

*P.O. Box 78, Accra  
Ghana*

E-mail: Kpekojo@hotmail.com

## **Introduction**

Chieftaincy is the oldest, enduring and most respected governance institution in Ghana despite the fact that the impact, influence, and effectiveness of traditional leaders have been steadily eroded over the years. Even in its weakened state, it remained the governance institution that impinges both positively and negatively on the majority of Ghanaians on daily basis. In previous years, many have believed that chieftaincy in Ghana is doomed to dwindle away or disappear. David Apter, one of the most perceptive analysts of Ghana's politics in the 1950s, argued for mutation rather than outright extinction. The functional significance of chieftaincy, he wrote, was by the mid-1950s, 'being transposed in kind via charisma to the larger social membership around the symbol of nationhood ....' (Apter 1960). This is in sharp contrast to the impact of Parliament, The Executive, Judiciary and even the Police have a limited effect on everyday lives of rural Ghanaians. Of note in this regard is the fact that Chieftaincy is not part of Ghana's modern democratic governance regime. Rather, it is a parallel traditional governance institution which sometimes works in step with government and other times acts as counterweight to the Government of Ghana.

Traditional leaders once held a firm grip on the social, economic and political system that governed society. There were systems in place to regulate behaviour, and rules were well enforced to ensure a safe and orderly society. They had an adequate revenue base through taxes and other donations and royalties to support families and meet their societal obligations. The decline in the influence and reach of traditional leadership in Ghana is a result of a combination of factors including the politics of colonisation, the modernisation of society, and the intended and unintended consequences of modern government and decentralisation. The weakening of traditional leadership and governance institutions has created a power and institutional vacuum, which central and new local government institutions have failed to fill adequately.

This situation notwithstanding, past and present governments have never ignored traditional leaders completely in national affairs (Arhin 1985). By creating the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils, the government has recognised traditional leaders as important agents of development, especially at the local levels. Thus the government has continued to provide some financial support to chiefs in the hope of sustaining the chieftaincy institution. Budget allocations are regularly made for them to supplement revenue obtained from their traditional sources such as stool lands and royalties. Since government over the years continued to provide some funding, no matter how meagre, to traditional rulers, the latter are required by law to give accounts of their financial transactions annually. By virtue of this requirement, traditional leaders, although no longer part of the governance system, are not excluded from the need to demonstrate accountability. Politically, the institution may have seemed to fade away, but it is still required like other organisations to submit books of accounts to the Auditor-General for examination.

This paper is a modest attempt to evaluate the work of the Auditor-General (henceforth 'A-G') in respect of its impact on accountability in managing resources of the Chieftaincy institution. The first part of the paper outlines the objectives of the study, approach, scope and methodology. This is followed with a reference to the literature on two contending views on the position of Chieftaincy in modern democratic politics. The section also discusses the history of the institution over time, highlighting its current status in the context of the 1992 Constitution, decentralisation and the new local government system. Part two of the paper then looks at the A-G's Reports and reviews the major issues raised from 1993 to 1999 regarding financial administration and management of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils. Part three discusses the issues within the context of accountability, noting its implications for traditional governance and development in Ghana.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to analyse the Auditor-General's performance in fulfilling the constitutional responsibility of state audit and evaluation of local government transactions. Within the context of this overall objective the study attempts to::

- Appraise the content of the report with respect to financial administration;
- Identify common trends and recurrence of opinions, observation and recommendations;
- Explain possible reasons underlying non-response to the recommendations, and its implications for the promotion of public accountability and good governance.
- Undertake a critical evaluation of the data in the context of the purpose of state audit and accountability.

### **Approach, Scope and Methodology**

This paper is based on documentary research into the Auditor-General's reports on the Public Accounts of Ghana for the period 1993-1999. Basically, it is a trends study that uses information from the Auditor-General's report of the Public Accounts of Ghana on ten Houses of Chiefs and their Traditional Councils. Adopting a content analytic approach, the paper provides an overview of the AG's reports, noting the recurrence of certain significant issues that touch on accountability, responsibility, compliance, efficiency and transparency in managing public affairs. The paper is limited to the period 1993 to 1999 and therefore does not cover the full ten year period of the country's return to constitutional rule, as reports for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 were not available at the time of this review.

### **Contending views on traditional rulers and governance**

Two diametrically opposed views often emerge on the role of the institution of chieftaincy (and chiefs) in Ghanaian politics. The first holds that chiefs should stay out of partisan politics. Traditionally, chiefs maintain strong ties with their communities, so their involvement in party politics is likely to undermine or compromise their authority and legitimacy, weaken communal cohesion and create division (Arhin 1985, Busia, 1951; Crook 1986). In the process, the chiefs' capacity to act as the custodian of tradition, custom, law and order, justice and peace in their

communities would be eroded. As such, the 1992 constitution explicitly debars chiefs from active political participation. The wisdom of the constitutional framers cannot be questioned, based on the history of confrontation that had marked the relations between government and the chieftaincy institution during the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods.

The contrary view is that traditional leaders have helped maintain a system of government based on accountability, consultation and decentralisation, albeit through traditional rather than modern democratic systems; and that they have been and remain widely respected. Thus, to ask chiefs to stay out of politics is undemocratic, and it means they are excluded from the decision-making process (Nsarko 1964, Ansere 1993). This, it is asserted, is likely to affect the progress of our democratic experiment. The point that cannot be glossed over is that chieftaincy institutions have served not only as the centrepiece for mobilising the people for communal development but also as the effective link between the people and the central government. It must be noted, however, that such a relationship has become controversial and at times tenuous over the years due largely to the continued erosion of the power base of chiefs upon the introduction of modern structures of government. The 1992 Constitution is, in fact, a bold attempt to free the institution from the gridlock of partisan politics and thereby guarantee its sustainability.

### **Chiefs and National Politics: An Historical Overview**

For many communities the chieftaincy institution constituted the embodiment of political power in pre-colonial, colonial, and even post-colonial periods (Busia 1951, Nugent 1996; Drah 1979).

However, it must be said that the traditionally unfettered powers of chiefs have undergone changes as a result of formal colonial rule and the introduction of parliamentary democracy after independence. Even though Ghana has experienced political instability through unwarranted military interventions, it is a known fact that the chieftaincy institution has demonstrated amazing resilience and still remains a key player, not only at the local level, but also in national life.

Though the key role of chiefs as the bastion of local political authority has been dented for many reasons, the institution is still revered, especially in communities where chiefs have made name for themselves by spearheading local development.

The nature of the challenges confronting the chieftaincy institution over the years are varied and range from attempts to break their authority to the hardly noticeable marginalisation of chiefs in political life through constitutional provisions. A common threat to the institution is the perceived erosion of the both the political power of chiefs and of their economic resource base (Kraus 1969, Frimpong 1973). It is true that the institution of chieftaincy and the role of chiefs in national development efforts have been formalised by the fairly recent creation of National and Regional Houses of Chiefs.

### **The 1992 Constitution and Chieftaincy**

The 1992 Constitution explicitly refers to the specific role the chieftaincy institution in our new democratic era. However, this constitutional recognition in chapter 22 of the Constitution is not altogether clear what is expected of traditional rulers to support and sustain democratic governance. Nevertheless, it is arguable that if chiefs play their specific traditional roles, it will guarantee development and enhance democratic governance. By their respect for the constitution, and by implication their adherence to its provisions, chiefs should be in a position to impact

positively on democratic consolidation.

Article 272 of the Constitution states that the National House of Chiefs, which represents the interest of all chiefs at the national level, shall:

- Advise any person or authority charged with any responsibility under this Constitution or any other law for any matter relating to or affecting chieftaincy
- Undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law, and compile the customary laws in lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin;
- Undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful;
- Perform such other functions, not being inconsistent with any function assigned to the House of Chiefs of a region, as Parliament may refer to it.

