



RESEARCH SUMMARY
Date Compiled: June 2024

Key takeaways from included research:

- As a result of declining alcohol use among US adolescents/early young adults and increases among other adults, a new study examined reasons for drinking based on age and sex. Researchers found notable increases in social among women aged 29/30 of 53% to 87% between 1987 to 2020. They concluded that binge drinking would not have increased had it not been for these social reasons.
- A new study examined how beverage-specific drinking patterns varied by gender, age, and race and ethnicity from 1979 to 2020. Researchers found that women’s drinking volume increased most among those aged 30 and older from 2000 to 2020. Men’s alcohol volume also increased, however it remained below 1979 and 1984 levels. Alcohol consumption also increased among older adults. Increased consumption rates were also found among Black men and women and Latina women from 2000 to 2020. Researchers emphasized a need for alcohol policy, interventions, and education to consider specific groups and how to address alcohol use among them.
- Researchers wanted to explore the patterns of how bartender influencers on TikTok feature and incorporate alcohol in their videos. Among 15 of the most followed bartenders on TikTok, they identified 345 videos which received an average 18 million views per video and found the most common alcohols in the videos were liquor, vodka, rum, and whiskey which displayed or mentioned a brand. These videos greatly increase exposure to digital marketing of alcohol and are related to increases in alcohol consumption, especially among young people. Stronger regulations are needed to reduce marketing exposure and the associated the harms.
- This study sought to describe the prevalence of trends in virtue marketing on new alcohol packaging. Virtue marketing was defined as health-, eco-, and cause-oriented claims. They found that virtue marketing was on 36.5% of new alcohol products with health-oriented claims being the most common at 32.5%. Researchers concluded that virtue marketing continues to increase in Australia, and this may exploit consumers’ motivation for purchasing products based on healthy, sustainable, and socially responsible claims.

REASONS FOR ALCOHOL USE FROM 1976 TO 2020 IN THE UNITED STATES AMONG INDIVIDUALS AGED 18 TO 30: HISTORICAL CHANGES AND MEDIATION OF COHORT EFFECTS IN BINGE DRINKING

May 2024

Background: Alcohol use is declining among US adolescents/early young adults and increasing among other adults, with increases in adult binge drinking more concentrated in females than males. Reasons for drinking are historically patterned by age and sex, and if historically variant, could suggest that changes over time could in part explain age- and sex-differential cohort effects.

Methods: We analyzed longitudinal Monitoring the Future data for individuals born from 1958 to 1990. These individuals were aged 29/30 from 1987 to 2020, and first surveyed at age 18 from 1976 to 2008 (N = 14,190). Five reasons for drinking were analyzed (social, enhancement, avoid problems, relax, boredom). Drinking for social reasons and to relax were most prevalent. Total effects of birth cohort predicting past-2-week binge drinking were estimated with polynomial regression models by age; indirect effects through mediators were estimated.

Results: Drinking reasons exhibited dynamic time trends across birth cohort and sex. Notable increases were observed in social reasons: among women aged 29/30, social reasons increased from 53% to 87% from 1987 to 2020. Social reasons to drink had prominent positive indirect effects at adult ages (age 23/24 and above among men; age 19 and above among women), indicating that binge drinking would have increased less were it not for the increase in social reasons for drinking. Social reasons also mediated adult male/female differences, indicating that part of the reason sex differences are diminishing is the more rapid increases in social reasons for drinking among women. Indirect effects were also observed for drinking to relax and for boredom, and limited indirect effects were observed for enhancement and to avoid problems.

Conclusion: Changing endorsement of drinking reasons, especially social reasons, among US adult drinkers mediate cohort effects in binge drinking in the US adult population and explain in part why binge drinking is converging by sex.

Source: Keyes, K. M., Rutherford, C., Patrick, M. E., Platt, J. M., Kloska, D. D., & Jager, J. (2024). Reasons for alcohol use from 1976 to 2020 in the United States among individuals aged 18 to 30: Historical changes and mediation of cohort effects in binge drinking. *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.15323>

In the News: Miller, Korin. (2024, May 30). Younger people are drinking less alcohol. Here's why — and what the rest of us can learn from them. *Yahoo Life*. <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/younger-people-are-drinking-less-alcohol-heres-why--and-what-the-rest-of-us-can-learn-from-them-175449908.html>

LONG-TERM TRENDS IN BEVERAGE-SPECIFIC DRINKING IN THE NATIONAL ALCOHOL SURVEYS: DIFFERENCES BY SEX, AGE, AND RACE AND ETHNICITY

April 2024

Background: Despite substantial declines in underage drinking and binge drinking, alcohol consumption has increased in the past 30 years. This study examined how beverage-specific drinking patterns varied by sex, age, and race and ethnicity from 1979 to 2020.

Methods: Secondary data analysis was conducted on pooled data from the National Alcohol Survey series from 1979 to 2020 of a sample of U.S. adults ages 18 years or older. Total and beverage-specific volume were calculated from graduated frequency questions on reported beverage type, which included beer, wine, and spirits. Sex-stratified analyses focused on descriptive trends of each

alcohol measure over time and by age and race and ethnicity. Time-varying effect models were also conducted to identify subgroups at higher risk for increased consumption over time.

