

# Influence of Masculinity and Femininity on Alcohol Consumption in Young People: A Scoping Review

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Received: 06/07/2023  
Sent to peers: 04/09/2023  
Approved by peers: 04/03/2024  
Accepted: 11/03/2024

**DOI: 10.5294/aqui.2024.24.2.4**

**Para citar este artículo / To reference this article / Para citar este artigo**

Martín del campo-Navarro AS, Cervera-Vallejos MF, Medina P, Álvarez-Aguirre A, Fuentes-Ocampo L. Influence of masculinity and femininity on alcohol consumption in young people: A scoping review. *Aquichan*. 2024;24(2):e2424.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5294/aqui.2024.24.2.4>

**Theme:** Health promotion, well-being, and quality of life

**Contribution to the discipline:** The results of this review have significant implications for Nursing, as they highlight the need for a proactive and personalized intervention in alcohol consumption-related health promotion. By understanding the gender and biological factors associated with alcohol consumption, nursing professionals can provide holistic and personalized care from the physical, psychological, and social dimensions of people.

## Abstract

**Introduction:** Alcohol consumption is a complex social practice that plays a role in building and consolidating friendships, as well as creating gender identities. The latter determines the limits of behaviors and defines what is considered appropriate or inappropriate in our daily routine; therefore, alcohol consumption patterns are not independent of gender. **Objective:** To identify and describe available evidence on the influence of gender on youth alcohol consumption. **Materials and method:** A review was conducted under JBI and Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines. Original full-text articles published between 2018 and 2023 in the VHL, PubMed, EBSCOhost, Web of Sciences, Epistemonikos, ScienceDirect, and ProQuest databases, without language limitations, were analyzed. The search categories were “Alcohol Drinking” AND “Young Adult” AND “Gender Identity” OR “Gender role”. **Results:** A total of 403 records were identified, but only 12 studies were included in the synthesis. The main results of these studies showed that both gender identity and gender roles influence alcohol consumption in young adults. Social gender norms may pressure young women to maintain a physical image and young men to maintain a normative public image. **Conclusions:** Social gender norms influence alcohol consumption behaviors; therefore, it is necessary to take these gender differences into account in nursing interventions and prevention strategies.

### Keywords (Source: DeCS)

Alcohol drinking; young adult; gender and health; gender studies; Nursing.

## 4 Influencia de la masculinidad y la feminidad en el consumo de alcohol en jóvenes: revisión de alcance

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### Resumen

**Introducción:** el consumo de alcohol es una práctica social compleja que desempeña un papel en la construcción y consolidación de amistades, así como en la formación de identidades de género. Este último determina los límites de los comportamientos y define lo que se considera apropiado o inapropiado en nuestra rutina diaria; por lo tanto, los patrones de consumo de alcohol no son independientes del género. **Objetivo:** identificar y describir la evidencia disponible sobre la influencia del género en el consumo de alcohol de los jóvenes. **Materiales y método:** se realizó una revisión bajo las pautas del Instituto Joanna Briggs (JBI) y los lineamientos del Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses, Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). Se analizaron artículos originales a texto completo, publicados entre 2018 y 2023 en las bases BVS, PubMed, EBSCOhost, Web of Sciences, Epistemonikos, ScienceDirect, y ProQuest, sin limitación de idioma; las categorías de búsqueda fueron “Alcohol Drinking” AND “Young Adult” AND “Gender Identity” OR “Gender role”. **Resultados:** se identificaron 403 registros, pero solo se incluyeron 12 estudios en la síntesis. Los resultados principales de estos estudios mostraron que tanto la identidad de género como los roles de género influyen en el consumo de alcohol en adultos jóvenes. Las normas sociales de género pueden presionar a las mujeres jóvenes a mantener una imagen física y a los hombres jóvenes a mantener una imagen pública normativa. **Conclusiones:** las normas sociales de género influyen en los comportamientos de consumo de alcohol, por ello, es necesario tener en cuenta estas diferencias de género en las intervenciones de enfermería y estrategias de prevención.

#### Palabras clave (Fuente DeCS)

consumo de bebidas alcohólicas; adulto joven; género y salud; estudios de género; enfermería.