As noted earlier, the debate on whether or not chiefs should engage in partisan politics rages. The constitution states categorically in Article 276 (1) that ‘a chief shall not take part in active politics, and any chief wishing to do so and seeking election to Parliament shall abdicate his stool or skin’. This view is reinforced in Article (94) (3). It is the view of many that by debarring chiefs outright from active politics, good talents that could be tapped for development purpose may be left out. This fear is however allayed by Article 176 (2) of the Constitution which states that a chief may be appointed to any public office for which he is otherwise qualified.

But a counter argument to Article 276(1) quoted earlier is that it contradicts the spirit and letter of the constitution. In the sense that if the constitution upholds individual rights to freedom of association, which include ‘freedom to form or join any association or union at national or international level, for the protection of their interest (Article 21 (e))’ then the restriction imposed on chiefs is undemocratic. Some chiefs have condemned their disqualification, seeing it as an infringement on their fundamental constitutional rights.

The anger of the chiefs against their disqualification notwithstanding, it must be stressed that the constitutional provisions debarring chiefs from meddling in active politics appears sound both in letter and in spirit. Whilst one cannot gloss over the fact that the constitutional provision does contravene a fundamental democratic right of chiefs to join any association or political party of their choice, one needs to look beyond that, and realise the political harm that such meddling in party policies will bring to the revered institution. In any criticism of the provision, one should never lose sight of the history of the relations between chiefs and central governments since colonial times. Also, the complex nature of modern politics and the inherent dynamics of chieftaincy and modern politics should be considered in any analysis and understanding of the constitutional provision. Above all, the desire for peace at all levels of governance to facilitate development should be seen as paramount in this regard.

### **Chieftaincy in the Context of Decentralisation and Local Government Administration**

The role of chiefs in local government has not been consistent over the years. In an attempt to promote people’s participation at the grassroots, the PNDC launched the local government reforms of 1988 and its concomitant decentralisation program. The local government law (PNDC 207) was promulgated. This changed the structure of local government administration in Ghana by introducing the District Assemblies. One result was that chiefs lost their one-third

membership of local government bodies. The PNDC asserted that the representative or active participation of chiefs in decentralised institutions such as the District Assemblies or any organ of power would be undemocratic and anti-revolutionary. The PNDC local government administrative reform therefore reserve a place or status for chiefs within the structures of the new local government system. However, the local government law does not preclude the appointment of chiefs as DA members, since the central government has the power to appoint 30% of the DA membership.

Under the 1992 Constitution, Article 242 (d) makes provision for two chiefs from the Regional House of Chiefs to serve on the Regional Coordinating Councils. The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), Section 5 (d) makes a similar provision. Unfortunately, neither the constitution nor Act 462 makes a provision for chiefs to be automatic or ex-officio members of the DAs. This is a serious omission that needs to be reconsidered.

Historical evidence about the contribution of chiefs to local governance and development abound; the utility that is likely to be derived from involving chiefs in local government administration has received extensive consideration. The Coussey Committee Report on Constitutional Reform had this to say on Chieftaincy in Ghana: 'The whole institution of chieftaincy is so closely bound up with the life of our communities that its disappearance would spell disaster' (Schiffer, 1970). This Report argued that, though the new local government system is good for building a stable democracy, such efforts should respect 'community interest', which meant not only that local government should only be close to the people but, by implication, that local administration should be rooted in the tradition of the people. As Kwame Arhin remarked, 'Chieftaincy appears as a force of continuity and of integration in a period of considerable flux' (Arhin 1985). The institution of Chieftaincy according to some people 'is in itself sacred to us, because in it are reposed our traditions and culture. It has always been our link with the past and the root of our homes'. In other words, the traditional political system of chieftaincy provides the linkage between the old and the new - 'modern democracy' and 'traditional democracy', and the present and the past, all in attempt to maintain continuity and stability. The complete disbarment of chiefs from our present system of local governance may therefore be unwelcome and counter to local developmental programmes.

The Local Administration Act of 1971 was a remarkable attempt in the right direction, where both the elective and traditional elements were represented in differing proportions. In this structure traditional authorities were given two-thirds representation on the local Councils and one-third representation on the District Councils. This provision of 1971 was, however, removed in the 1988 reforms. This step was a major blow to the Chieftaincy. The provisions of PNDL (207) and the 1992 Constitution further undermined their status. For many, these measures sacrifice Ghanaian tradition and culture on the altar of democracy and modernity.

A further point is that there is no legislative provision for the automatic inclusion of chief in any of the sub-district structures such as Urban, Zonal, and Town Councils and Unit Committees.

However, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives are enjoined to consult chiefs in the appointment of persons to be members of the sub-district political institutions. This lack of institutionalised representation of chiefs in the local government structure has created a series of tensions and strained relations between some chiefs, functionaries of DAs, and some DCEs at the local level. The new local government system has failed to fully integrate chiefs structurally and functionally into the decision-making process. This situation has for sometime now left chiefs in a limbo, thereby hindering their effective participation in decision-making and development at the

local levels. Since chiefs wield enormous power at the community level, to by-pass them in implementing the democratisation project is likely to undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of such an effort. The question that remains unanswered is how can chiefs be fully integrated into the process of democratic governance? The system of State audits is one such process that still incorporates the institutions of chieftaincy in the course of its annual work.

### **The State Audit and the Auditor-General's Authority**

The Auditor-General derives his mandate to audit the accounts of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils annually from the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, 1992, Article 187(2) and the Chieftaincy Act, 1971 (Act 370), Section 59(2). At present there is a National House of Chiefs, 10 Regional Houses of Chiefs, and 176 Traditional Councils. Article 187(5) of the 1992 Constitution enjoins that the A-G within six months after the end of the immediately preceding financial year submits his report to parliament and in that report draws attention to any irregularities in the accounts audited and to any other matter which in his opinion ought to be brought to the notice of Parliament. This paper, among other things, tries to assess the performance of the A-G in his discharge of this responsibility on the basis of available reports to Parliament covering the period 1993-1999 on the financial operations of the Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils within the same period, with focus on compliance with existing regulations. On the whole, the A-G satisfactorily performed his mandated functions of auditing the accounts of the various Managements of the chieftaincy institution and reporting to Parliament accordingly. What this review cannot establish for certain is the promptness with which these obligations were met.

### **Significant issues arising from the Work of the Auditor-General, 1993-1999**

A careful examination of the reports reviewed revealed two issues of significance, which are pervasive in the A-G's findings and recommendations. The first is a low standard of accounting. This finding characterised the A-G's reports to Parliament within the period under review (i.e. 1993-1999). The accounts of most of the Traditional Councils were not maintained in a satisfactory manner. Consequently, most Traditional Councils were not able to prepare and submit their Annual Accounts to the A-G for validation. For instance, the A-G submitted in his 1995 report to Parliament that two out of the ten Regional House of Chiefs and 102 out of the 168 Traditional Councils which operated in the country defaulted in the preparation and submission of annual accounts for validation (1995 report, p. 83; section 325). This situation did not change much in 1996, especially with the Traditional Councils where 94 out of 165 Councils audited again defaulted. (1996 Report, p. 98, section 371). In all these instances, the A-G attributed the violations to the lack of competent accounting personnel able to handle professionally the accounts of the Councils.

The second fault found by the A-G as reflected in reports suggests that operating without approved estimates had become the norm of most Traditional Councils contrary to section 58 of the Chieftaincy Act, 1971, and the persistent reminders by the AG to the Chieftaincy Secretariat to rectify this anomaly (1993 Reports, p.74, section 360; 1994 Reports p. 113, section 545; 1995 Reports, p. 84 section 327; 1996 Reports p. 98-99 section 373). Apparently, the Chieftaincy Secretariat had failed to find a solution to this unacceptable practice - hence its recurrence in the

1993-1999 reports. The same applies to the problem of incompetent accounting staff managing the accounts of the Councils.

### **A Profile of Selected Regional Cases from the Auditor-General's Reports**

This section of the paper presents data drawn from the A-G's reports regarding the administration of funds by various traditional authorities. The data show a fairly consistent pattern as regards the lack of sound accounting practice and the failure to work within the approved monetary estimates. These data could be elaborated by reference to other regions studied in the course of the research, but the following cases exemplify the general picture.

