

A Survey of Alcohol Consumption in African Countries, 2019

Amadu Jacky Kaba^{1,2} 

¹Department of Sociology, Anthropology, & Criminal Justice, Seton Hall University, South Orange, USA

²Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of the Gambia, Faraba Banta, The Gambia

Email: amadu.kaba@shu.edu

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Abstract

This study examines pure alcohol consumption in African countries. The study finds that overall, while there is a prevalence of alcohol consumption in African countries, the rates are not as high when compared to countries in Europe and North America. The highest rates of alcohol consumption per capita in Africa are found in countries in Southern, Eastern, and Middle Africa. The rates are very low in Northern and Western Africa. Nine of the top ten countries in Africa with the highest alcohol consumption rates are in these three regions: Seychelles, #1, Tanzania, #2, Eswatini, #3, Burkina Faso, #4 (Western Africa), South Africa, #5, Uganda, #6, Gabon, #7, Rwanda, #8, Equatorial Guinea, #9, and Angola, #10. Some of the reasons presented for the prevalence of alcohol consumption in African countries are as follows: increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP, purchasing power parity) of Africa (increasing from \$2.366 trillion in 2005 to \$8.624 trillion in 2023), and increase in the wealth of people in the continent; religion; secularism; age; and international tourism.

Keywords

Alcohol Consumption, African Countries, Age, Religion, Region, Gross Domestic Product: Wealth, Advertising: Tourism

1. Introduction

A careful examination of several hundred scholarly journal articles on the prevalence of alcohol consumption in African countries finds that they tend to be focused mostly in the following interrelated areas: alcohol and HIV/AIDS; alcohol and sexual behavior; alcohol consumption and young people; alcohol and religion; alcohol and women, health risks, including pregnant women; alcohol and intimate partner violence; prevalence of alcohol consumption in

Southern Africa and East-ern Africa; alcohol and domestic violence; alcohol and harmful health effects; and alcohol control health strategies (Aboagye et al., 2021, 2022; Adeoye, 2022; Addila et al., 2021; Alves et al., 2022; Aneja et al., 2023; Belete et al., 2024; Bitew et al., 2020; Bizuneh et al., 2024; Bonnechère et al., 2022; Carrasco et al., 2016; Coldiron et al., 2008; Daba et al., 2025; Eggert & Rumsby, 2024; Ferreira-Borges et al., 2016; Fer-reira-Borges et al., 2017; Gellé et al., 2024; Georgescu et al., 2024; Goma et al., 2024; Haworth, 1993; Isaksen et al., 2015; Jalloh et al., 2024; Jilajila et al., 2023; Kalungi et al., 2024; Kaltsas et al., 2024; Lekettey et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2024; Madureira-Lima & Galea, 2018; Martinez et al., 2011; Matjila et al., 2021; Melkam et al., 2024; Nkosi et al., 2014; Nouaman et al., 2018; Ntho et al., 2024; Osborne et al., 2024; Peer, 2017; Probst et al., 2018; Shubina et al., 2023; Swahn et al., 2022; Thakarakar et al., 2016; Tumwesigye et al., 2012; Qian et al., 2014; Wogayehu et al., 2024; Wynn et al., 2024).

The data in this study show that there are visible differences among African countries on their rates of alcohol consumption. These differences are due to various interrelated factors, including age (very young countries on the continent), religiosity, tourism, western educational attainment, and secularism.

This paper examines the prevalence of alcohol consumption in African countries. The paper begins by presenting the methodology section. Next the paper presents data and characteristics of alcohol consumption in African nations. Next the paper presents the reasons for alcohol consumption in African countries. Finally, the paper presents a summary and conclusion section.

2. Methodology and Data Limitations of the Study

The data for this study in **Tables 1-6** are compiled from the website of the World Factbook from January 5, 2025, to January 17, 2025. On January 28, 2025, I checked to verify all the numbers in the tables one last time (<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>). I decided to utilize alcohol consumption data from the World Factbook because careful research revealed that it was the entity that presented figures for almost all African countries and countries around the world, for a single year. It also provides a breakdown of the types of alcohols. The variables in the tables are as follows: total population for 2024, including females and males; 2019 per capita number of liters of alcohol consumed in a country, broken down into beer, wine, spirits, and “other alcohols” which “includes one or several other alcoholic beverages, such as fermented beverages made from sorghum, maize, millet, rice, or cider, fruit wine, and fortified wine”, and comparison rank in the world (<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/field/alcohol-consumption-per-capita/>). The comparison rankings are from highest to lowest, meaning that the country with the highest alcohol consumption per capita is ranked number one.

I also provided the rankings for all African countries presented in the study. The 2023 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures in **Tables 7-12** are compiled and computed from the World Factbook from May 16 to May 18, 2025

(<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>). The 2023 population figures are compiled from Kaba (2024a: pp. 89-93). Alcohol consumption figures are not available for the following African nations: Mayotte (population figures as of 2010), Reunion (population figures as of 2006), Saint Helena, South Sudan, and Western Sahara (population figures from Kaba, 2020: p. 251). Over the past decade, the World Factbook no longer provides data for Mayotte and Reunion because their data are now included in the data for France as parts of its overseas regions. It is reported that: “In the early 21st century, five French overseas entities—French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, and Reunion—became French regions and were made part of France proper.”

(<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/france/#people-and-society>). South Sudan became an independent nation in 2011. As a result, institutions that compile data for various countries around the world are gradually increasing their data compilation for South Sudan. “Saint Helena is a British Overseas Territory off the coast of Africa” and has a population of 7943 in 2024. This could explain the reason why it does not have alcohol consumption data

(<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/saint-helena-ascension-and-tristan-da-cunha/#people-and-society>). The 2024 population figures are presented to provide an understanding of the most recent population of African countries to have a better context of the continent’s population. The 2023 population figures are presented along with the 2023 GDP figures to compute for the per capita GDP of Africa and its five regions.

The World Factbook provides very useful data categorized as average household expenditures on alcohol and tobacco that help to explain the findings of this study. However, figures for this particular variable are available as of 2022 only for the following 14 (26.4% out of 53 nations with available alcohol consumption figures) nations: South Africa, 5%, Egypt, 4.6%, Kenya, 3.7%, Tunisia, 3.3%, Cote D’Ivoire, 3.2%, Ethiopia, 3.1%, Cameroon, 2%, Tanzania, 1.6%, Angola, 1.5%, Morocco, 1.4%, Algeria, 1%, Nigeria, 1%, Uganda, 0.9%, and Ghana, 0.6%

(<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>). Another important limitation of the data is that they are not available based on sex (females and males). As noted in the introduction, there is significant research on women and alcohol consumption in African countries. Another limitation of the study is that there are no figures for those who drink alcohol versus those who do not; and no figures for age differences for those who consume alcohol.