# Influência da masculinidade e da feminilidade no consumo de álcool pelos jovens: uma revisão de escopo

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## Resumo

**Introdução:** o consumo de bebida alcoólica é uma prática social complexa que desempenha um papel na construção e na consolidação de amizades, bem como na formação de identidades de gênero. Este último determina os limites dos comportamentos e define o que é considerado apropriado ou inapropriado em nossas rotinas diárias; portanto, os padrões de consumo de álcool não são independentes do gênero. **Objetivo:** identificar e descrever as evidências disponíveis sobre a influência do gênero no consumo de álcool pelos jovens. **Materiais e métodos:** foi realizada uma revisão de acordo com as diretrizes do Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) e dos lineamentos do Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). Foram analisados artigos originais de texto completo, publicados entre 2018 e 2023 nos bancos de dados BVS, PubMed, EBSCOhost, Web of Sciences, Epistemonikos, ScienceDirect e ProQuest, sem limitação de idioma; as categorias de pesquisa foram “alcohol drinking” AND “young adult” AND “gender identity” OR “gender role”. **Resultados:** foram identificados 403 registros, mas apenas 12 estudos foram incluídos na síntese. Os principais resultados desses estudos mostraram que tanto a identidade de gênero quanto as funções de gênero influenciam o consumo de bebida alcoólica por jovens adultos. As normas sociais de gênero podem pressionar as mulheres jovens a manter uma imagem física e os homens jovens a manter uma imagem pública normativa. **Conclusões:** as normas sociais de gênero influenciam os comportamentos de consumo de álcool; portanto, essas diferenças de gênero precisam ser levadas em conta nas intervenções de enfermagem e nas estratégias de prevenção.

### Palavras-chave (Fonte: DeCS)

Consumo de bebidas alcoólicas; adulto jovem; saúde de gênero; estudos de gênero; Enfermagem.

## Introduction

Alcohol consumption is a global concern due to its high potential to cause dependence and its connection to a wide range of disorders and diseases. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), alcohol consumption causes more than three million deaths each year, accounting for 7.2% of premature deaths in people under 69 years of age and 13.5% of premature deaths in young people between 20 and 29 years of age (1, 2).

Some authors highlight that there is a greater probability of consuming alcohol during youth, i.e., in the first 20 years of life; therefore, this period is considered of the highest risk (3-6). It is documented that, despite cultural differences, reasons for alcohol consumption among young people are similar in many countries (7), such as the search for entertainment, excitement, fun, and bonding with friends (8).

The state of the art on alcohol consumption shows that young people also ingest this substance in an attempt to experience emotions of pleasure, which implies fun, joy, enjoyment, feeling good, relaxing, having a good time, laughing, and being sociable (8-10). Therefore, alcohol consumption must be understood as a social practice that is embodied and integrated into gender relations and social environments (11, 12).

The literature indicates that its consumption plays an important role in friendship building and consolidation, as well as gender identity formation (13-15). Gender identity is understood as “how being a man or woman is socially prescribed by the combination of role and status attributed to a person based on their sex, which is internalized by each person. The identities and roles attributed to one of the sexes are complementary and interdependent with those assigned to the other” (16), hence the differences that exist between femininity and masculinity.

In this regard, Wilsnack and Wilsnack (17) have emphasized that alcohol is involved in the process of building gender identities since it is an important part of the interactions between women and men. Therefore, gender influences both alcohol consumption and the act of drinking itself, being a way of “doing gender” and achieving traditional and non-traditional gender identities (18).

In terms of gender norms and their relationship to health, research has revealed that most behaviors and practices that promote care are associated with femininity, whereas those that involve taking risks are associated with masculinity (19). Gender is considered a relational theoretical approach that focuses on social processes and structures, encompassing cultural factors that influence individual and social understanding of masculinities and femininities (20, 21).

In this context, gender determines behavior limits, defining what is considered appropriate or inappropriate in our daily routine (19,

22). Therefore, alcohol consumption patterns are not independent of gender, meaning that participating and sharing in “drinking events” also become a way of constructing masculinities and femininities, and potentially gender identity (23).

In relation to the above, there are a variety of studies that have identified differences in alcohol consumption respecting consumer gender. However, studies do not explore the extent to which alcohol consumption and its impact on youth health are mediated by masculinity and femininity performance; for this reason, this scoping review aimed to identify and describe available evidence on the influence of gender on youth alcohol consumption.

## Materials and methods

In the present review, JBI (24) guidelines were followed to identify the breadth and nature of existing literature on a particular topic to contribute to research and decision-making in the field of health (25). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines were adopted when developing the manuscript as a scoping review (26).

