been used by the researcher to gather quantitative data, and an interview grid has been used to gather qualitative data. In order to find patterns, connections, and trends, the quantitative data—which was mostly gathered using structured questionnaires—is examined statistically.

Following the collection of structured questionnaires, the answers are input into IBM SPSS Statistics, a statistical software program. The results show that psycho-spiritual wellness tends to decline as alcohol intake rises. To put it another way, seminarians who drink more alcohol are probably less spiritually and psychologically healthy. Finding so encourages seminarians to use caution and to reconsider their alcohol consumption because seminarians who drink may develop interpersonal, psychological, spiritual, and physical illnesses.

Keywords: Alcohol Use, Future Clergy, Formation Houses, Seminarians, Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing, and Spiritual Life.

Introduction:

The entire seminarian training program should be focused on creating true shepherds of the souls, following the example set by our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Catholic Church's decree on priestly training, OPTATAM TOTIUS, which was issued by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 28, 1965. For the sake of serving God's people, it is very evident that all areas of preparation—human, physical, spiritual, intellectual, and disciplinary—must be adhered to rigorously and without exception in priestly training (Paul VI, 1965).

There is conflict between seminarians and traditional standards as a result of a psycho-spiritual outcry in Catholic seminaries. Pastoral care, self-awareness, and emotional stability are all impacted by the crisis. Alcohol affects different people differently (Egunjobi, 2023). Alcohol-related issues can make seminarians more anxious, depressed, and less confident, which makes it harder for them to relate to others honestly and to tenaciously follow their calling.

Seminarians who drink alcohol may experience other problems, such as sexual disputes and academic dishonesty. Concerns about these issues have been voiced by the faithful, emphasising the necessity for future clergy to address them. However, there aren't many research on how alcohol abuse affects moral values and spiritual pursuits, and it's unclear how alcohol laws will affect future clergy members' behaviour and performance in seminaries in the long run (Wechsler & Thum *et al.*, 1970).

Research Objectives: To establish the relation between Alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual wellbeing of seminarians in selected formation houses in Nairobi County Kenya.

Research Questions: What is the relationship between Alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual wellbeing of seminarians in selected formation houses in Nairobi County Kenya?

Literature Review:

Alcohol Consumption and Psychospiritual Well-being: This study investigates the relationship between seminarians' mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being and their alcohol use. It seeks to comprehend the ways in which alcohol impacts these elements, which are essential to the overall growth of religious leaders. For effective leadership and spiritual vitality, the authors stress the significance of interventions that support resilience, wellbeing, and sober living (Muthuku, Oginde, and Chiroma 2023).

Alcohol is frequently used in African societies as both a social lubricant and a possible cause of social disorder. This cultural normalisation highlights the need for more research because it can result in problems including emotional instability, domestic violence, and marital breakdowns.

Churakova et al. (2017), in a study conducted in Ukraine, found According to the nature and Nurture theory, drinking alcohol is associated with dysfunctional coping mechanisms and a reduced level of spirituality, especially in younger people. This finding is pertinent to seminarians, who, in spite of organised faith formation, may turn to alcohol as a coping strategy as a result of stress, loneliness, or peer pressure.

The same was true in Hong Kong, where Leung (2021) showed that there was a strong negative correlation between psychological discomfort and spiritual well-being among university students, including seminarians. People who scored higher on spiritual dimensions also reported feeling less stressed, anxious, and depressed. The importance of both individual and group spiritual aspects as protective factors against mental health issues was emphasised by the study. The results reinforce the idea that building psycho-spiritual resilience in religious formation can serve as a safeguard against emotional illnesses and substance abuse, according to the disease hypothesis of alcoholism.

According to a study conducted in Singapore, people with alcohol use disorder (AUD) have worse life satisfaction and personal well-being scores, underscoring seminary students' susceptibility to both personal hardships and outside stressors. A maladaptive use of alcohol as a coping mechanism for personal difficulties may result from this sensitivity (Lim et al. 2021)

Higher spiritual intelligence, which is the capacity to apply spiritual principles and practices to daily life, was found to be negatively connected with psychological discomfort by Chukwurah (2023), who studied seminarians in Nigeria. This implies that developing a spiritual consciousness can improve resilience and regulate emotions. The ability to navigate the challenges of formation, including as celibacy, obedience, scholastic pressure, and communal living, is crucial for seminarians.