Table 1. Population of African nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

Country	2024			2019				Other	World Comparison	Rank in
	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Burundi	13,590,102	6,755,456	6,834,646	4.07	1.84	0.00	0.00	2.23	95	17
Comoros	900,141	435,758	464,383	0.18	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.00	173	48

Continued

Djibouti	994,974	450,796	544,178	0.21	0.05	0.02	0.14	0.00	172	47
Eritrea	6,343,956	3,122,433	3,221,523	0.93	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.51	153	38
Ethiopia	118,550,298	59,062,093	59,488,205	1.16	0.92	0.00	0.20	0.03	149	36
Kenya	58,246,378	29,091,800	29,154,578	1.68	0.81	0.04	0.81	0.03	134	30
Madagascar	29,452,714	14,760,501	14,692,213	0.89	0.50	0.07	0.32	0.00	155	39
Malawi	21,763,309	10,674,594	11,088,715	2.04	0.08	0.00	0.25	1.70	129	27
Mauritius	1,310,504	639,270	671,234	3.39	1.94	0.23	0.88	0.03	106	20
Mayotte (2010)*	231,139	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mozambique	33,350,954	16,449,734	16,901,220	1.46	1.03	0.22	0.21	0.00	140	33
Reunion (2006)*	787,584	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rwanda	13,623,302	6,684,655	6,938,647	6.35	0.23	0.03	0.09	6.00	65	8
Seychelles	98,187	50,973	47,214	9.48	4.11	0.49	4.62	0.25	28	1
Somalia	13,017,273	6,546,312	6,470,961	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	..	..
South Sudan*	12,703,714	6,476,341	6,227,373	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tanzania	67,462,121	33,691,904	33,770,217	7.81	0.74	0.09	0.38	6.60	46	2
Uganda	49,283,041	24,040,560	25,242,481	6.82	0.85	0.01	0.50	5.46	61	6
Zambia	20,799,116	10,407,253	10,391,863	3.82	1.26	0.04	0.36	2.16	98	18
Zimbabwe	17,150,352	8,343,790	8,806,562	3.11	1.20	0.05	0.39	1.47	110	24
Angola	37,202,061	18,196,058	19,006,003	5.84	3.78	0.72	1.27	0.08	73	10
Cameroon	30,966,105	15,429,588	15,536,517	4.09	2.36	0.16	0.01	1.56	94	16
Central African Rep	5,650,957	2,814,497	2,836,460	0.94	0.55	0.04	0.02	0.33	152	37
Chad	19,093,595	9,464,699	9,628,896	0.55	0.37	0.01	0.01	0.16	162	43
Congo (D.R.)	115,403,027	57,688,160	57,714,867	0.56	0.50	0.01	0.05	0.00	161	42
Congo, Rep.	6,097,665	3,045,973	3,051,692	5.74	5.11	0.10	0.52	0.01	75	12
Equatorial Guinea	1,795,834	962,385	833,449	6.11	3.83	1.24	0.99	0.05	69	9
Gabon	2,455,105	1,270,023	1,185,082	6.47	5.31	0.62	0.50	0.04	64	7
Sao Tome & Principe	223,561	111,553	112,008	4.23	0.42	3.58	0.23	0.00	92	15
Algeria	47,022,473	23,854,821	23,167,652	0.59	0.31	0.20	0.08	0.00	160	41
Egypt	111,247,248	57,142,484	54,104,764	0.14	0.09	0.01	0.04	0.00	175	49
Libya	7,361,263	3,747,364	3,613,899	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	184	51
Morocco	37,387,585	18,664,263	18,723,322	0.51	0.18	0.24	0.09	0.00	163	44
Sudan	50,467,278	25,335,092	25,132,186	1.93	0.00	0.00	0.29	1.63	131	28
Tunisia	12,048,847	5,972,242	6,076,605	1.51	0.99	0.32	0.17	0.03	139	32
Western Sahara*	652,271	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Botswana	2,450,668	1,174,306	1,276,362	5.98	2.93	0.46	0.96	1.64	71	11
Eswatini	1,138,089	538,600	599,489	7.68	2.45	0.06	0.00	5.17	50	3
Lesotho	2,227,548	1,101,959	1,125,589	3.56	1.98	0.44	0.31	0.82	103	19

Continued

Namibia	2,803,660	1,377,286	1,426,374	2.38	1.37	0.16	0.53	0.32	126	26
South Africa	60,442,647	29,664,388	30,778,259	7.21	3.99	1.21	1.31	0.70	58	5
Benin	14,697,052	7,253,258	7,443,794	1.25	0.81	0.02	0.20	0.22	145	35
Burkina Faso	23,042,199	11,297,749	11,744,450	7.28	1.00	0.08	0.31	5.88	57	4
Cabo Verde	611,014	297,106	313,908	4.70	2.28	1.82	0.60	0.00	86	13
Cote d'Ivoire	29,981,758	15,040,032	14,941,726	1.70	1.13	0.33	0.20	0.04	133	29
The Gambia	2,523,327	1,250,490	1,272,837	2.67	0.21	0.00	0.02	2.44	121	25
Ghana	34,589,092	16,902,073	17,687,019	1.59	0.53	0.05	0.39	0.61	137	31
Guinea	13,986,179	6,985,606	7,000,573	0.33	0.29	0.01	0.03	0.00	168	45
Guinea-Bissau	2,132,325	1,042,910	1,089,415	3.21	0.41	0.98	0.54	1.28	108	22
Liberia	5,437,249	2,711,324	2,725,925	3.12	0.38	0.44	2.28	0.02	109	23
Mali	21,990,607	10,688,755	11,301,852	0.60	0.09	0.00	0.02	0.49	159	40
Mauritania	4,328,040	2,083,690	2,244,350	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	186	52
Niger	26,342,784	13,056,203	13,286,581	0.11	0.04	0.01	0.06	0.00	177	50
Nigeria	236,747,130	119,514,449	117,232,681	4.49	0.73	0.09	0.40	3.27	88	14
Senegal	18,847,519	9,283,314	9,564,205	0.25	0.21	0.02	0.02	0.00	170	46
Sierra Leone	9,121,049	4,515,726	4,605,323	3.22	0.17	0.01	0.15	2.90	107	21
Togo	8,917,994	4,395,271	4,522,723	1.40	0.78	0.09	0.20	0.33	141	34
Saint Helena	7943	3978	3965	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	1,487,099,907	741,561,898	743,867,015							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 2. Population of Eastern African nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in Eastern African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

	2024			2019				Other	Comparison	Rank in
Country	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Burundi	13,590,102	6,755,456	6,834,646	4.07	1.84	0.00	0.00	2.23	95	17
Comoros	900,141	435,758	464,383	0.18	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.00	173	48
Djibouti	994,974	450,796	544,178	0.21	0.05	0.02	0.14	0.00	172	47
Eritrea	6,343,956	3,122,433	3,221,523	0.93	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.51	153	38
Ethiopia	118,550,298	59,062,093	59,488,205	1.16	0.92	0.00	0.20	0.03	149	36
Kenya	58,246,378	29,091,800	29,154,578	1.68	0.81	0.04	0.81	0.03	134	30
Madagascar	29,452,714	14,760,501	14,692,213	0.89	0.50	0.07	0.32	0.00	155	39
Malawi	21,763,309	10,674,594	11,088,715	2.04	0.08	0.00	0.25	1.70	129	27
Mauritius	1,310,504	639,270	671,234	3.39	1.94	0.23	0.88	0.03	106	20
Mayotte (2010)*	231,139	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mozambique	33,350,954	16,449,734	16,901,220	1.46	1.03	0.22	0.21	0.00	140	33
Reunion (2006)*	787,584	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Continued

