

# An Investigation into Gender Differences in Alcohol Consumption among Third Level College Students in Ireland.

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate gender differences in alcohol consumption among male and female third level college students in Ireland. Quantitative research methods were used with a quasi – experimental between participant design. The variables were gender (ID) and alcohol consumption (DV). Results highlight that male students do consume more alcohol than female students and male and female students have an equal knowledge of the health risks of drinking alcohol and are equally unaware of the development of mental health issues due to drinking. Results furthermore show that female students have more unprotected sex and drink more than male students. In conclusion female college student need to be reminded of the health implications of engaging in unprotected sex and the consequences of drink driving. Both male and female college students need more education on the issue of mental health and how to maintain it.

## Introduction

The World Health Organization (2004), estimates that there are about 2 billion people worldwide who consume alcoholic beverages and 76.3 million with diagnosable alcohol use disorders. This research illustrates some of the consequences of the harmful misuse of alcohol to both men and women and demonstrated how women are not on an equal par to men. Regardless to the fact that men consume more alcohol on average than women, as research points out that men were less often abstainers, more often consumed larger amounts of alcohol and were more often heavy drinkers than women. Many factors come into play with regard the gender difference in alcohol consumption, from biological reasons, to the social stigma experienced by women, and family commitments. We will highlight how the biological make-up of the female body makes them more susceptible to the harmful effect of alcohol, as well as exploring the idea that the main reason women do not drink more than men is that the social sanctions against drinking are greater for women than men

## Results

Results indicated that male students did drink significantly more alcohol than female students. Relating to students awareness of the health consequences of alcohol consumption both genders indicated a similar knowledge. However there was lack of knowledge for both genders in relation to developing mental health issues. Male students showed a significant correlation between aggression while under the influence of alcohol. A difference between the levels of unprotected sex between male and female students was detected which found that female students were having more unprotected sex than males. Female students also indicated they drank and driven more than male students. The result showed that there was not a significant difference between the genders and consuming alcohol in order to avoid dealing with negative emotions.

## Discussion

The current study found that male college students are drinking more than female college students. There was also no significant difference between male and female college students awareness around the health risks associated to alcohol consumption. Both genders did however show a lack of knowledge relating to the development of mental health issues. The research concluded that male students appeared to become more aggressive after consuming alcohol than female students. Female students were found to be having more unprotected sex and drink driving more than male college students. The study indicated no significant between the genders and drinking to avoid dealing with negative emotions.

## References

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