Seminarians are educated to be spiritual leaders and act as moral role models. But according to a study by Agnes et al. (2023), drinking seriously reduces a teacher's efficacy as a teacher and undermines their credibility and spiritual authority. Regular alcohol consumption jeopardises their future effectiveness in ministry and spiritual integrity.

Potelwa et al. (2021 research in South Africa demonstrates how spirituality and health are interwoven in African cultures. For healing, people in Soweto frequently resort to religious practices like prayer and communal worship. This emphasises how crucial it is for seminaries to incorporate Christian principles and indigenous spiritual traditions in order to foster holistic well-being, particularly in African communities where access to official psychological assistance may be limited.

In conclusion Psycho-spiritual well-being is negatively correlated with alcohol usage, as demonstrated in Hong Kong, Ukraine, Kenya South Africa and Nigeria. Increased psychological anguish, weakened spiritual resilience, and weakened personal wellbeing are all associated with higher alcohol consumption. With a focus on Catholic seminarians, this study emphasises the value of specialised therapies to improve moral integrity and psycho-spiritual development.

Methodology:

Using a correlational research methodology, the study combined qualitative and quantitative methods. A research was carried out at a few chosen religious formation homes in Nairobi County, Kenya, to examine the patterns of alcohol intake and the psycho-spiritual health of seminarians. With its many universities, seminaries, and religious formation houses connected to several religious orders, Nairobi, Kenya's capital, is a major centre for education and religion.

Table 1. Sample Size

Respondents	Population Size	Questionnaire Administered	Questionnaire Returned	Questionnaire Return Rate-	Instrument- Interview
Formation house 1	15 formees	12	10	10.30 (10)	1
Formation house 2	40 formees	30	28	28.86 (29)	2
Formation house 3	20 formees	18	18	18.55 (19)	2
Formation house 4	18 formees	15	13	13.40(13)	1
Formation house 5	35 formees	25	22	22.68 (23)	2
Total	128	97	91	94%	8

The study looked at the psycho-spiritual consequences and patterns of alcohol intake among a particular sample of seminarians, who were drawn from five different houses of religious formation. With 97 seminarians—a representative sample representing a wide range of experiences and viewpoints—the mixed approach sought to reach data saturation, including around 76% of the entire population.

Data Collection and Data Analysis:

The quantitative data was collected using two structured questionnaires, the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) and a particular version of the Psych-Spiritual Well-Being Scale (P-SWBS), while the qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data, acquired through semi-structured interviews, was examined using theme analysis to reveal deeper insights into the seminarians' experiences and perspectives on the pattern of alcohol intake and seminarian's psycho-spiritual welfare.

The methodology used for the quantitative and qualitative instruments is explained in full in Table 1.

The relation between alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual well-being of seminarians in selected formation houses

An examination of seminarians' alcohol use and psycho-spiritual health offers important new perspectives on their way of life and general mental and spiritual well-being. With a mean score of 2.5 (SD = 1.2) for alcohol intake, seminarians generally have low to moderate alcohol use. It's hardly surprising that alcohol intake is still mostly under control given their area of work, which emphasises spiritual discipline and self-control.

With a mean score of 6.8 (SD = 1.5), seminarians often report excellent levels of psycho-spiritual wellness. The standard deviation of 1.2, however, indicates that drinking patterns vary, with some people abstaining or drinking very little. Some seminarians may drink a little more than others, which could be a sign of changes in their well-being brought on by personal difficulties or outside stressors.

Descriptive Statistics of Alcohol Consumption and Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Alcohol Consumption and Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Alcohol Consumption Score	2.5	1.2
Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing Score	6.8	1.5

Seminarians typically retain high levels of psycho-spiritual wellness despite engaging in moderate alcohol intake. This promotes self-control and moderation, which is consistent with religious teachings. Nonetheless, some people drink more often or in greater amounts than others, possibly as a result of environmental, social, or personal reasons. Strong mental and emotional resilience is reflected in the high psycho-spiritual wellbeing score, underscoring the need for more research on individual variations. Seminarians' psychological health and wellness can be severely impacted by external stresses, such as academic pressure, underscoring the necessity of pastoral care programs that are successful.