Rwanda	13,623,302	6,684,655	6,938,647	6.35	0.23	0.03	0.09	6.00	65	8
Seychelles	98,187	50,973	47,214	9.48	4.11	0.49	4.62	0.25	28	1
Somalia	13,017,273	6,546,312	6,470,961	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	..	
South Sudan*	12,703,714	6,476,341	6,227,373	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Tanzania	67,462,121	33,691,904	33,770,217	7.81	0.74	0.09	0.38	6.60	46	2
Uganda	49,283,041	24,040,560	25,242,481	6.82	0.85	0.01	0.50	5.46	61	6
Zambia	20,799,116	10,407,253	10,391,863	3.82	1.26	0.04	0.36	2.16	98	18
Zimbabwe	17,150,352	8,343,790	8,806,562	3.11	1.20	0.05	0.39	1.47	110	24
Total	479,659,159	237,684,223	240,956,213							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 3. Population of Middle African nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in Middle African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

Country	2024			2019				Other	Comparison	Rank in
	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Angola	37,202,061	18,196,058	19,006,003	5.84	3.78	0.72	1.27	0.08	73	10
Cameroon	30,966,105	15,429,588	15,536,517	4.09	2.36	0.16	0.01	1.56	94	16
Central African Rep	5,650,957	2,814,497	2,836,460	0.94	0.55	0.04	0.02	0.33	152	37
Chad	19,093,595	9,464,699	9,628,896	0.55	0.37	0.01	0.01	0.16	162	43
Congo (D.R.)	115,403,027	57,688,160	57,714,867	0.56	0.50	0.01	0.05	0.00	161	42
Congo, Rep.	6,097,665	3,045,973	3,051,692	5.74	5.11	0.10	0.52	0.01	75	12
Equatorial Guinea	1,795,834	962,385	833,449	6.11	3.83	1.24	0.99	0.05	69	9
Gabon	2,455,105	1,270,023	1,185,082	6.47	5.31	0.62	0.50	0.04	64	7
Sao Tome & Principe	223,561	111,553	112,008	4.23	0.42	3.58	0.23	0.00	92	15
Total	218,887,910	108,982,936	109,904,974							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 4. Population of Northern African nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in Northern African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

Country	2024			2019				Other	Comparison	Rank in
	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Algeria	47,022,473	23,854,821	23,167,652	0.59	0.31	0.20	0.08	0.00	160	41
Egypt	111,247,248	57,142,484	54,104,764	0.14	0.09	0.01	0.04	0.00	175	49
Libya	7,361,263	3,747,364	3,613,899	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	184	51
Morocco	37,387,585	18,664,263	18,723,322	0.51	0.18	0.24	0.09	0.00	163	44
Sudan	50,467,278	25,335,092	25,132,186	1.93	0.00	0.00	0.29	1.63	131	28
Tunisia	12,048,847	5,972,242	6,076,605	1.51	0.99	0.32	0.17	0.03	139	32
Western Sahara*	652,271	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Total	266,186,965	134,716,266	130,818,428							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 5. Population of Southern African Nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in Southern African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

	2024			2019				Other	Comparison	Rank in
Country	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Botswana	2,450,668	1,174,306	1,276,362	5.98	2.93	0.46	0.96	1.64	71	11
Eswatini	1,138,089	538,600	599,489	7.68	2.45	0.06	0.00	5.17	50	3
Lesotho	2,227,548	1,101,959	1,125,589	3.56	1.98	0.44	0.31	0.82	103	19
Namibia	2,803,660	1,377,286	1,426,374	2.38	1.37	0.16	0.53	0.32	126	26
South Africa	60,442,647	29,664,388	30,778,259	7.21	3.99	1.21	1.31	0.70	58	5
Total	69,062,612	33,856,539	35,206,073							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 6. Population of Western African nations by sex for 2024, total pure alcohol consumption in Western African nations per capita (people aged 15 and over), beer, wine, spirits, other alcohols, world and Africa comparison rankings, 2019.

	2024			2019				Other	Comparison	Rank in
Country	Population	Male	Female	Total	Beer	Wine	Spirits	Alcohols	Ranking #	Africa
Benin	14,697,052	7,253,258	7,443,794	1.25	0.81	0.02	0.20	0.22	145	35
Burkina Faso	23,042,199	11,297,749	11,744,450	7.28	1.00	0.08	0.31	5.88	57	4
Cabo Verde	611,014	297,106	313,908	4.70	2.28	1.82	0.60	0.00	86	13
Cote d'Ivoire	29,981,758	15,040,032	14,941,726	1.70	1.13	0.33	0.20	0.04	133	29
The Gambia	2,523,327	1,250,490	1,272,837	2.67	0.21	0.00	0.02	2.44	121	25
Ghana	34,589,092	16,902,073	17,687,019	1.59	0.53	0.05	0.39	0.61	137	31
Guinea	13,986,179	6,985,606	7,000,573	0.33	0.29	0.01	0.03	0.00	168	45
Guinea-Bissau	2,132,325	1,042,910	1,089,415	3.21	0.41	0.98	0.54	1.28	108	22
Liberia	5,437,249	2,711,324	2,725,925	3.12	0.38	0.44	2.28	0.02	109	23
Mali	21,990,607	10,688,755	11,301,852	0.60	0.09	0.00	0.02	0.49	159	40
Mauritania	4,328,040	2,083,690	2,244,350	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	186	52
Niger	26,342,784	13,056,203	13,286,581	0.11	0.04	0.01	0.06	0.00	177	50
Nigeria	236,747,130	119,514,449	117,232,681	4.49	0.73	0.09	0.40	3.27	88	14
Senegal	18,847,519	9,283,314	9,564,205	0.25	0.21	0.02	0.02	0.00	170	46
Sierra Leone	9,121,049	4,515,726	4,605,323	3.22	0.17	0.01	0.15	2.90	107	21
Togo	8,917,994	4,395,271	4,522,723	1.40	0.78	0.09	0.20	0.33	141	34
Saint Helena	7,943	3,978	3,965	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	453,303,261	226,321,934	226,981,327							

Source: See methodology section.