The Population, Concept and Context (PCC) mnemonic method was used to define the review parameters. In this case, the Population of interest was men and women (young adults); the Concept referred to gender, and the Context focused on alcohol consumption. The guiding question of this review was: How does gender influence youth alcohol consumption? Likewise, original full-text articles, published in indexed databases without language limitations, with a quantitative and qualitative research approach, that included a young population between 18 and 29 years old and addressed alcohol consumption according to the gender variable, were included.

The search strategy aimed to locate studies published in the literature between 2018 and 2023 in databases such as Virtual Health Library (VHL), PubMed, EBSCOhost, Web of Science, Epistemonikos, ScienceDirect, and ProQuest. Search protocols were established from the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) (27), as shown in Table 1. Consultations were carried out from February to May 2023.

To assess qualitative articles, we used the study analysis tool Critical Appraisal Skills Program in Spanish (28, 29), which considers three general aspects for study assessment: Rigor, credibility, and relevance. Furthermore, to assess and select quantitative articles, we used the Research Article Eligibility Criteria Instrument (30), which made it possible to determine, based on the assessment of nine criteria, the relevance of articles that had to be selected for the review, where the minimum value is zero and the maximum value is nine, and the minimum value to be admitted is eight.

**Table 1.** Search strategies in databases for research, Mexico, 2023

Database	Search protocol
VHL	("alcohol drinking") AND ("young adult") AND ("Gender Identity") OR ("gender role") AND ("young adult") AND ("alcohol drinking") AND (year_cluster:[2018 TO 2023])
PubMed	(((Alcohol Drinking) AND (Young Adult)) AND (Gender Identity)) OR (Gender role) AND (Young Adult) AND (Alcohol Drinking) Filters applied: in the last 5 years
EBSCOhost	alcohol drinking AND adult young AND gender identity OR gender role AND adult young AND alcohol drinking. Publicaciones académicas (arbitradas); Fecha de publicación: 20180101-20231231
Web of Science	Results for (((ALL=(Alcohol drinking)) AND ALL=(Adult young)) AND ALL=(Gender identity)) OR ALL=(Gender role) AND ALL=(Adult young) AND ALL=(Alcohol drinking) and 2023 or 2022 or 2021 or 2020 or 2019 or 2018 (Publication Years) Document Types: Article or Review Article
Epistemonikos	(title:(alcohol drinking) OR abstract:(alcohol drinking)) AND (title:(adult young) OR abstract:(adult young)) AND (title:(Gender identity) OR abstract:(Gender identity)) OR (title:(Gender role) OR abstract:(Gender role)) AND (title:(adult young) OR abstract:(adult young))
ScienceDirect	"alcohol drinking" AND "young adult" AND "Gender Identity" OR "gender role" AND "young adult" AND "alcohol drinking"
ProQuest	noft(Alcohol drinking) AND noft(Young Adult) AND noft(Gender Identity) OR noft(Gender role) AND noft(Young Adult) AND noft(Alcohol drinking) Additional limits - Date: From January 01 2018 to March 01 2023; Document type: Article

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

After the search, all identified citations were gathered and uploaded to the software Rayyan (AI-Powered Tool for Systematic Literature Reviews) (31). The article selection process was completed in two phases to guarantee the inclusion of relevant and high-quality studies. In the first phase, two independent reviewers performed an exhaustive reading of the titles and abstracts of the articles identified in the search. Duplicate articles and those that clearly did not meet the established inclusion criteria were excluded.

In the second phase, potentially relevant articles were retrieved in their entirety and were assessed in detail by the reviewers reading the full text. During this phase, databases were compared and discussions were held to solve any discrepancies in article selection. Finally, studies that met the inclusion criteria were selected for incorporation into the review. Likewise, the study met the ethical criteria related to intellectual property by preserving the integrity and authorship of the documents used.