Correlation analysis between alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual well-being

To study the connection between alcohol use and psycho-spiritual wellness, a Pearson correlation analysis was performed. The findings show that there is a moderate to significant negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -0.62$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that psycho-spiritual wellness tends to decline with increased alcohol usage. Stated differently, seminarians who drink more alcohol are probably less feeling spiritually and psychologically healthy.

The relation is unlikely to have happened by accident because the negative correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This result is consistent with research that indicates excessive alcohol use can harm one's capacity to think clearly, maintain emotional stability, and have a clear spiritual path. The correlation's strength, however imperfect, indicates that alcohol use has a significant impact on psycho-spiritual wellness, albeit other aspects could possibly be involved (Johnson & Sheets et al., 2008).

Table 1: Correlation analysis between alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual wellbeing

Variables	Alcohol Consumption	Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing
Alcohol Consumption	1	-0.62**
Psycho-Spiritual Wellbeing	-0.62**	1

Significance Level: ** $p < 0.01$ \ast \ast $p < 0.01$ ** $p < 0.01$

The potential harm that alcohol intake may do to one's spiritual and psychological well-being is highlighted by the found negative association between alcohol use and psycho-spiritual wellness. According to a moderate to high connection ($r = -0.62$), drinking alcohol is significantly associated with lower wellbeing rather than having a negligible impact. The negative impacts of excessive alcohol use on mental clarity, self-control, and spiritual fulfilment are in line with religious and psychological viewpoints.

Higher alcohol use seems to have noticeable effects on wellbeing, even while moderate alcohol use may not have a substantial negative impact. This could result from the way alcohol impacts moral judgement, emotional control, and cognitive awareness—all essential components of spiritual life. Further diminishing their psycho-spiritual well-being, seminarians may feel guilty or internally conflicted when their alcohol use goes against their religious beliefs. These results suggest that pastoral care initiatives ought to incorporate education campaigns on appropriate alcohol consumption, which would support both bodily and spiritual well-being.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Relation between Alcohol consumption and psycho-spiritual wellbeing of seminarians in selected formation houses

The lifestyle, mental health, and spiritual well-being of seminarians were revealed through an analysis of their alcohol use and psycho-spiritual health. The mean score was 2.5, which indicates low to moderate alcohol usage. However, there were variations in drinking habits, with some individuals not drinking at all others drinking very little. A mean score of 6.8 for psycho-spiritual wellness suggested a high level of wellbeing. While many reported good psycho-spiritual wellbeing, other seminarians experienced changes due to personal struggles, outside influences, or varying degrees of commitment to their spiritual activities.

A Pearson correlation analysis was used to investigate the connection between alcohol use and spiritual and psychological well-being. Between the two variables, the findings showed a moderate to strong negative association ($r = -0.62$, $p < 0.01$). This implied that psychological and spiritual well-being tended to decline as alcohol use rose. The potential harm that alcohol drinking may do to one's spiritual and psychological well-being was highlighted by the found negative association between alcohol intake and psycho-spiritual wellness. According to a moderate to high connection ($r = -0.62$), drinking alcohol was significantly associated with lower wellbeing rather than having a subtle impact.

This was consistent with theological and psychological viewpoints that highlight the negative impacts of excessive alcohol use on self-control, spiritual fulfilment, and mental clarity. Higher levels of alcohol use seemed to have substantial effects on wellbeing, even while moderate consumption could not have had a major negative impact. This could have resulted from the way alcohol impacted moral judgement, emotional control, and cognitive awareness—all essential components of spiritual life.

Conclusion

The study found that a sizable portion of seminarians used alcohol in formation homes, indicating dangerous drinking practices. The study underlined the need for structured interventions to promote alcohol consumption in moderation and prevent dependency. It has been demonstrated that alcohol use and psycho-spiritual health are moderately to strongly correlated, with higher alcohol consumption significantly associated with lower levels of psychological and spiritual wellbeing.

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