Table 7. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Burundi	13,162,952	11.347	800	2.7
Comoros	888,378	2.975	3500	3
Djibouti	976,143	7.38	6400	6.68
Eritrea (2017)	6,274,796	9.702	1600	5
Ethiopia	116,462,712	354.604	2800	6.5

Continued

Kenya	57,052,004	314.491	5700	5.56
Madagascar	28,812,195	51.265	1600	3.8
Malawi	21,279,597	34.789	1600	1.89
Mauritius	1,309,448	33.532	26,600	6.96
Mayotte (2010)* (2021)	231,139	0.09534	4900	..
Mozambique	32,513,805	50.844	1500	5.44
Reunion (2006)*(2021)	787,584	4.348	5800	2.5
Rwanda	13,400,541	42.701	3100	8.24
Seychelles	97,617	3.53	29,500	3.16
Somalia	12,693,796	25.747	1400	4.22
South Sudan (2017)	12,118,379	20.01	1600	-5.2
Tanzania	65,642,682	233.786	3600	5.07
Uganda	47,729,952	135.803	2800	5.34
Zambia	20,216,029	76.129	3700	5.37
Zimbabwe	15,418,674	56.249	3400	5.34
Angola	35,981,281	266.249	7200	1
Cameroon	30,135,732	138.191	4900	3.25
Central African Rep	5,552,228	5.849	1100	0.87
Chad	18,523,165	32.446	1700	4.12
Congo (D.R.)	111,859,928	154.012	1500	8.56
Congo, Rep.	5,677,493	38.163	6200	1.91
Equatorial Guinea	1,737,695	28.985	15,700	-5.09
Gabon	2,397,368	46.472	18,700	2.45
Sao Tome & Principe	220,372	1.279	5500	0.37
Algeria	44,758,398	699.818	15,200	4.1
Egypt	109,546,720	1,912	16,700	3.76
Libya	7,252,573	91.161	12,500	10.16
Morocco	37,067,420	339.603	8900	3.4
Sudan	49,197,555	123.565	2500	-20.11
Tunisia	11,976,182	153.152	12,600	0.04
Botswana	2,417,596	46.743	18,800	2.73
Eswatini	1,130,043	12.468	10,100	5.01
Lesotho	2,210,646	6	2600	1.83
Namibia	2,777,232	29.944	10,100	4.16
South Africa	58,048,332	865.402	13,700	0.7
Benin	14,219,908	52.51	3700	6.35
Burkina Faso	22,489,126	57.152	2500	2.96
Cabo Verde	603,901	4.852	9300	5.48
Cote d'Ivoire	29,344,847	202.119	6500	6.2
The Gambia	2,468,569	7.911	2900	4.8
Ghana	33,846,114	229.639	6800	2.94
Guinea	13,607,249	56.892	3900	6.74
Guinea-Bissau	2,078,820	5.553	2600	5.2

Continued

Liberia	5,506,280	8.882	1600	4.68
Mali	21,359,722	56.919	2400	4.66
Mauritania	4,244,878	31.434	6300	6.51
Niger	25,396,840	44.561	1700	2.5
Nigeria	230,842,743	1,275	5600	2.86
Senegal	18,384,660	78.045	4300	4.58
Sierra Leone	8,908,040	25.671	3000	5.71
Togo	8,703,961	25.75	2800	6.4
Saint Helena (2021)	7935	0.0311	7800	..
Total	1,447,549,975	8623.75044	5958	

Source: See methodology section.

Table 8. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of eastern African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Burundi	13,162,952	11.347	800	2.7
Comoros	888,378	2.975	3500	3
Djibouti	976,143	7.38	6400	6.68
Eritrea (2017)	6,274,796	9.702	1600	5
Ethiopia	116,462,712	354.604	2800	6.5
Kenya	57,052,004	314.491	5700	5.56
Madagascar	28,812,195	51.265	1600	3.8
Malawi	21,279,597	34.789	1600	1.89
Mauritius	1,309,448	33.532	26,600	6.96
Mayotte (2010)* (2021)	231,139	0.09534	4900	..
Mozambique	32,513,805	50.844	1500	5.44
Reunion (2006)*(2021)	787,584	4.348	5800	2.5
Rwanda	13,400,541	42.701	3100	8.24
Seychelles	97,617	3.53	29,500	3.16
Somalia	12,693,796	25.747	1400	4.22
South Sudan (2017)	12,118,379	20.01	1600	-5.2
Tanzania	65,642,682	233.786	3600	5.07
Uganda	47,729,952	135.803	2800	5.34
Zambia	20,216,029	76.129	3700	5.37
Zimbabwe	15,418,674	56.249	3400	5.34
Total	467,068,423	1469.32734	3146	

Source: See methodology section.

Table 9. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of middle African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Angola	35,981,281	266.249	7200	1
Cameroon	30,135,732	138.191	4900	3.25
Central African Rep	5,552,228	5.849	1100	0.87
Chad	18,523,165	32.446	1700	4.12
Congo (D.R.)	111,859,928	154.012	1500	8.56
Congo, Rep.	5,677,493	38.163	6200	1.91
Equatorial Guinea	1,737,695	28.985	15,700	-5.09
Gabon	2,397,368	46.472	18,700	2.45
Sao Tome & Principe	220,372	1.279	5500	0.37
Total	212,085,262	711.646	3356	

Source: See methodology section.

Table 10. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of northern African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Algeria	44,758,398	699.818	15,200	4.1
Egypt	109,546,720	1,912	16,700	3.76
Libya	7,252,573	91.161	12,500	10.16
Morocco	37,067,420	339.603	8900	3.4
Sudan	49,197,555	123.565	2500	-20.11
Tunisia	11,976,182	153.152	12,600	0.04
Total	259,798,848	3319.299	12,776	

Source: See methodology section.

Table 11. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of southern African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Botswana	2,417,596	46.743	18,800	2.73
Eswatini	1,130,043	12.468	10,100	5.01
Lesotho	2,210,646	6	2600	1.83
Namibia	2,777,232	29.944	10,100	4.16
South Africa	58,048,332	865.402	13,700	0.7
Total	66,583,849	960.557	14,429	

Source: See methodology section.

Table 12. Population, gross domestic product (GDP, in billions of United States dollars), GDP per capita, and GDP growth rate, of western African nations, 2023.

	2023	2023	GDP	GDP Growth
Country	Population	GDP	Per Capita	Rate %
Benin	14,219,908	52.51	3700	6.35
Burkina Faso	22,489,126	57.152	2500	2.96
Cabo Verde	603,901	4.852	9300	5.48
Cote d'Ivoire	29,344,847	202.119	6500	6.2
The Gambia	2,468,569	7.911	2900	4.8
Ghana	33,846,114	229.639	6800	2.94
Guinea	13,607,249	56.892	3900	6.74
Guinea-Bissau	2,078,820	5.553	2600	5.2
Liberia	5,506,280	8.882	1600	4.68
Mali	21,359,722	56.919	2400	4.66
Mauritania	4,244,878	31.434	6300	6.51
Niger	25,396,840	44.561	1700	2.5
Nigeria	230,842,743	1,275	5600	2.86
Senegal	18,384,660	78.045	4300	4.58
Sierra Leone	8,908,040	25.671	3000	5.71
Togo	8,703,961	25.75	2800	6.4
Saint Helena (2021)	7,935	0.0311	7800	..
Total	442,013,593	2162.9211	4894	

Source: See methodology section.