#### ***Case 1: Ashanti Region***

Two Houses of Chiefs and 18 Traditional Councils operated in the Ashanti region during the period 1993 to 1999. The low standard of accounting in most of the Councils was consistently reported on by the A-G in his Reports. This phenomenon was attributed to the inability of accounting staff to prepare the accounts due to their lack of accounting knowledge. Consequently, 3 out of the 20 councils failed to submit their financial statements and accounts for validation, in 1993 (see 1993 Reports, page 78 section 374), 5 in 1994 (1994 Report, page 114, Sections 348-550), 6 in 1995 (1995 Report, page 84, Sections 329-330), and 3 in 1996 (1996 Report, page 99, section 376). At the end of the 1996 financial year, Mampong, Kumanu, Asokore, Nsuta and Manso Nkwanta were in heavy arrears, Manso Nkwanta being the guiltiest with arrears of 12 years operating without submitting annual accounts for validation.

Operation without approved estimates was the norm in the region during the period under review, in contravention of section 58 of the chieftaincy Act, 1971. This flaw was reported by the A-G in all his reports. (See 1993, section 375; 1994, section 551; 1995, section 331 and 1996, section 373).

#### ***Case 2: Greater Accra Region***

One Regional House of Chiefs and 7 Traditional councils constitute the Traditional Authority in the Greater Region of Accra. In 1993, all the six Traditional Councils and the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs submitted their 1993 annual accounts for validation (1993 Report, section 383). According to section 592 of the 1994 Report of the A-G, the accounts of the Councils and the House of Chiefs were satisfactorily kept. The only problem was the delay in the submission of their accounts for validation (1994 Report, section 592). The undue delay in the submission of accounts for validation was again recorded in 1995. This time, at the time the A-G compiled his report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1995, four Traditional Councils had failed to submit their annual report for validation (1995, section 350). There was an improvement in 1996, though three Traditional Councils still defaulted in the submission of their annual accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 1996 (1996, Report, Section 419).

Operating without approved estimates was recorded in both 1994 (section 590) and 1995 (Section 351) reports. As stated by the A-G in his 1994 report (section 591), 'In the absence of approved estimates, control of expenditure exercised over the Traditional Councils and the House of Chiefs could not be meaningfully assessed'. This does not augur well for prudent financial management

by traditional authorities in the region.

### **Case 3: Northern Region**

Six (6) Traditional Authorities comprising one Regional House of Chiefs and five (5) Traditional Councils operated in the northern during the period under review. According to the A-G's report of 1993, only the Northern Regional House of Chiefs and the Gonja Traditional Council submitted their annual accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1993 for validation. The other two (2) Traditional Councils defaulted. The accounts which were submitted were reportedly kept satisfactorily and annual accounts promptly submitted. The arrears of defaulting councils ranged between 2 and 5 years, Mamprusi being the worse offender (1993, Section 387-389). In 1994, probably due to the ethnic conflict which broke out in the course of the year, only the Regional House of Chiefs submitted its accounts to the A-G for validation. The state of default of the Traditional Councils (including the newly established North Mo Traditional Council) ranged between one and four (4) years (1994 Report, Sections 601-602).

According to the A-G's report of 1995, the trend in default persisted as only one out of the five Traditional Councils submitted their 1995 annual accounts for validation (1995 Report, Section 354). This situation did not change in 1996 as the A-G reported four (4) defaulters in relation to the submission of annual accounts.

Operating without approved estimates appeared across board in the region during the period under review. (See 1993, section 390; 1994, section 603, 1995, section 355 and 1996, section 425 of the A-G's Reports). The only exception was the Gonja Traditional Council whose estimates were duly approved by the Northern Regional Administration in 1993.

### **Case 4: Western Region**

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1996, The Western Regional House of Chiefs and 21 Traditional Councils operated in the region. At the close of the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1993 only the Regional House of Chiefs and 9 Traditional Councils submitted their accounts for audit. Out of these the accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and 7 Traditional Councils were examined and certified as being properly maintained. Time constraints prevented the validation of the accounts of the remaining two Councils. The 12 defaulting Traditional Councils were in arrears of between one and sixteen years. Lower Axim, Gwira and Western Nzema had 10, 14 and 16 years respectively in arrears of submitting their accounts for validation. (1993 Report, sections 395-397).

In 1994 only four Traditional Councils together with the Regional House of Chiefs had their accounts audited. These accounts were certified by the A-G as properly maintained. Six (6) other Traditional Councils which submitted their accounts could not have them validated due to time constraints. Again Gwira ranked highest in default with 15 years arrears followed by Lower Axim and Suaman with 11 and 5 years arrears respectively in submission of financial statements and accounts to the Auditor-Generals Department for validation. (A-G's Report 1994, section 606 & 607). The State of Accounts in 1995 was not better than in 1994. At the end of the financial year only 8 Traditional Councils had submitted their annual accounts. Two (2) of these were not validated (A-G's Report 1995, section 371). There was an improvement in the state of accounts in 1996. The accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and 9 Traditional Councils were audited and



found to be properly maintained. The remaining 12 Traditional Councils failed to submit their accounts for validation (A-G's Report, 1996 Section 448).

For the period under review almost all Traditional Authorities in the region whose accounts were validated operated without approved estimates from 1993 to 1995 (A-G's Report 1993 section 398, 1994, Section 609; 1995, Section 372). In 1996 however, The Regional House of Chiefs and five (5) out of the nine Traditional Councils whose accounts were validated operated with approved estimates (A-G's Report 1996, section 448).

### **Case 5: Eastern Region**

The Eastern Region has 12 Traditional Authorities comprising one Regional House of Chiefs and 11 Traditional Councils. It seems to be one of the few regions whose books of accounts were properly kept and whose Traditional Councils, relatively, operated with approved estimates. The A-G's 1993 Report indicated that the State of Accounts remained poor as in previous years in 6 out of the 12 Traditional Councils. This called for intervention by AGD in preparing the accounts for them. However, Akwamu Traditional Council failed to submit its accounts for validation (A-G's 1993 Report Section 362). Apparently due to the involvement of the AGD in the preparation of the accounts of some Traditional Councils in the region in 1993 coupled with the reported regular training programmes organised for Registrars of the various Traditional Councils by the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs, the Eastern region scored 100% in the preparation and submission of annual accounts for audit for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 1994 (A-G's Report, 1994, section 576). This trend probably continued in 1995 as it was reported in 1996 that 'The accounts of the Regional House of Chiefs and the ten Traditional Councils whose accounts were examined continued to be well kept and rendered for audit'. The validation of the New Juabeng Traditional Council was in progress at the time the report was written (A-G's Report 1996, Section 410).

According to the A-G's report of 1993, apart from two Traditional Councils, Anum and Manya Krobo, the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs and the other nine Traditional Councils operated with approved estimates (A-G's Report, 1993, Section 363). With the exception of the Anum Traditional Council which consistently defaulted in operating with approved estimates over the years, and Akwamu Traditional Council, which failed to submit estimates for the year 1996 for approval, all Traditional Authorities complied with the requirement of submitting for approval and operating with approved estimates (A-G's Reports: 1994, section 577; 1995, section 347; 1996, Section 411).

### **Case 6: Upper East Region**

At the beginning of the period under review the Upper East Regional House of Chiefs and four Traditional Councils constituted the Traditional Authority of the region. Six new Traditional Councils were however created in the course of 1993, bringing the number of Traditional Authorities to eleven. The A-G submitted in his 1993 report that with the exception of the newly created Councils, all the old Councils maintained satisfactory books of accounts and submitted their annual accounts for the 1993 financial year for validation. This record was reversed in 1994, with as many as 8 out of the 11 Councils defaulting. This trend did not change in 1995 and 1996. In 1995 six Traditional Councils failed to prepare and submit their annual accounts for audit while

eight defaulted in 1996. This negative trend in financial management by the Traditional Authorities in the region was attributed to the low-calibre of Registrars who manned the Councils, in terms of accounting know-how (Refer A-G's reports: 1995, Section 358; 1996, Section 431). During the period under review, all the Traditional Councils operated without approved estimates. The only isolated case occurred in 1996 with the Regional House of Chiefs operating with approved estimates (A-G's Reports: 1993, Section 573; 1995, Section 359; 1996; Section 432).