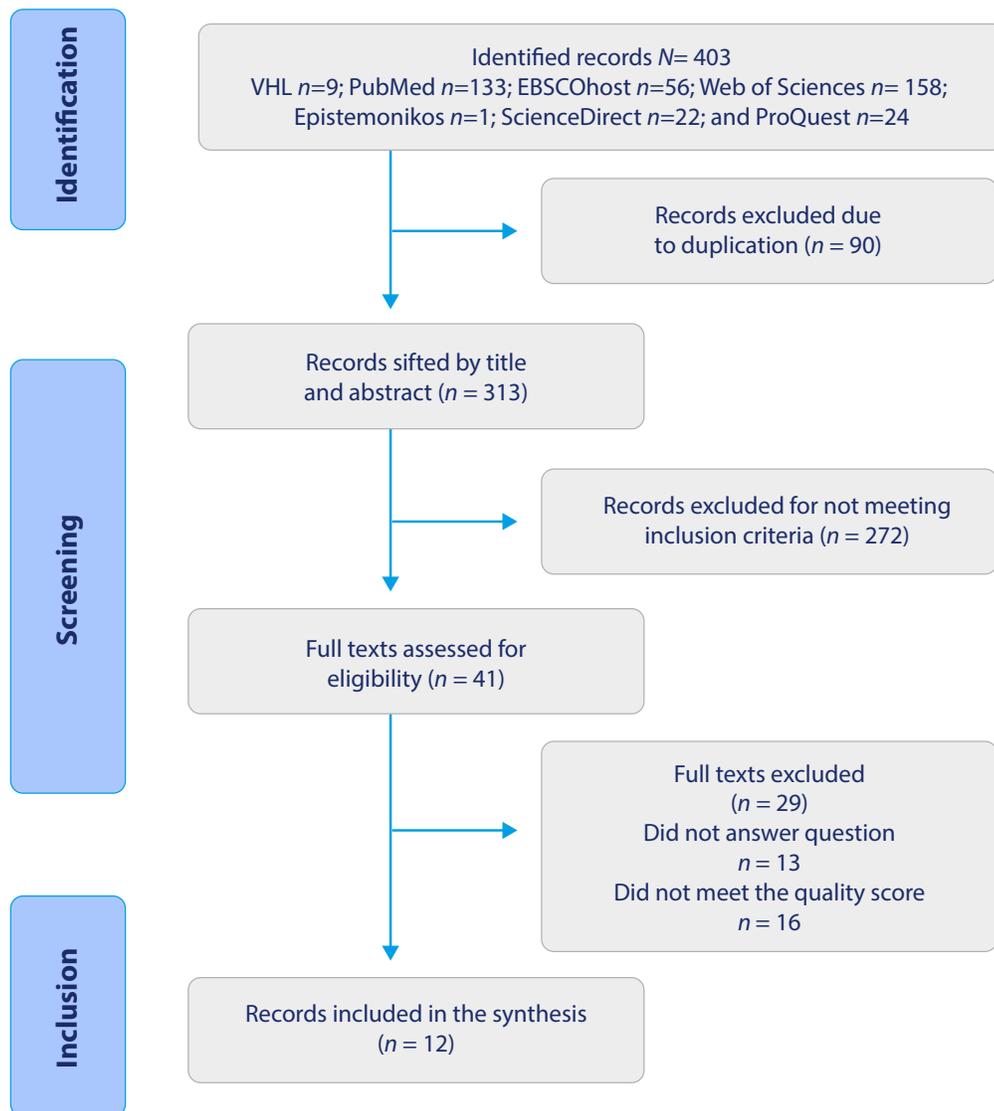
## Results

In the search, 403 studies were identified. After excluding 90 duplicate articles and 272 due to eligibility criteria, the full text of 41 articles was analyzed with selection instruments, and those that did

not meet the score and criteria were eliminated. In the end, a total of 12 documents were selected, four of them quantitative and eight qualitative (Figure 1).

Each of the selected articles was characterized based on content analysis. Table 2 presents the characteristics of the 12 studies selected in this scoping review, classified by author, year of publication, journal, objective, method, and main results. The results of this review showed the articles were written in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Spain, Nigeria, Denmark, England, the Czech Republic, Scotland, and Australia. Correspondingly, all were published in English. The United States and the United Kingdom presented the largest production related to the topic, with each one having two studies.

**Figure 1.** Flowchart of Selected Articles according to PRISMA-ScR



Source: Adapted from Page et al. (32).