3. Data on Alcohol Consumption in African Nations, 2019

Tables 1-6 present the total population (including for males and females) of Africa, its five regions, and individual nations as of July 2024; per capita alcohol consumption in African countries, including total, beer, spirits, and other alcohols, for the year 2019; and comparison rankings for the world and for Africa.

Of Africa's total population of 1.487 billion in 2024, 743.87 (50.03%) million were females and 741.562 (49.87%) million were males (**Table 1**). Utilizing the United Nations classifications of the five regions of Africa (see **Appendix**), of the 1.487 billion people in Africa in 2024, 479.66 (32.3%) million (240.956 million females and 273.684 million males) were in Eastern Africa; 453.303 (30.5%) million (226.981 million females and 226.321 million males) were in Western Africa; 266.187 (17.9%) million (134.716 million males and 130.818 million) were in Northern Africa; 218.888 (14.7%) million (109.905 million females and 108.983 million males) were in Middle Africa; and 69.1 (4.65%) million (35.206 million females and 33.857 million males) were in Southern Africa (**Tables 2-6**).

The top 10 most populous nations in Africa in 2024 are as follows: Nigeria,

236.747 million (15.9% of Africa's total); Ethiopia, 118.55 million (7.97%); Democratic Republic of Congo, 115.4 million (7.76%); Egypt, 111.25 million (7.48%); Tanzania, 67.5 million (4.54%); South Africa, 60.44 million (4.07%); Kenya, 58.3 million (3.92%); Sudan, 50.5 million (3.4%); Uganda, 49.3 million (3.32%); and Algeria, 47 million (3.16%) (**Table 1**).

Within Eastern Africa, there are 8 nations with populations of 20 million or more: Ethiopia, 118.55 million (24.5% of 479.66 million); Tanzania, 67.5 million (14.1%); Kenya, 58.3 million (12.15%); Uganda, 49.3 million (10.3%); Mozambique, 33.4 million (7.2%); Madagascar, 29.45 million (6.14%); Malawi, 21.8 million (4.54%); and Zambia, 20.8 million (4.34%). The remaining nations have the following populations: Zimbabwe, 17.15 million (3.6%); Rwanda, 13.62 million (2.84%); Burundi, 13.59 million (2.83%); Somalia, 13 million (2.7%); South Sudan, 12.7 million (2.65%); Eritrea, 6.34 million (1.3%); Mauritius, 1.31 million (0.27%); Djibouti, 994,974 (0.21%); Comoros, 900,141 (0.19%); Reunion, 787,584 (0.16%) (2006 estimate); Mayotte, 231,139 (0.05%) (2010 estimate); and Seychelles, 98,187 (0.02%) (**Table 2**).

Within Western Africa, there are 6 nations with populations of 20 million or more: Nigeria, 236.75 million (52.2% of 453.3 million); Ghana, 34.6 million (7.6%); Cote d'Ivoire, 29.98 million (6.6%); Niger, 26.34 million (5.8%); Burkina Faso, 23 million (5.1%); and Mali, 21.99 million (4.85%). The remaining nations have the following populations: Senegal, 18,847,519 (4.2%); Benin, 14,697,052 (3.24%); Guinea, 13,986,179 (3.1%); Sierra Leone, 9,121,049 (2%); Togo, 8,917,994 (1.97%); Liberia, 5,437,249 (1.2%); Mauritania, 4,328,040 (0.96%); The Gambia, 2,523,327 (5.6%); Guinea-Bissau, 2,132,325 (0.47%); Cabo Verde, 611,014 (0.14%); and Saint Helena, 7,943 (0.0018%) (**Table 6**).

Within Northern Africa, there are 4 nations with populations of 20 million or more: Egypt, 111.25 million (41.8% of 266.2 million); Sudan, 50.5 million (19%); Algeria, 47 million (17.7%); and Morocco, 37.4 million (14.1%). The remaining nations have the following populations: Tunisia, 12,048,847 (4.5%); Libya, 7,361,263 (2.8%); and Western Sahara, 652,271 (0.25%) (**Table 4**).

Within Middle Africa, there are 3 nations with populations of 20 million or more: Democratic Republic of Congo, 115.4 million (52.7% of 218.89 million people); Angola, 37.2 million (17%); and Cameroon, 31 million (14.2%). The remaining nations have the following populations: Chad, 19,093,595 (8.7%); Republic of Congo, 6,097,665 (2.8%); Central African Republic, 5,650,957 (2.6%); Gabon, 2,455,105 (1.1%); Equatorial Guinea, 1,795,834 (0.82%); and Sao Tome & Principe, 223,561 (0.1%) (**Table 3**).

Finally, within Southern Africa, South Africa is the only nation with double digit population of 60.44 million (87.47% of 69.1 million); Namibia, 2.8 million (4.1%); Botswana, 2.45 million (3.6%); Lesotho, 2.23 million (3.2%); and Eswatini, 1.14 million (1.7%) (**Table 5**).

The alcohol consumption figures show that they are relatively higher in countries in Southern, Eastern, and Middle Africa. For example, according to **Table 1**,

in 2019, there were 24 nations where the per capita (people aged 15 and over) consumption of pure alcohol is 3 liters or more: Seychelles, 9.48 liters; Tanzania, 7.81 liters; Eswatini, 7.68 liters; Burkina Faso, 7.28 liters; South Africa, 7.21 liters; Uganda, 6.82 liters; Gabon, 6.47 liters; Rwanda, 6.35 liters; Equatorial Guinea, 6.11 liters; Botswana, 5.98 liters; Angola, 5.84; Republic of Congo, 5.74 liters; Cabo Verde, 4.70 liters; Nigeria, 4.49 liters; Sao Tome & Principe, 4.23 liters; Cameroon, 4.09 liters; Burundi, 4.07 liters; Zambia, 3.82 liters; Lesotho, 3.56 liters; Mauritius, 3.39 liters; Sierra Leone, 3.22 liters; Guinea-Bissau, 3.21 liter; Liberia, 3.12 liters; and Zimbabwe, 3.11 liters (**Table 1**).

The following 17 nations consumed less than 1 liter of alcohol per capita: Comoros, 0.18 liters; Djibouti, 0.21 liters; Eritrea, 0.93 liters;; Madagascar, 0.89 liters; Central African Republic, 0.94 liters; Chad, 0.55 liters; Democratic Republic of Congo, 0.56 liters; Algeria, 0.59 liters; Egypt, 0.14 liters; Libya, 0.01 liters; Morocco, 0.51 liters; Guinea, 0.33 liters; Mali, 0.6 liters; Niger, 0.11 liters; Senegal, 0.25 liters; Somalia and Mauritania, each 0 liters.

Of the four categories of alcohols (beer, wine, spirits, and “other alcohols”), **Table 1** shows that beer and “other alcohols” are consumed the most. There are 10 nations that consumed 2 liters or more of beer per capita: Seychelles, 4.11 liters; Angola, 3.78 liters; Cameroon, 2.36 liters; Republic of Congo, 5.11 liters; Equatorial Guinea, 3.83 liters; Gabon, 5.31 liters; Botswana, 2.93 liters; Eswatini, 2.45 liters; South Africa, 3.99 liters; and Cabo Verde, 2.28 liters.