### **Case 7: Brong Ahafo Region**

The Regional House of Chiefs and 42 Traditional Councils constituted the Traditional Authorities in the Brong Ahafo region in 1993, 1994 and 1995. An additional Traditional Council was created in 1996 to increase their number to 43. The lack of competent accounting staff was identified as the main hindrance to proper financial management and adequate financial reporting. Failure to prepare and submit financial statements and annual accounts for audit was the dominant feature in the A-G's reports on the state of accounts of the House of Chiefs and Traditional Councils of Brong Ahafo-during the period under review. For example in 1995, 35 councils failed to submit their annual accounts for validation, 32 in 1996 and 20 were in arrears up to 1988 for the 1993 and 1994 financial years. For lack of competent accounting personnel to handle the accounts, most of the Traditional Councils failed to maintain proper accounts. Consequently, none of the 43 Councils that operated in the region in 1993 was able to prepare and submit their annual accounts for validation by the A-G (A-G's Reports 1993, Sections (401-402; 1994, Section 560; 1995, Sections 337-338 and 1996, Section 338)). According to the A-G's reports covering the period under review, almost half of those Councils which did submit their annual accounts for audit still operated without approved estimates contrary to section 58 of the Chieftaincy Act, 1971.

### **Fraud, Losses and serious Irregularities**

During the period under review, the category in the Auditor-General's reports labelled 'Fraud, Losses and Serious Irregularities' was minimal with regard to the Traditional Authorities. There were four cases, two each in 1993 and 1996, reported on by the A-G. While the 1993 cases involved cash shortages, outstanding advances and payment for goods not delivered, irregularities identified in 1996 concerned an outstanding vehicle advance as well as a deposit for a bus not delivered. The first instance of defalcation placed under the heading 'Fraud, losses and serious irregularities' was associated with the Manya Krobo Traditional Council – Odumase of the Eastern Region. The A-G's 1993 report indicated that the Registrar was unable to account for the sum of ₵709,426.92 being part of a total cash balance of ₵836,266.92. In the same Traditional Council, the A-G's report revealed that an amount of ₵400,000 granted as a loan to a late employee to purchase a car had not been refunded since 1988. In both cases, the A-G strongly recommended that appropriate steps should be taken to recover the various amounts (A-G's Report, 1993, Sections 371-372).

The Kpone Traditional Council was the second to be found guilty of inappropriate financial management with respect to frauds, losses and irregularities. The A-G reported that the Council deposited an amount of ₵240,000 with the Tema Municipal Assembly in February, 1993 for the purchase of two television sets which, as at the close of the fiscal year, had not been delivered (A-G's Report, 1993, Section 386 p.82). The A-G's 1996 report recorded another instance of fraud,

losses and serious irregularities in the accounts of the Amantin Traditional Council in the Brong Ahafo Region. The A-G reported that an advance of ₵12,688,000.00 was given to the Amantin Community in November 1995 to purchase a vehicle for Commercial use, but as at the end of the 1996 financial year no repayments had been made. The A-G recommended immediate action to recover the amount (A-G's Report, 1996 Section (400), p.104). The second irregularity identified by the A-G in his 1996 report involved the Volta Regional House of Chiefs which paid ₵10m to the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) Accra in February, 1996 for the purchase of a 25-seater Neoplan bus. At the end of the fiscal year, the bus had not been delivered.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, the data indicate that the Auditor-General conducted thorough audits on Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils for the period 1993-99. Two major issues attracted the attention of the A-G: the low standard of accounting and the widespread phenomenon of operating without approved estimates. Financial mismanagement under the item 'Fraud, losses and serious irregularities' was reported to be minimal. The lack of competent staff to manage the affairs of the Traditional Councils is a particular causal variable behind such matters as poor accounting, operating without estimates, failure to submit books for auditing and the unintentional violation of financial regulations.

Chieftaincy, though the oldest and most respected traditional governance institution in Ghana, has undergone neglect and marginalisation for a very long time. Ghana has implemented far-reaching institutional reforms but not single reform programme has been directed at improving the institutional capacity of the oldest institution in the country. Consequently, traditional authorities could be argued to fail to promote accountability, peace, security and good governance. The increasing neglect of chiefs has created a cleavage in the democratisation and decentralisation process underway in Ghana. The potential influence of traditional governments in Ghana is still significant: though they are gone they cannot be forgotten. Traditional government will remain part of our political and governance systems. We must not ignore them.

In addition to the several recommendations from the Auditor-General over time in connection with issues discussed the following further observations are made: the administration and management of all Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils in Ghana should be subjected to rigorous modernising reform; the Councils should be resourced and staffed with competent personnel; transactions of the Councils should be made more transparent; Houses of Chiefs and Traditional Councils should be obliged by statute to publish financial statements annually; and outmoded laws obstructing the operations of the Houses of Chiefs and the Councils should be reformed or revoked.

Overall, the entire institution should be considered for reform in the hope of building its capacity to govern and manage development. The decentralisation and new local government system should be restructured to integrate chiefs more meaningfully in the decision-making process. Any further neglect of them could turn them into obstacles to Ghana's democratic experiment. Indeed, they are gone but they cannot so easily be forgotten.

## **References**

Ansere, J.K. 1993. *The role of Local government in Nation Building*, Institute of Adult

Education, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Monograph No. 4 December.

Apter, D. 1960. 'The role of traditionalism in the political modernization of Ghana and Uganda', *World Politics* 13.

Arhin, K. 1979. *A Profile of Brong Akyempin*. Accra. Afram Publishers.

Arhin, K. 1985. *Traditional rule in Ghana past and present*. Accra. Sedco.

Busia, K. A. 1951. *The position of the chief in the modern political system of Ashanti*. London. OUP.

Crook, R.C. 1986. 'Decolonization, the colonial state and chieftaincy in the Gold Coast'. *African Affairs* vol. 85, pp 338.

Drah, F.K. 1979. 'The Brong political Movement', in *A Profile of Brong Akyempin*, Arhin, K. (ed.) Accra. Afram Publishers.

Frimpong, K. 1973. 'The Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs and the politics of independence, 1946-1958', in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. XIV.

Ghana, Republic of, 1992. *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*, Tema. Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Ghana, Republic of, 1988. *Local Government Law, PNDC Law 207*, Tema. Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Ghana, Republic of, 1993a. *From Centre to the Grassroots*, Vol. III, Accra. Venus Publication.

Ghana, Republic of, 1975. *Income Tax Decree*, (SMCD 55).

Ghana, Republic of, 1979. *Financial Administration Decree (FAD) and Financial Administration Regulation (FAR)*, (L.I. 1234), Accra. Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Ghana, Republic of, 1993. *Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462)*, Tema. Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Ghana, Republic of, 1993. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1994. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1995. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1996. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1997. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1998. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Ghana, Republic of, 1999. *Report of the Auditor-General on the Public Accounts of Ghana, District Assemblies and Traditional Councils*.

Kraus, J. 1969. 'On the politics of nationalism and social change in Ghana', *Journal of Modern African Studies* vol. 7, (1).

Nsarko, J.K. 1964. *Local Government in Ghana*, Accra. Ghana Universities Press.

Nugent, P. 1996. 'An abandoned project? The nuances of chieftaincy, development and history in Ghana's Volta region', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 37-38.

Sciffer, H.B. 1970. 'Local administration and national development; fragmentation and decentralization in Ghana', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, vol. 4, 1.