Authors, Year	Country	Objective	Methodology	Main results
Romo-Aviles et al., 2023	Spain	To examine how images and stories about alcohol consumption are presented on Instagram, the strategies for constructing them, and the impact of social norms, including gender norms, on strategies to make alcohol consumption visible.	Qualitative research. Digital ethnography. 188 participants in 13 discussion groups were selected by snowball technique.	Gender is a central element in understanding the differences in how Instagram posts related to drinking and drunkenness affect young people. Young women are pressured by physical image while young men are pressured to maintain a normative public image.
Dumbili, 2022	Nigeria	To explore alcohol consumption among youth in Nigeria according to their gender and the health implications of their practices.	Qualitative research. Inductive and deductive thematic analysis. 72 participants were selected by snowball technique.	Men used competitive rituals of excessive drinking and drunkenness to enact masculinity. Most women constructed an anti-traditional/normative femininity with episodes of excessive alcohol consumption, whereas others maintained traditional femininity to avoid stigmatization.
Wilkinson and Wilkinson, 2020	United Kingdom	To explore young people's alcohol consumption practices and experiences.	Qualitative research. Multiple qualitative methods. 16 male participants.	Both conscious and unconscious gender performances shape and are shaped by drinking. Young men draw on different coexisting versions of masculinity, one of which is based on femininity exclusion, whereas another version is more inclusive and allows for displays of care and emotion.
Jensen and Hunt, 2020	Denmark	To explore how young women use friends to negotiate their sexual boundaries and construct the meaning of their sexual experiences in a context of heavy alcohol consumption.	Qualitative research. 33 in-depth interviews with young women.	The social norms reproduced in friendship groups have a high gender connotation and, consequently, the enthusiasm for sharing funny stories with friends can make sexual violence less visible in contexts of alcohol consumption.
Lojdová, 2020	Czech Republic	To understand the meaning of alcohol for emerging adults through stories about alcohol poisoning.	Qualitative research. Narrative-oriented research method. 82 young adult narratives.	In terms of gender identity, stories include both confirmation of gender stereotypes and efforts to break them. Traditional gender identity is associated with expectations of what it means to be a man or a woman or with the construction of traditional gender identities.
Leone and Parrott, 2019	United State of America	To examine the moderating effect of excessive alcohol consumption on the relationship between traditional masculinity and bystander behavior in alcohol consumption contexts.	Quantitative research. Scope not specified. Sample of 148 male alcohol consumers, convenience sampling.	A significant relationship between antifemininity and excessive alcohol consumption was detected with $b = -0.27$ , $p = 0.048$ , 95% Confidence Interval.
Nicholls, 2019	United Kingdom	To explore the nuances around the negotiation of femininities today, particularly through alcohol consumption practices.	Qualitative research. Narrative interviews with thematic analysis. 26 women participants.	Alcohol consumption plays an important role in female socialization and the negotiation of both friendships and femininity in contemporary leisure contexts.

Authors, Year	Country	Objective	Methodology	Main results
Lennox et al., 2018	Scotland	To explore young women's drinking practices and how they construct their identities through alcohol consumption and its display on social media.	Qualitative research. Thematic analysis of interviews in 16 focus groups of young people.	Young women's discussions revealed a difficult "balancing act" between demonstrating sexy femininity (but not too sexy) and "willing to do so" through their drinking and appearance, while preserving control and respectability.
O'Brien et al., 2018	England	To examine the relationships between masculinity, alcohol consumption, and alcohol-related aggression and antisocial behavior in athletes.	Correlational, cross-sectional quantitative research. Sample of 208 young athletes.	There were positive associations for men and women between masculinity and alcohol consumption scores ( $r=0.12$ $p<0.001$ ; $r=0.16$ , $p<0.001$ ).
Iwamoto et al., 2018	United State of America	To examine the relationship between multidimensional feminine norms, excessive alcohol consumption, and alcohol-related problems.	Quantitative correlational research. Sample of 1,910 women.	The relationship between female norms and problematic alcohol use is complex. Norm adherence and investment in appearance were positively associated with excessive alcohol consumption, whereas adherence to sexual fidelity and the belief that one should be sweet and pleasant were protective.
Hussman and Goldstein, 2019	Canada	To examine the relationship between traditional norms of femininity and alcohol-related problems for young women, considering the social contexts of drinking.	Quantitative, clinical and experimental research. Sample of 132 women.	Specific aspects of traditional femininity are positively related, whereas others are inversely related to alcohol problems. The desire to be thin emerged as the strongest positive correlate, and sexual fidelity was negatively correlated to alcohol problems.
McLean et al., 2018	Australia	To explore how young drinkers negotiate the far edge of the "within limits" clause for acceptable drunken behavior.	Qualitative research. Thematic analysis of interviews with 60 young people.	Participants were quick to activate gender stereotypes regarding alcohol consumption to condemn women's drunkenness, causing greater disgust, while men's drunkenness is more likely to generate fear. Being drunk in public was rarely admired.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

On the other hand, a coding and categorization process was used, and relevant data were extracted and grouped in a matrix, following a thematic approach. This integration of the findings allowed us to identify key patterns and themes related to the influence of gender on youth alcohol consumption, affirming masculinity with alcohol consumption, femininity's relevance with alcohol consumption, double gender standards in women alcohol consumers, and representation of women and drinking. Based on the above, the discussion was conducted.