There are 10 nations that consumed 2 liters or more of “other alcohols” per capita: Burundi, 2.23 liters; Rwanda, 6 liters; Tanzania, 6.6 liters; Uganda, 5.46 liters; Zambia, 2.16 liters; Eswatini, 5.17 liters; Burkina Faso, 5.88 liters; Gambia, 2.44 liters; Nigeria, 3.27 liters; and Sierra Leone, 2.9 liters.

The world comparison rankings data show that there are only 3 African nations in the top 50 for total number of liters consumed per capita in 2019; Seychelles, #28, Tanzania, #46, and Eswatini, #50; and 18 nations in the top 100: Seychelles, #28, Tanzania, #46, and Eswatini, #50, Burkina Faso, #57, South Africa, #58, Uganda, #61, Rwanda, #65, Gabon, #64, Equatorial Guinea, #69, Botswana, #71, Angola, #73, Republic of Congo, #75. Cabo Verde, #86, Nigeria, #88, Sao Tome & Principe, #92, Cameroon, #94, Burundi, #95, and Zambia, #98.

For comparative purposes, the pure alcohol consumption per capita in 2019 for the following nations across the world are as follows: United States, 8.93 liters; China, 4.48 liters; Canada, 8 liters; United Kingdom, 9.8 liters; France, 11.44 liters; Germany, 10.56 liters; Italy, 7.65; India, 3.09 liters; Spain, 10.72 liters; Russia, 7.29 liters; and Japan, 8.36 liters (<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>).

4. Reasons for Alcohol Consumption in African Countries

4.1. Gradual Increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Africa

There are various reasons for the prevalence of alcohol consumption in countries across Africa. Some of these reasons may be interrelated. One obvious reason for

the prevalence of alcohol consumption in many countries across Africa is the increase in wealth of the continent. Alcohol consumption is expensive, and it can become a lifestyle that is practiced daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Africa has increased substantially over the past two decades. For example, in 2005, the estimated GDP of Africa was \$2.366 trillion, (3.9%) of the Gross World Products (GWP) of \$60.71 trillion. Of Africa's \$2.366 trillion GDP in 2005, Northern Africa accounted for \$909.9 billion (38.5% of total); \$575.45 billion (24.33%) for Southern Africa; \$377.84 billion (16%) for Western Africa; \$315.32 billion (13.33%) for Eastern Africa; and \$151.66 billion (6.41%) for Middle Africa (Kaba, 2007a: p. 80). In 2023, the total population of Africa was: 1,447,549,975; Eastern Africa, 467,068,423 (32.3%); Western Africa, 442,013,593 (30.54%); Northern Africa, 259,798,848 (17.95%); Middle Africa, 212,085,262 (14.65%); and Southern Africa, 66,583,849 (4.6%) (Kaba, 2024a: 89-93). In 2023, the total GDP of Africa was \$8,623,750,000,000: \$3,319,299,000,000 (38.49%) for Northern Africa; \$2,162,921,100,000 (25.08%) for Western Africa; \$1,469,327,300,000 (17.04%) for Eastern Africa; \$960,557,000,000 (11.14%) for Southern Africa; and \$711,646,000,000 (8.25%) for Middle Africa (Tables 7-12). The 2023 population and GDP figures for Africa presented above means that the per capita GDP in Africa in 2023 was: \$5,958; \$14,429 for Southern Africa; \$12,776 for Northern Africa; \$4,894 for Western Africa; \$3,356 for Middle Africa; and \$3,146 for Eastern Africa (Tables 7-12).

In their study examining alcohol consumption of young people in Sub-Saharan Africa, Belete et al. (2024) note that "...socio-economic status may influence alcohol use patterns in SSA [Sub-Saharan African] countries..." (p. 1536). It is reported that: "Africa's wealth story is one of aspiration and untapped potential. The continent is home to 135,200 millionaires, 342 centi-millionaires, and 21 billionaires, collectively holding a total investable wealth of USD 2.5 trillion" (Volek, 2024, April).

Volek (2024) adds that the total number of millionaires in Africa will increase by 65% in the next 10 years. This rise is due to: "... strong growth in key sectors such as fintech, eco-tourism, business process outsourcing, software development, rare metals mining, green tech, media and entertainment, and wealth management" (Volek, 2024, April). It is noted that: "The effects of Africa's economic revival are evident in a wide range of industries across the continent, with the burgeoning alcohol market being a prime example of this new-found prosperity... movement towards safer, better quality, formal alcoholic drinks is being driven by improving disposable incomes and greater involvement and investment in the region from the multinational drinks companies..." (Alcohol consumption rising in Africa despite obstacles, 2016; also see Barr, 2024). It is reported that: "The West Africa alcoholic beverages market size reached USD 13.9 Billion in 2024.... [and expected] to reach USD 22.9 Billion by 2033, ... a growth rate ... of 5.42% during 2025-2033" (West Africa Alcoholic Beverages Market Report by Product Type (Beer, Spirits, Wine, and Others), 2025). It is noted that: "The rising consumption

of alcoholic beverages among the masses, the rising popularity of socializing among individuals, and the introduction of mixed and flavored alcoholic beverages represent some of the key factors driving the market” in Western Africa (*West Africa Alcoholic Beverages Market Report by Product Type (Beer, Spirits, Wine, and Others)*, 2025).

Numerous research studies show that males consume alcohol more than their female counterparts in Africa. For example, in their study of alcohol consumption among adults in Tanzania, *Liu et al. (2024)* find that “Men exhibited higher alcohol consumption than women...” (p. 17520). According to *Wynn et al. (2024)*: “Compared to women, men were more likely to report alcohol use...” (pp. 1-2; also see *Ferreira-Borges et al., 2016*: pp. 56-57; *Tachi et al., 2020*: p. 220; *Tumwesigye et al., 2012*: p. 1).

4.2. Tourism to African Nations

Tourism is another reason for the prevalence of alcohol consumption in Africa. Although overall annual tourism to Africa is not as high as tourism to Europe, North America, or Asia, tens of millions of people visit various nations in the continent annually. Tourists visiting African countries come from all parts of the world, including Europe, North America, and Northeastern Asia (*Henema, 2013*; *Kaba, 2024b*; *Study on Chinese Outbound Travel to Africa, 2010*). It is reported that a 2023 study claims that: “19.5 million Black or African American adults ages 18 and older (62.5% in this age group” reported to have drank alcohol in the past year (*Alcohol Use in the United States: Age Groups and Demographic Characteristics, 2025*). Pertaining to Black Americans now visiting and relocating to Africa in substantial numbers, they are among the most educated, politically influential, and wealthiest groups in the United States and the world, meaning that they can afford to consume expensive types of alcohols (*Kaba, 2007b, 2009a, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2017, 2024a*; *Kaba & Ward, 2009*; *Mazrui & Kaba, 2016*).