## **A Note on Alcohol Consumption and Sexual Behaviour of Youths in Botswana**

Eugene K. Campbell  
*Department of Demography*  
*Private Box 70075*  
*University of Botswana*  
*Gaborone, Botswana*  
*Tel: (267) 355000 (W); (267) 322356 (H)*  
*Fax: (267) 585099, Email: Campbell@mopipi.ub.bw*

### **Introduction**

The global incidence of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) has led to a flood of research into their causes, processes and effects. Theoretical and empirical dimensions that link alcohol with sexual intercourse, sexually transmitted infections (STI), HIV and AIDS relate largely to youths in the United States of America (Cooper, 1992; McEwan et al., 1992; Dermen et al., 1998; Murphy et al., 1998; Santelli et al., 1998; Anonymous, 1999; Chapko et al., 1999; Fromme et al., 1999; Mott, 1999; Anonymous, 2002). But few studies in southern Africa (and none in Botswana) have focused on this subject. African ideology about alcohol and sexual intercourse are strongly based on folklore, mythology and symbolic manifestations; and it is ironic that both are capable of producing joy, through sustained lifespan within a community, and misery through premature death. While moderate alcohol consumption may have positive health effects (Dufour, 1999), large quantities of alcohol could result in physical trauma, falls, malnutrition, poor intellectual and work performance and death (Kinney and Leaton, 1983; Gossop, 1989; Milgram, 1990; Van der Gaar et. al., 2000; Rehm and Rossow, 2001). Indeed, alcohol plays an important role in fostering poverty - a factor that is crucial to the quality of human immune system and exposure to HIV infection. It is also known that alcohol-induced intoxication lowers inhibitions, and increases the likelihood of men fumbling over condom application, having sex without condoms and having multiple sexual partners (Gordon et al., 1997; Ford and Norris, 1998; Poulson et al., 1998; Estrin, 1999). Risky sexual behaviour in this era of HIV/AIDS could lead to contraction of STI, HIV infection and, eventually, death.

This paper seeks to examine alcohol consumption and its effect on sexual behaviour of youths. It also examines possible relationship between alcohol use and other social factors. In this paper, alcohol use and alcohol consumption are employed interchangeably. Consistent condom use refers to use of condom always. While alcohol is probably the most abused substance in Botswana, Botswana (citizens of Botswana) are not among the highest of the world's alcohol consumers. In 1996, Botswana ranked eighty-third among 153 developed and developing countries for which data on alcohol consumption exist (United Nations, 1998). Indeed, per capita consumption of alcohol in South Africa, Gabon, Liberia, Zimbabwe, etc. exceeds that in Botswana. Its level of alcohol consumption is by far lower than the case in the United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, France, Ireland and Switzerland, among others, all of which have far lower HIV prevalence rates than Botswana. The indications are that while alcohol consumption is declining in developed countries, it is increasing in developing countries (United Nations 2001). But whereas per capita alcohol consumption increased in about 43 percent globally between

1970/72 and 1994/96, it declined by 1.4 percent in Botswana during the same period (Anonymous, 1998). This begs the question, what then justifies investigating a link between alcohol and sex in Botswana?

This study is partly justified by uncertainty about the completeness of data on alcohol consumption in Botswana and other southern African countries. Home-brewed alcoholic beverages are commonly and illicitly sold and consumed in Botswana's rural and urban areas by especially the poor and those aged 18-34 years (Molamu and Manyeneng, 1988; MacDonald, 1996b; Campbell and Ntsabane, 1997; Molamu and MacDonald, 1996). While traditional beverages, such as *bojalwa*, were initially designed to contain small amounts of alcohol, their increasing economic value has influenced the inclusion of solvents and sulphuric acid from motor vehicle batteries to enhance their capacity to intoxicate (MacDonald, 1996b). So, although statistics indicate that black people drink less alcohol than their white counterparts, it appears that alcohol intake is much higher among blacks than statistics reveal. Given relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty among Botswana, nutritional levels are generally low among the poor due to inadequate food intake. Thus, home-brewed alcoholic beverages that were previously perceived to have nutritional value are now contributing towards compromising nutritional levels of the poor that abuse alcohol to the extent of exposing them to easy access by physically and mentally debilitating diseases. A further rationale for this study is argument in much of the existing literature that Botswana women are perceived as objects of sexual pleasure, certainty that heterosexual sexual intercourse is the primary mode of HIV transmission in sub-Saharan Africa, observations about a probable link between alcohol and sexual intercourse and Campbell et al.'s (2002) observation in South Africa of an association between alcohol consumption and increased rates of HIV infection.

### **The Social Profile of Botswana**

Botswana's population, 1.7 million, is one of the smallest in Africa. With current HIV infection rate of 36 percent among the population aged 15-49 years, the global demographic effects of HIV/AIDS are highest among Botswana (citizens of Botswana). Some 34 percent of females and 16 percent of males aged 15-24 years are infected with HIV. The life expectancy of Botswana fell from 65 to 46 years between 1991 and 2000. By 2005 it would be 36 years, when it could have been 70 years if AIDS did not exist (United Nations, 2000). For over a decade, the government has maintained a massive campaign to sensitise people about HIV/AIDS and how to minimise the risk of infection. Consistent condom use, delayed age at first sexual intercourse and sexual abstinence are among intervention strategies recognised by national government and non-governmental organisations. Alcohol use and abuse, on the other hand, have hardly featured among HIV-related policies. Several social scientists have investigated the determinants of high HIV infection rates in Botswana, with sexual intercourse among youths being the prime focus. These studies examined factors influencing sexual behaviour from several perspectives, including modernisation effect, poverty, multiple sexual partners, poor parental guidance and non-institutionalised prostitution (Seboni, 1993; Ball, 1996; Macdonald, 1996a; Letamo and Bainame, 1996; Selolwane et al., 1999; Meekers and Ahmed, 2000). But none of these studies focused on the role of alcohol, thereby eliminating from the policy equations one of the most important determinants of risky sexual behaviour among youths. Seboni noted that taking alcohol before sexual intercourse was rare while Ball's sample population did not consider alcohol an important

motivator of sexual intercourse. Apart from fleeting references by Selolwane et al. to alcohol and other drug use where forced sex was initiated by male youths, other researchers apparently ignored the effect of alcohol.

Up to the late 1980s commercial sex workers (CSWs) were mostly found within spaces occupied by hotels and other amusement places where alcohol was sold. Since the 1990s CSWs have increasingly been motivated by poverty and increased demand for luxury goods to operate on the street in major towns at night, mostly sheltered by the shadows of nearby trees and wall fences. Commercial sex work (or prostitution) has been linked with heavy alcohol (and other drug) use amongst CSWs and their clients particularly where sex workers operate in or near drinking places (Plant *et al.*, 1989; De Graaf, 1995). Though little is known about prostitution in Botswana, evidence from South Africa, Kenya, Zaire and Rwanda indicate that up to 80 percent of black sex workers in parts of the region have HIV (Plant *et al.*, 1989; Rees *et al.*, 2000). Given the dependence of CSWs and their clients on alcohol to reduce social inhibitions, its ability to intoxicate and reduce mental coherence and enhance risky sexual behaviour (including the characteristic multiple sexual partnership and poor or non-use of condoms), it is easy to perceive that a combination of alcohol and sex through prostitution contributes to the spread of HIV and AIDS in Botswana. Though recent studies suggest awareness of HIV/AIDS and preventive measures amongst most CSWs in southern and eastern Africa, very few use the condom consistently. Indeed, most would proceed to have unprotected sex where clients are prepared to pay extra to do so (Rees *et al.*, 2000; Gysels, 2001; Varga, 2001; United Nations, 2002). In Botswana women are often exposed to rape, the incidence of which increased by 7 percent between 1995 and 1997 and increased further by 11 percent during the next twelve months. A considerable number of such cases involved alcohol consumption by the assailant, victim or both (Botswana 1999). Violent sexual abuse of women persists, and this is steeped in traditional belief that women are inferior enough to be referred to as children (Macdonald 1996a). Studies elsewhere in the region reveal a presence of alcohol in rape incidence and fear of rape serving to deter women from using alcohol (Mamman *et al.* 2002). In South Africa, most rapes occur during weekends - the period when exposure to alcohol consumption leisure activities is highest (Swart *et al.* 2000). Alcohol abuse in Botswana's cities is easily visible on weekends by the heaps of empty cans of alcohol beverages that lie near drinking places awaiting collection for recycling. Several studies have attested to rape victims' exposure to risk of HIV infection from the assailant. But unlike South Africa, where the spread of HIV is as alarming as in Botswana, HIV intervention policies in Botswana have not yet incorporated assistance to rape victims. Though the proportion of Botswana males and females who become sexually active by their twentieth birthday is lower than in other Southern African countries, relatively more Botswana than Zimbabweans and Tanzanians commence sexual intercourse by age 15 (McCauley and Salter, 1995; Singh, et. al. 2000). Sexual intercourse is understood by Botswana youths as a critical expression of love, so much so that having boyfriends or girlfriends is considered to be more or less synonymous with having sexual intercourse (Ball, 1996). Unprotected sexual intercourse contributed to high and increasing levels of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection (STI) among Botswana youths between the 1980s and 1990s (Botswana 1994). While premarital sex and pregnancy were frowned upon prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, an effect of modernisation has been increasing tolerance of pre- and extra-marital sexual relationships and premarital pregnancy. Migration of Botswana men to South African mines and poverty are also assumed to be among factors that have contributed to risky sexual behaviour and spread of HIV among Botswana

(Macdonald 1996a).

