**ALCOHOL USE BY FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO, MEDUNSA CAMPUS, GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA**

**by**

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**RESEARCH DISSERTATION**

**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements** **for the degree of**

# MASTER OF SCIENCE

**in**

# PSYCHOLOGY

**in the**

# FACULTY OF MEDICINE

**at the**

# UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

# SUPERVISOR: Dr K Nel

# 2011

# ABSTRACT

# South Africa has a long history of alcohol use. Traditionally alcohol was used on specific occasions, and, only after the introduction of commercial alcohol, was it used by the youth, women and males on a more regular social basis. Colonialism and separate development discriminated against Blacks, who were disenfranchised and they were also not allowed to buy, use or sell alcohol freely under specific laws. After South Africa became a democratic country in 1994 all such regulation was taken out of the statute books and all South Africans over the age of eighteen could buy, sell or use alcohol subject to certain conditions. The breweries expanded their markets and advertising campaigns were introduced to target the previously disenfranchised groups. As a result of this South Africans, particularly students’ are rated high in terms of alcohol consumption. Health and social problems related to alcohol escalated as well. The research design for the study is a randomised non-experimental survey design. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyse the data which is consistent with a mixed method approach. Descriptive statistics and the chi-square are used to analyse the majority of the data while Thematic Content analysis is used analyse qualitative data. The results underpin previous research in that students have the tendency to use and abuse alcohol with negative academic and social consequences. It was found that both males and females have similar drinking patterns in terms of when they drink, how much they drink and what type of alcohol they drink. Students of both sexes were generally found to have poor knowledge about alcohol. Qualitative results suggest that some students are aware that moderate alcohol consumption is socially acceptable and responsible behaviour. However, they are also aware that there is a problem with alcohol use and abuse amongst their peers. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**I would like to thank my family for supporting me in this endeavor and the Department of Psychology at the University of Limpopo (Medunsa Campus), particularly the HOD Prof Wilna Basson. I would particularly like to thank Dr Seeletsi for his help with the statistics and MS Kate Nel for her help in data capturing and lastly a big thank you to my supervisor who went the extra mile in helping me complete the dissertation.**

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**DECLARATION**

**I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master of Science in Psychology (research) has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.**

**M M Mogotsi 10.01.1011**

**Student Number: 9614774**

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