Many of the tourists visiting African nations come from countries where alcohol consumption is legal and prevalent. Tourism data from the World Bank show that in 2018, 79.75 million tourists visited the United States; 82.8 million tourists visited Spain; 61.6 million tourists visited Italy; 36.3 million tourists visited the United Kingdom; 89.3 million tourists visited France; 38.9 million tourists visited Germany; 25.6 million tourists visited Russia; 45.8 million tourists visited Turkey; 63 million tourists visited China; 21.1 million tourists visited Canada; and 15.3 million tourists visited Saudi Arabia. In 2017, there were 47.63 million tourists that visited Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. In 2018, there were 10.5 million visitors to South Africa; 12.3 million visitors to Morocco; 11.2 million visitors to Egypt; 8.3 million visitors to Tunisia; 2.7 million visitors to Algeria; 5.3 million visitors to Nigeria; 1.4 million visitors to Tanzania; 1.364 million visitors to Kenya (2017 figures); 1.4 million visitors to Uganda; 2.743 million visitors to Mozambique; 1.1 million visitors to Cameroon; 1.97 million visitors to Cote d’Ivoire;

1.072 million visitors to Zambia; 1.37 million visitors to Senegal (2017 figures); 2.6 million visitors to Zimbabwe; 1.5 million visitors to Namibia (2017 figures); 1.623 million visitors to Botswana (2017 figures); and 1.2 million visitors to Lesotho (Kaba & Kaba, 2020: pp. 133-134). The pure alcohol consumption per capita figure of 0.51 liters for Morocco, a country where Muslims accounted for 100% in 2020 (Kaba, 2022: p. 31) shows that its relatively high tourist visits among African countries, is a big factor for that 0.51-liter figure.

4.3. Religion and Secularism/Formal Educational Attainment

Religion is a major reason as to why the data in this study illustrate that very little or no alcohol is consumed in Western African and Northern African countries, because of their high Muslim populations. According to Isaksen et al. (2015): “The socio-demographic predictors most strongly related to alcohol consumption were religion (Catholics 53.6%, Protestants 25.9%, Muslims 14.8%)” (p. 205; also see Kaba, 2008a; Tachi et al., 2020: p. 220). Liu et al. (2024) find that “...Christians tended to consume more [alcohol] than Muslims” (p. 17520). Mitsunaga and Larsen (2008) point out in their study that: “In general, Christians had higher alcohol abuse than Muslims or other religions...” (p. 379). In a study of college students in Ghana, Aboagye (2021) notes that “Muslim students had lower odds of alcohol consumption compared to Christians” (p. 431). Adeoye (2022) finds that, “Muslims were less likely to consume alcohol during pregnancy compared to Christians...” (p. 570; also see Nouaman et al., 2018: p. 1). The study by Addo et al. (2018) of Ghanaian immigrants in Europe finds that: “... those attending religious services less frequently reported higher levels of drinking alcohol than non-attendants (never attend/no religion compared to attending service at least once a week” (p. 1). According to Georgescu et al. (2024): “...countries with strong religious or cultural prohibitions, such as predominantly Muslim nations, report lower alcohol consumption rates” (p. 1139). In their study of four Muslim majority African nations (Comoros, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal), Clausen et al. (2009) find that: “... virtually all respondents were life-time abstainers. ... current drinkers (previous week) did not exceed one-third in any country ...” (p. 1147; also see Bonnechère et al., 2022: p. 1).

In 2001, 2009 and 2020, Muslims accounted for the majority in Northern Africa and Western Africa. In 2001, of the 183.2 million people in Northern Africa, Muslims accounted for 167.13 million (91.23%). Of the 240.74 million people in Western Africa in 2001, Muslims accounted for 130.84 million (54.35%). In 2009, of the 210.4 million people in Northern Africa, Muslims accounted for 188.58 million (89.63%). Of the 292.6 million people in Western Africa in 2009, Muslims accounted for 154.36 million (52.76%) (Kaba, 2009: p. 12). In 2020, of the 232.57 million people in Northern Africa, Muslims accounted for 223 million (95.89%). Of the 394 million people in Western Africa in 2020, Muslims accounted for 218.28 million (55.4%) (Kaba, 2022: p. 29).

In Africa, alcohol is restricted in Muslim countries more so than in Christian

countries. Christian countries tend to be more secular than Muslim countries in Africa, partly because they tend to have higher proportions of people with formal western education (Kaba, 2006a). However, although Christian nations in Africa tend to be more secular than their Muslim counterparts, the strict religiosity of many Christians in those countries also tend to cause them not to drink alcohol (Nelson & Ediom-Ubong, 2014). According to Tshiswaka et al. (2017), "... the influence of spiritual beliefs and religion [in African nations] discourage alcohol consumption" (p. 37). According to Georgescu et al. (2024): "Africa displays a wide range of drinking behaviors, from high levels of abstinence in some regions to significant alcohol use in others..." (p. 1139). Clausen et al. (2009) note that: "African drinking patterns are diverse, and although life-time abstinence dominates in African countries, ..." (p. 1147). According to Jalloh et al. (2024), "African Region has a high level of lifetime abstainers (57.5%)..." (p. S86). Ferreira-Borges et al. (2016) write of Africa that: "High rates of abstention are a clear feature of alcohol consumption in this region. In many countries, that is Algeria, Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, more than 80% of the adult population, as defined by ages 15 years or older, did not consume alcohol in 2012" (p. 54).

In an article entitled: "British and French Africa: the High Death Rate of African Women in Sub-Saharan British Africa," Kaba (2006a) finds that countries in British Africa had more cases of HIV/AIDS than those in French Africa. One primary explanation for this phenomenon is religion. The countries in British Africa had more people with formal Western education and more can read and write than the countries in French Africa, and this in turn makes them more secular. Secularism (such as drinking alcohol) contributed to the behavior that caused the prevalence of HIV/AIDS (also see Granger & Price, 2009). However, it is important to note that in 2020, of the 22,714,543 people in Burkina Faso, Muslims accounted for 14,240,000 (62.7%); Christians accounted for 4,930,000 (21.7%); and those who practiced indigenous religions accounted for 3,430,000 (15.1%) (Kaba, 2022: p. 32). This shows that the relatively high rate of alcohol consumption in Burkina Faso might be due to the Christian population and those who practice indigenous African religions. In fact, in 2020, of the 1.282 billion people in Africa, only 34,474,138 (2.7%) practiced indigenous African religions; and 16,828,000 (4.3%) of the 394 million people in Western Africa practiced indigenous African religions in 2020. This means that the 4.93 million people who practiced indigenous religions in Burkina Faso, in 2020 accounted for 29.3% of the 16.828 million people who practiced indigenous religions in Western Africa (Kaba, 2022: p. 29 & 33). Ekeke and John (2023) note that: "Alcoholism is endemic in Nigeria's traditional religion and society.... Some say Africans drink a lot because their religious heritage promotes drinking..." (p. 1).