## **Methodology**

Primary quantitative data were obtained from a sample survey of 1124 males and females aged 14 to 24 years between November 1997 and January 1998. A stratified sample design, structured questionnaires and canvassers (or 'face-to-face') methods were used to collect the data. In Gaborone, the selection of an appropriate sample size for this study was based on an assumed proportion ( $p$ ) of sexually active youths in the city. From the variation in the proportion of sexually active teenagers in Botswana, it was assumed that the true level of sexually active youths (14-24 years) in Botswana is between 60.0 percent and 80.0 percent. The sample size was therefore predetermined at three levels of precision where the percentage random standard error (prse) corresponding to 60.0 percent, 70.0 percent, and 80.0 percent sexual activity were computed. In order to obtain populations that were not affected much by social and economic conditions in Gaborone, rural areas were selected purposively from the northern part of the country. Selection of sample population in each sample locality was done randomly. Though the initial sample size in Gaborone was 1000, 891 youths were enumerated. The additional 233 were enumerated in the villages, namely Masunga, Sebina, Shashe/Semotswane, Tawana, Tsamaya and Zwenshambe. To ensure confidentiality and, thus, reliability of responses, each responded was enumerated, with permission, out of earshot of a third person. Qualitative information was collected through in-depth interviews.

## **Quantitative Analytical framework**

Chi square, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression analysis were used. Chi square was applied to examine bi-variate interactions between alcohol use and selected factors. ANOVA was applied to examine the effects of a single factor on frequency of sexual intercourse. In each case, a third variable (age of youth) was used as a control. Multiple regression analysis was used to isolate the determinants of alcohol consumption and sexual intercourse. Because the data lacked additivity, logarithmic transformation was done to induce normality. Consequently, the means in Table 1 are actually antilogarithms of the initial means obtained from transformed data. Stepwise method was used to select the predictors because of its ability to correct for effects of multicollinearity (Draper and Smith, 1981; Neter *et al*, 1985; Mukherjee *et al*, 1998). In applying multiple regression analysis, the response variables are (1) number of (alcoholic) drinks consumed per day and (2) frequency of sexual intercourse per month (i.e. 'number of times youth had sex in the past month'). The first response reflects quantity of alcohol consumed. It is a better indicator of alcohol consumption than the number of times youth drink alcohol. The second response reflects current sexual activity. Initially the predictors included in the development of the equations are age of youth, education of youth, education of youth's father, education of youth's mother, proportion of surviving brothers, proportion of surviving sisters, age when youth first knew about sex, number of sexual partners youth had simultaneously, number of boyfriend or girlfriend had in the past 12 months, current number of boyfriend/girlfriend, age at first sexual intercourse, number of children ever born or fathered, number of times youth went to nightclub, bar or party, number of times youth drank alcohol and number of drinks youth consumed per day. While number of times youth had sex in the past month was initially included as a predictor when the response variable was *number of drinks consumed per day*, it was excluded where the



response was *frequency of sexual intercourse per month*.

Two of the alcohol-related predictors (i.e. number of times youth drank alcohol and number of drinks consumed per day) were excluded when developing the first model. The second model includes the effect of number of alcoholic drinks youth consumed per day while the third model includes the effect of number of times youth drank alcohol. The contributions of individual variables to total coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) are excluded from Table 2 due to its presentation. Where appropriate, they are included in the text. It is worth noting that education of respondent's parents was included among the predictors because it is better for explaining respondent's attitudes and behaviour than the respondent's education (Campbell 1993, Campbell and Campbell 1997).

## **Results**

Out of 1,124 youths interviewed, 59 percent were females and 41 percent were males. Only 1 percent of the youths never went to school. 34 percent of those that attended school attained senior secondary and post-secondary education. 96 percent were never married and more than three-quarters (76 percent) had no income. Among those that were sexually active, 61 percent were females and 55 percent were males. There were relatively more alcohol consumers among males (41 percent) than among females (23 percent). Chi square revealed that youths' age and education are significantly associated with alcohol use. Alcohol use is significantly higher among out-of-school youths than those that are in school. Most of those in school live with their parents while those not attending school live with relatives, other guardians or spouses. The family that males live with influences their use of alcohol. Sexually active youths consume significantly more alcohol than their virgin counterparts. Though consistent condom use is relatively higher among non-alcohol users, there is no significant association between condom and alcohol use.

## **Perceptions about Alcohol and Sex**

It is not always clear what is meant when people make statements that associate sexual intercourse with alcohol consumption. Do they perceive that the relationship (if there is one) is an outcome of biological, social or psychosocial factors? The in-depth survey revealed that people generally believe that alcohol does affect adolescents' sexual behaviour. Indeed, most respondents' views were consistent with the environmentalist theory. Some of the responses are cited here; but, for purposes of confidentiality, the names are not the real. Pontsho, a 25 year old insurance agent, felt that 'youth nowadays drink alcohol excessively. After drinking, they become reckless by having sex all over the place. Alcohol lowers the mind's alertness, and despite the fact that they know about AIDS/HIV, they engage in behaviour that leads them to contract it'. While Pontsho correctly refers to the inhibiting effect of alcohol, her association of alcohol consumption with reckless sexual behaviour by youth is too general and appears to have been influenced by the tendency to stigmatise HIV infection as a product of irresponsible sexual behaviour. Still, the statement draws attention to a realisation that there is a strong element of social intervention in the behaviour of people after taking alcoholic drinks. According to 17 years old Thabo, 'there is a definite connection between alcohol consumption and reckless sexual behaviour. Sometimes people have sex when they are drunk, and it is not something they planned. They just do it under the influence of alcohol. There are cases where drunken individuals rape or are raped. Also, when people are drunk, they may forget or be unable to protect themselves by using a condom'. This

remark includes the effect of alcohol-induced intoxication on rape and concurs with observations elsewhere about the effect of alcohol on crime (Gossip 1989, Chapko 1999). Where rape occurred due to the perpetrator being intoxicated, it may be surmised that most of such acts were implemented due to sexual arousal following alcohol consumption. Thabo's remark captures much of the social and health factors associated with alcohol use and abuse. It is consistent with remarks by Namibians on this subject (LeBeau et al. 2001).

What seems to be missing in the statements by Pontsho and Thabo is a tendency by others to associate alcohol with sexual intercourse as if there was intervention from biological factors. For instance, 35 year old civil engineer Mpho stated that:

I have never taken alcohol. But my friends who drink alcohol tell me that after drinking, the alcohol drops below the waist (*bo a tsheta*), meaning that it causes them sexual arousal and desire. In that sense, I would say that alcohol is a factor in adolescent sexual practice. After drinking, I don't know if you understand me, one becomes more excited and sociable. So, like my friends tell me, when they want a girl, and they are scared to approach them, they go drinking to gain the bravado to approach the girl.