Results: Women's drinking increased, with alcohol volume rising substantially from 2000 to 2020; the largest increase was among women 30 and older. Men's alcohol volume also rose over this period but remained below the levels of 1979 and 1984, with older adults increasing their consumption those 18–29 decreased their drinking. Beverage-specific trends showed some similarities by gender: in 2020, wine volume was at its highest level for both women and men, while spirits volume also was at its highest level for men and in women was tied with the 1979 peak in spirits consumption. Increases were also found among Black men and women and Latina women from 2000 to 2020.

Conclusions: Given the increases in alcohol volume, particularly among women and older age groups, alcohol policy, interventions, and education should consider ways to reduce harms associated with alcohol use among these groups. Continued monitoring of beverage-specific drinking patterns is needed to track policy-relevant changes.

Source: Kerr, W. C., Lui, C. K., Ye, Y., Li, L., Greenfield, T., Karriker-Jaffe, K. J., & Martinez, P. (2024). Long-term trends in beverage-specific drinking in the National Alcohol Surveys: Differences by sex, age, and race and ethnicity. *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.15335>

#BARTENDER: PORTRAYALS OF POPULAR ALCOHOL INFLUENCER'S VIDEOS ON TIKTOK© **May 2024**

Background: Despite widespread use of the short-video social media platform TikTok©, limited research investigates how alcohol is portrayed on the platform. Previous research suggests that a driver of alcohol content on TikTok©, in part, comes from bartenders demonstrating how to make drinks. This study aims to explore the characterizing patterns of how bartender influencers on TikTok© feature and incorporate alcohol in their videos.

Methods: We identified the global top 15 most followed bartenders on TikTok© in 2021 (cumulative 29.7 million subscribers) and the videos they posted in November and December 2021, the period just before Christmas and New Year, when alcohol tends to be more marketed than in other periods. The videos were coded based on five criteria: (1) the presence of alcohol or not; (2) alcohol categories; (3); alcohol brand(s) if visible; (4) the presence of candies and other sweet products; (5) presence of cues that refer to young people's interests.

Results: In total, we identified 345 videos, which received 270,325,600 views in total, with an average of 18,021,707 views per video. Among these 345 videos, 92% (n = 317) displayed alcohol in their cocktail recipes (249,275,600 views, with an average of 786,358 views). The most common types of alcohol present in videos were liquor, vodka, rum, and whiskey, all of which are high-ABV beverages. 73% (n = 230) displayed or mentioned an alcohol brand. 17% (n = 55) associated alcohol with sweet products such as different types of candy (53,957,900 views, with an average of 981,053 views per video). 13% (n = 43) contained cues appealing to young people (e.g., cartoons, characters) (15,763,300 views, with an average of 366,588 views per video).

Conclusions: Our findings suggest a large presence of positively framed alcohol content posted by popular bartenders on TikTok©. As exposure to digital marketing is related to an increase in alcohol consumption, particularly among young people, regulations are needed to protect the public from alcohol-related harms.

Source: Guégan, E., Zenone, M., Mialon, M., & Gallopel-Morvan, K. (2023). Bartender: portrayals of popular alcohol influencer's videos on TikTok©. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-18571-1>

VIRTUE MARKETING: TRENDS IN HEALTH-, ECO-, AND CAUSE-ORIENTED CLAIMS ON THE PACKAGING OF NEW ALCOHOL PRODUCTS IN AUSTRALIA BETWEEN 2013 AND 2023

May 2024

Objective: Some claims on alcohol labels highlight virtuous aspects of brands or products, including in health-, eco-, and cause-oriented domains (including charity partnerships, or ethical or humanitarian certifications). This virtue marketing may create a 'halo' whereby consumers generalise from specific attributes to a more favourable overall appraisal of the product, brand, or even alcohol or the alcohol industry in general. This study aims to describe the prevalence of and trends over time in virtue marketing on the packaging of new alcohol (including lower and zero alcohol) products on the Australian market.

Method: Records of N=4,024 new alcohol products released in Australia between 2013 and 2023 were extracted from Mintel Global New Products Database. Health-, eco-, and cause-oriented claims on packaging were summarised across product types and time, and co-occurrence between claims was assessed.

Results: Virtue marketing appeared on 36.5% of new alcohol products, of which health-oriented claims were most common (32.5%), followed by eco- (6.3%) and cause-oriented claims (2.0%). The prevalence of each claim category and virtue marketing overall significantly increased over time (each $p < .001$) and varied by product type. New alcohol products displayed as many as eight different types of claims and all claims tended to co-occur with at least two others.

Conclusions: Virtue marketing is prevalent on new alcohol products in Australia and has recently increased. While product packaging can provide useful consumer information, health-, eco-, and cause-oriented claims may exploit consumers' motivation to make healthy, sustainable, and socially responsible choices despite alcohol being detrimental in these areas.

Source: Haynes, A., Dixon, H., & Wakefield, M. (2024). Virtue marketing: Trends in health-, eco-, and cause-oriented claims on the packaging of new alcohol products in Australia between 2013 and 2023. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, jsad-23. <https://doi.org/10.15288/jsad.23-00376>