4.4. Prevalence of Young People in African Countries/Demographics

An important reason for the low alcohol consumption rates across countries in

Africa is the phenomenon of African countries being relatively young. According to Tachi et al. (2020): “Alcohol consumption was significantly associated ... age group...” (p. 220; also see Martinez et al., 2011: p. 160). There were 533.5 million people in Africa under the age of 15 in 2020, accounting for 39.8% of the 1.341 billion people; and 18.1% were 15 to 24 years old (Kaba, 2020: p. 231). This means that 57.9% of people in Africa were aged 24 and under in 2020. In most societies in the world people under the age of 18 or 21 are not allowed by law to drink alcohol (Parry et al., 2018). While people aged 65 and over can drink alcohol, the percent of people in this age group in African countries is relatively small, accounting for 3.3% of the 1.341 billion people in 2020 (Kaba, 2020: p. 231). In their study on alcohol consumption and its risk factors in Burkina Faso, Bonnechère et al. (2022) claim that: “Age was associated with alcohol intake with a gradient effect and older people having a higher level of consumption” (p. 1).

4.5. Additional Reasons

Various additional reasons have been cited for alcohol consumption in African nations. The poverty of a substantial number of people in Africa might also be a reason why the alcohol consumption figures are not as high because purchasing alcohol can be expensive over time. For example, Morojele et al. (2021) find in their study on the harmful effects of alcohol consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa that: “The socio-economic differences were highest for mortality from infectious diseases, with persons of low SES (socio-economic status) having a lower prevalence of current alcohol use...” (p. 409). Liu et al. (2024) note that: “middle-aged and elderly adults in Tanzania tend to consume alcohol when they feel depressed...” (p. 17520; also see Addila et al., 2021: p. 419).

In a study examining alcohol consumption among pregnant women in a town in Ethiopia, Addila et al. (2021) present the following reasons for consuming alcohol: “The study revealed that pregnant women who have a low knowledge level on harmful effect of alcohol consumption... positive attitude towards alcohol consumption... history of pre-pregnancy alcohol consumption..., whose partner consume alcohol... a perception that alcohol consumption is culturally or socially acceptable ... who were encouraged by their partners to consume alcohol...” (p. 419). The study by Leketey et al. (2017) finds high alcohol consumption rates among pregnant women in Accra, Ghana, with: “...socialization noted as a major reason for prenatal alcohol consumption” (p. 1). In their study focusing on young people aged 18 - 35, Matjila et al. (2021) claim that: “Empirical results show that advertising, parental influence, peer influence and personal attitude has positive effects on youth alcohol consumption behaviour” (p. 539). Morojele et al. (2021) point out that: “Alcohol producers have continued their aggressive marketing and policy interference activities...” (p. 402).

5. Summary and Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that although there is a prevalence of alcohol con-

sumption in African countries, the overall rates for the entire continent are substantially lower when compared with other parts of the world such as Europe and North America. As the data in this study illustrate, a high majority of the nations in Africa where alcohol is consumed by higher proportions of people are in Southern, Eastern, and Middle Africa. Countries in Northern and Western Africa have very low rates of alcohol consumption. However, Burkina Faso, a Western African nation, has an unusually high figure of 7.28, and ranked #4 in the Top 10 in Africa. In their study on alcohol consumption in Africa and young people, Ntho et al. (2024) point out that: “Pooled estimates from sub-Saharan Africa suggest the highest proportion of alcohol use among adolescents is in Southern Africa (40.82%), followed by East Africa (34.25%), then Central Africa (29.09%). In contrast, West Africa had the lowest proportion of alcohol use among adolescents at 28.21%” (p. 2).

The comparison rankings data for African nations show that 9 of the top 10 nations that consumed the highest number of liters of alcohol per capita in 2019 are in Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, and Southern Africa combined: Seychelles, #1, Tanzania, #2, Eswatini, #3, Burkina Faso, #4 (Western Africa), South Africa, #5, Uganda, #6, Gabon, #7, Rwanda, #8, Equatorial Guinea, #9, and Angola, #10 (Tables 1-6).

Many reasons are cited in this study for the prevalence of alcohol consumption in African countries. The gradual increase in the GDP of African countries and the gradual increase in the wealth of people in Africa are among the reasons for this phenomenon. Africa’s GDP increased from \$2.366 trillion in 2005, to \$8.624 trillion in 2023. International tourism to African countries, while substantially lower when compared with other parts of the world such as Europe and North America, has also contributed to the increase in alcohol consumption in Africa. For example, in 2018 alone, 82.8 million people visited Spain, and 79.75 million tourists visited the United States, but only 47.63 million tourists visited Sub-Saharan African countries in 2017. However, these tourists, especially those from Europe and North America may have contributed to alcohol consumption in Africa by influencing Africans to consume alcohol. This is especially the case with Black American tourists who are visiting African countries in increasing numbers in the past decade mostly due to increasing positive relations between African countries and the United States in the past two decade (Kaba, 2004, 2006b, 2009b, 2015, 2024c, 2024d; M’Cormack-Hale & Kaba, 2015), but with setbacks in the relationship during the presidency of Donald Trump, with both Africans in Africa and Black Americans having similar experiences as it has been in history (Kaba, 2005, 2006b, 2007c, 2008b, 2012b, 2012c, 2016b, 2019), which has contributed to Blacks from the United States relocating to African countries in the past decade. It is reported that 75% of Black Americans were Christians in 2021; 3% were members of other religions; and 21% were “not affiliated with any religion and instead identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular...” (Mohamed et al., 2021: p. 9).

The study also finds that religion is a major reason for alcohol consumption in African countries in two forms: first Muslim countries drink less, while relatively more people tend to drink in Christian countries. An explanation for this observation is that Christian countries in Africa tend to be more secular. On the other hand, religiosity causes both Muslims and Christians to abstain from drinking alcohol in African countries. Age is an important reason for alcohol consumption in Africa, with young people drinking less or not at all. In 2020, 533.5 million people in Africa were under the age of 15, accounting for 39.8% of the continent's total population of 1.341 billion; and 57.9% of people on the continent were aged 24 and younger in 2020. Additional interrelated reasons are also provided for the consumption of alcohol in Africa. Poverty is cited as a reason for many people in Africa not consuming alcohol, since alcohol consumption as a lifestyle can be very expensive. Socialization, aggressive marketing or advertising, parental alcohol consumption, and romantic partner influence are also cited as reasons for alcohol consumption in Africa. Future research by this author will examine the harmful effects of alcohol consumption in African countries; and will provide useful recommendations for managing this phenomenon. A future study focusing on specific examples of how tourists influence local people to consume alcohol in African countries will be very useful.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix

Geographic Breakdowns of the Five Regions of Africa (n = 58)

Eastern Africa (n = 20): Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Reunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Middle Africa (n = 9): Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Sao Tome & Principe.

Northern Africa (n = 7): Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Western Sahara.

Southern Africa (n = 5): Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland.

Western Africa (n = 17): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Saint Helena.

Source: "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" Retrieved on January 29, 2019 from: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>.