In addition to social effects on the interrelationship between alcohol and sex, Mpho also includes intervention from biological factors that interact with alcohol to directly affect sexual arousal in humans. This is consistent with hereditarianism and empirical observations about the biological effect of alcohol on sexual behaviour.

### **Alcohol Consumption and Frequency of Sex: A Behavioural Perspective**

The number of sexual intercourse youths had during the past month increased according to the number of times that they drank alcohol (see Table 1). Males who drank at least once a week had 2 times more sex than their non-drinking counterparts. The quantity of alcohol consumed is implicit in the number of alcoholic drinks consumed at a single drinking session. The drinking status of youths' partners does not seem to have significant effect on the sexual behaviour of youths. The frequency of sexual intercourse among males who have had sex with a casual acquaintance when under the influence of alcohol is significantly higher than it is among those who have never had such a sexual encounter.

-----Table 1 Here (On separate file)-----

### **Multiple Regression Analysis**

Both models in Table 2 indicate that alcohol consumption by youths is influenced by attendance of nightclubs, bars and parties; and this is especially so for females. This presents an impression that a link exists between sexual intercourse and alcohol consumption of youths in Botswana.

Considering that Botswana youths tend to associate having a boyfriend or girlfriend with sex, it may seem that the negative signs of the regression coefficients corresponding to number of boyfriends that females had currently ( $b = -0.347$ ) and in the past 12 months ( $b = -0.351$ ) are inconsistent with expectation. Meanwhile, Models 1 and 2 indicate positive relationship between multiple sexual partners among all youths (total) and quantity of drinks consumed per day ( $b = 0.167$  and  $0.172$ , respectively).

-----Table 2 Here on Facing Page (On separate file)-----

While the educational attainment of youths is mutually independent of the number of drinks consumed in a day, both models indicate a significant effect of their father's education on alcohol consumption. The negative signs of the regression coefficients for all adolescents in Models 1 and 2 (-0.168 and -0.143, respectively) are consistent with expectations, and they indicate that offspring of less educated fathers have a greater tendency toward alcohol consumption than their counterparts with more educated fathers.

Models 2 and 3 in Table 3 indicate that alcohol consumption has a significant influence on frequency of sexual intercourse among Batswana youths. Additional results to those presented in Model 2 (not shown in Table) revealed that alcohol consumption contributed 11.3 percent and 26 percent to variations in sexual behaviour of males and females, respectively. With regard to Model 3, the corresponding contributions are 2.1 percent and 24.1 percent, respectively. These  $R^2$  values point towards a greater effect of alcohol on sexual behaviour of females than among males. Models 2 and 3 in the table indicate that attendance of nightclubs, bars and parties tends to influence sexual intercourse among youths. While the effect of nightclub, bars and parties on sexual frequency among youths seems to be stronger among females than males, the models indicate that activities associated with these places tend to reduce the frequency of sexual intercourse among such females ( $b = -0.301$  and  $-0.304$ , respectively).

-----**Table 3 (on separate file) on Facing page**-----

Although alcohol appears to have significant effects on the sexual behaviour of youths, other social factors also play important roles in determining frequency of sexual intercourse. Table 3 shows that for males and females the number of boy/girlfriends youths had over the past 12 months or currently influences the frequency of sexual intercourse. Additional statistics (not shown in the Table) revealed that the number of boyfriends a females had over the past 12 months and the number of girlfriends a male had currently have the greatest influence on frequency of sexual intercourse among female and male youths. From Models 1, 2 and 3 results, it was revealed that number of boyfriends over the past 12 months contributed 67.6 percent, 29.9 percent, and 24.1 percent, respectively, to variance in frequency of sexual intercourse among females. The corresponding contributions of current number of girlfriends among males are 74.4 percent, 54.3 percent, and 58.3 percent, respectively.

The table further indicates that older youths have more sex than their younger counterparts (see Model 1). The model also suggests the existence of a relationship between number of children ever born to females and the frequency of sexual intercourse by females. Likewise, having multiple sexual partners tends to influence the frequency of sexual intercourse among females. While the absence of a significant relationship between multiple sexual partners and sexual intercourse in Models 2 and 3 suggests caution about drawing conclusions from these observations, they should not be overlooked entirely. Model 3 indicates that having brothers contributes towards males' participation in sexual intercourse.

## **Conclusion**

Batswana entertain beliefs (and myths) about alcohol's ability to influence sexual behaviour; and the qualitative part of this study reveals that in general, Batswana youths perceive that alcohol consumption influences people's sexual behaviour. With opinions as strong as this, it is probable that the absence of scientific analysis on alcohol and sex interrelationship in previous studies in

Botswana is partly due to a general conclusion that the two variables are highly related. But conclusions should be based on evidence; and the evidence from this study points to the need for further investigation in order to strengthen conclusions about the subject.

This study reveals strong effects of social factors on sexual behaviour of youths in Botswana. They include alcohol consumption, having a boyfriend or girlfriend, entertaining multiple sexual partners and sibling's behavioural effects. In effect, the sexual behaviour of youths is not determined by alcohol alone (see Harvey and Beckman, 1986; Hines et al., 1998). Alcohol-induced intoxication influences non-use of condoms, and inconsistent condom use by alcohol users partly explains why the incidence of sexually transmitted infections is significantly higher among alcohol users than non-alcohol users. Implicitly, attention is called to the contribution of alcohol to HIV/AIDS infection among youths in Botswana. This serves to reinforce the need for HIV-related policies in Botswana to address every risk factor. In effect, the results point towards adopting an alcohol policy that is designed to control consumption of alcohol in Botswana. But the symbolism of alcohol consumption within cultures that are still steeped in traditional beliefs could pose serious challenges to governmental interventions.

Apparently, alcohol consumption by youths influences sexual behaviour just as much as their sexual behaviour influences consumption of alcohol. Given the interaction between testosterone level and youths' sexual behaviour (Udry and Billy, 1987; Halpern et al., 1994), it is reasonable to expect linearity between alcohol consumption and sexual behaviour of youths. Mindful of the health effects of previous practice of consanguinity in the country, future studies should address biosocial contributions to sexual behaviour, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

### **Acknowledgement**

The author is grateful to the Union for African Population Studies in Dakar for funding this study.

### **References**

- Anonymous. 1998. *Alcohol Consumption*. Geneva. World Health Organization.
- Anonymous. 1999. 'Sexual abuse: A worst crime against children'. *Reprowatch Youth Edition*, 4, 1-2.
- Anonymous. 2002. 'Substance abuse, alcohol linked to unprotected sex'. *Nation's Health*, 32 (3), 15.
- Ball, A. 1996. *The Social and Cultural Construction of Sexual Risk by Youth in Botswana*. PhD thesis, Winnipeg. University of Manitoba.
- Botswana. 1994. *Health Statistics 1992*. Gaborone. Central Statistics Office.
- Botswana. 1999. *Report of a Study of Rape in Botswana*. Gaborone. Ministry of State President.
- Campbell, E.K. 1993. 'Family Size Preferences of Men in the Western Area of Sierra Leone, Methods and Determinants'. *Genus*, 11, 181-199.
- Campbell, C., Williams, B. & Gilgen, D. 2002. 'Is social capital a useful conceptual tool for exploring community level influences on HIV infection? An exploratory case study from South Africa'. *AIDS Care*, 14(1), 41-54.
- Campbell, E.K., & Campbell, P.G. 1997. 'Family Size and Sex Preferences and Eventual Fertility Behaviour in Botswana'. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 29, 191-204.
- Campbell, E.K. & Ntsabane, T. 1997. *Street children in Botswana: A case study in Gaborone*. *Social Development Issues*, 19, 39-53.

- Chapko, M.K., Somse, P., Kimball, A.M., Hawkins, R.V. & Massanga, M. 1999. Predictors of rape in the Central African Republic'. *Health Care and Women International*, 20, 71-77.
- Cooper, M.L. 1992. 'Alcohol and increased behavioural risk for AIDS'. *Alcohol, Health & Research World*, 16, 64-72.
- De Graaf, R. and Vanwesenbeeck, I. 1995. 'Alcohol and drug use in heterosexual and homosexual prostitution, and its relation to protection behaviour'. *AIDS Care*, 7 (1) 35-47.
- Dermen, K.H., Cooper, M.L. & Agocha, V.B. 1998. 'Sex-related alcohol expectancies as moderators of the relationship between alcohol use and risky sex in adolescents'. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 59, 71-77.
- Dufour, M.C. 1999. 'What is moderate drinking?' *Alcohol Research & Health*, 23, 5-14.
- Draper, N.R. & Smith H. 1981. *Applied Research Analysis*. New York. Wiley.
- Estrin, D. 1999. 'In Ghana, young men's condom use is linked to lack of barriers, perceived susceptibility to HIV infection'. *International Family Planning Perspectives*, 25, 106-107.
- Ford, K. & Norris, A.E. 1998. 'Alcohol use, perceptions of the effects of alcohol use, and condom use in urban minority youth'. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes and Human Retrovirology*, 17, 269-274.
- Fromme, K., D'Amico, E. & Katz, E. 1999. 'Intoxicated sexual risk taking: An expectancy or cognitive impairment explanation?' *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 60, 54-63.
- Gordon, C.M., Carey, M.P. & Carey, K.B. 1997. 'Effects of a drinking event on behavioral skills and condom attitudes in men: Implications for HIV risk from a controlled experiment'. *Health Psychology*, 16, 490-495.
- Gossop, M. 1989. 'Many Problems in Many Forms'. In D. Robinson et al. (Eds.), *Controlling Legal Addictions* (pp.43-62). London. Macmillan Press.
- Gysels, M. 2001. 'Truck drivers, middlemen and commercial sex workers: AIDS and the mediation of sex in south-west Uganda'. *AIDS Care*, 13(3) 373-384.
- Halpern, C.T., Udry, J.R., Campbell, B., Suchindran, C. & Mason, G.A. 1994. 'Testosterone and religiosity as predictors of sexual attitudes and activity among adolescent males: A biosocial model' *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 26, 217-234.
- Harvey, S.M. & Beckman, L.J. 1986. 'Alcohol consumption, female sexual behaviour and contraceptive use. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 47, 327-332.
- Hines, A.M., Snowden, L.R. & Graves, K.L. 1998. 'Acculturation, alcohol consumption and AIDS-related risky sexual behaviour among African American women'. *Women and Health*, 27, 17-35.
- Kinney, J. & Leaton, G. 1983. *Loosening the Grip: A Handbook of Alcohol Information*. St. Louis. The C.V. Mosby Company.
- LeBeau, D., Fox, T., Becker, H. & Mufune, P. 2001. 'Agencies and structures facilitating the transmission of HIV/AIDS in northern Namibia'. *Society in Transition*, 32, 56-68.
- Letamo, G. & Bainame, K. 1997. 'The socio-economic and cultural context of the spread of HIV/AIDS in Botswana'. *Health Transition Review*, 7 (Suppl.3), 97-101.
- Macdonald D. 1996a. 'Notes on the socio-economic and cultural factors influencing the transmission of HIV in Botswana'. *Social Science and Medicine*, 42, 1325-1333.
- Macdonald D. 1996b. 'Drugs in Southern Africa: An overview'. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, 13, 127-144.
- Mamman, L.S., Brieger, W.R. & Oshiname, F.O. 2002. 'Alcohol consumption pattern among women in rural Yoruba community in Nigeria'. *Substance Use and Misuse*, 37(5-7), 579-597.

- McCauley, A.P. & Salter, C. 1995. 'Meeting the Needs of Young Adults'. *Population Reports*. Series J, No.41, Population information Program. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.
- McEwan, R.T., McCallum, A., Bhopal, R.S. & Madhok, R. 1992. 'Sex and the risk of HIV infection: The role of alcohol'. *British Journal of Addiction*, 87, 577-584.
- Meekers, D. and Ahmed, G. 2000. 'Contemporary patterns of adolescent sexuality in urban Botswana'. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 32, 467-485.
- Milgram, G.G. 1990. *The Facts about Drinking: Coping with Alcohol Use, Abuse, and Alcoholics*. New York. Consumers Union.
- Molamu, L. & Manyeneng, W.G. 1988. *Alcohol Use and Abuse in Botswana*. Gaborone. Government Printer.
- Molamu, L. & Macdonald, D. 1996. 'Alcohol abuse among the Basarwa of the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Districts in Botswana'. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, 13, 145-152.
- Mott, F.L. 1999. 'Sex, contraception and childbearing among high-risk youth: Do different factors influence males and females?' *PPFY Network*, 2, 1-11.
- Mukherjee, C., White, H. & Wuyts, M. 1998. *Econometrics and Data Analysis for Developing Countries*. London. Routledge.
- Murphy, S.T., Monahan, J.L. & Miller, L.C. 1998. 'Inference under the influence: The impact of alcohol and inhibition conflict on women's sexual decision making'. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 517-528.
- Neter J., Wasserman W. & Kutner M.N. 1985. *Applied Linear Statistical Models*. Illinois. Irwin.
- Plant, M.L., Plant, M.A., Peck, D.F. & Setters, J. 1989. 'The sex industry, alcohol and illicit drug use: implications for the spread of HIV infection'. *British Journal of Addiction*, 84, 53-59.
- Poulson, R.L., Eppler, M.A., Satterwhite, T.N., Wuensch, K.L. & Bass, L.A. 1998. 'Alcohol consumption, strength of religious beliefs, and risky sexual behaviour in college students'. *Journal of American College Health*, 46, 227-232.
- Rees, H., Beksinska, M.E., Dickson-Tetteh, K., Ballard, R.C. & Htun, Ye. 2000. 'Commercial sex workers in Johannesburg: Risk behaviour and HIV status'. *South African Journal of Science*, 96(6), 283-285.
- Rehm, J. & Rossow, I. 2001. 'The impact of alcohol consumption on work and Education'. In H. Klingemann & G. Gmel (Eds.), *Mapping the Social Consequences of Alcohol Consumption*. (pp.67-77). Dordrecht. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Santelli, J.S., Brener, N.D., Lowry, R. Bhatt, A. & Zabin, L.S. 1998. 'Multiple sexual partners among U.S. adolescents and young adults'. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 30, 271-275.
- Seboni, N.M. 1993. *Botswana Female Youth: Perception of Sexuality and Risk-Taking Behaviors*. PhD thesis, San Francisco. University of California.
- Selolwane, O.D., Rakola, T., Kabubi, N. & Madzwamuse, M. 1999. *A Sociological Study on Student Pregnancies in Mahalapye*. Gaborone: UNICEF.
- Singh, S., Wulf, D., Samara, R. & Cuco, Y.P. 2000. 'Gender differences in the timing of first intercourse: Data from 14 countries'. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 26, 21-28.
- Swart, L., Gilchrist, A., Butchart, A., Seedat, M & Martin, L. 2000. 'Rape surveillance through district surgeon offices in Johannesburg, 1996-1998: Findings, evaluation and prevention implications'. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 30(2), 1-10.
- Udry, J.R. & Billy, J.O. 1987. 'Initiation of coitus in early adolescence'. *American Sociological Review*, 52, 841-855.
- United Nations. 2000 *Botswana Human Development Report 2000*. Gaborone. United Nations

Development Programme.

United Nations. 2001. *A Summary of Global Status Report on Alcohol*. WHO.

NCD/MSD/2001.2. World Health Organization. Geneva.

United Nations. 2002. *Country Profile: Angola*. United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, Pretoria.

Van Der Gaag, M.S., Sierksma, A., Schaafsma, G., Van Tol, A., Geelhoed-Mieras, T., Bakker, M. & Hendriks, H.F.J. 2000. 'Moderate alcohol consumption and changes in postprandial lipoproteins of premenopausal and postmenopausal women: A diet-controlled, randomized intervention study'. *Journal of Women's Health and Gender-Based Medicine*, 9, 607-616.

Varga, C.A. 2001. 'Coping with HIV/AIDS in Durban's commercial sex industry'. *AIDS Care*, 13(3), 351-364.