## Discussion

### Affirming Masculinity with Alcohol Consumption

Masculinity is a concept that refers to the external cultural or social standards that sanction a man's actions in a particular place

or time (33). It is a sociocultural construction composed of beliefs, traits and behaviors that are considered important for being a man and that support the maintenance of dominance and power over others (34).

According to the review by Patr6-Hernández *et al.* (35) on the relationship between gender norms and alcohol consumption, it is noted that traditional gender stereotypes are present in situations of alcohol consumption and that excessive alcohol consumption, aggressiveness and risk behaviors are associated with male roles. Likewise, alcohol consumption and intoxication have long been associated with masculinity. Furthermore, this type of behavior in men works to affirm masculinity and increase bonds and solidarity between them (22).

In this regard, Leone and Parrot (36) assert that men may feel pressured to adhere to manly norms they proscribe, and alcohol intoxication probably facilitates their attention to these signals, which strengthens this association. An example of this is the study by Dumbili *et al.* (37), in which men agreed that drinking is for social reasons, and for other reasons such as engaging in sexual negotiations, displaying masculinity, and obtaining social attention. It is important to note that male identity is performatively constituted and that men are only as masculine as their last display of manhood (38).

On the other hand, alcohol consumption has always been related to masculinity as a “male domain” in society (39). This stereotype has been reinforced by traditional views, where drinking is associated with masculinity and abstinence with femininity (40). This association has also led to a significant interaction between antifemininity and excessive alcohol consumption (36). In some cases, male identity is constructed through the role of protector of women, which involves a discussion of physical strength (41). However, this stereotype has also been associated with greater odds of insulting, humiliating, and attacking others while intoxicated in both men and women. Additionally, higher levels of masculinity have been linked to greater odds of being involved in alcohol-related assaults and antisocial behaviors (42).

Alcohol consumption culture in men is a topic that has been widely studied. Public leisure contexts have been found to be sites where masculinity is (re)produced and the ability to consume large quantities of alcohol without showing signs of intoxication is a significant social achievement, determining status in male hierarchies (40). These alcohol consumption patterns in men are a reflection of existing gender stereotypes, as pointed out by Lobjova (43). Gender stereotype support can be seen in the way men relate to alcohol and how they are encouraged to drink in party contexts. Under these conditions, men are often encouraged to consume alcohol in large quantities, and those who do not may be questioned about their masculinity by their peers (44).

In addition to the above, when men are challenged in their ability to drink large amounts of alcohol, they feel obligated to demonstrate to their peers that they are “real men”, who can tolerate excessive alcohol consumption without becoming intoxicated. Therefore, for members of the male social network, it is mandatory to consume alcohol and participate in the social (re)production of masculinity every time they meet for entertainment (40).

On the other hand, non-drinking men may be at risk of being excluded from their own friendship groups (45). Consequences for non-drinkers are real and can include exclusion, social isolation, or even verbal abuse and physical harassment (46, 47). Based on the above, it can be seen that male alcohol consumption culture is problematic and has negative consequences for both drinkers and non-drinkers.

## Relevance of Femininity with Alcohol Consumption

Femininity ideologies refer to the norms and restrictions that establish what is considered normal and ideal for a woman, highlighting characteristics such as passivity, conformity, and kindness (48). Although alcohol consumption has traditionally been seen as a male activity, nowadays young women can participate in it and have greater autonomy in their consumption (49, 50). However, they still face pressure to conform to gender expectations, and alcohol consumption can help them achieve different types of traditional and non-traditional femininities (51, 52).

The relationship between women and alcohol consumption has been studied from different perspectives. One of the most interesting findings is how women frame the act of drinking alcoholic beverages, because, for many, drinking is a way to socialize, become intimate and build trust with other women, according to Nicholls (53). Having a “girl’s night” is an important opportunity to socialize, and some even see it as their main or only form of socialization. However, not all women actually enjoy binge drinking and some attribute this to peer pressure and expectations.

Similarly, excessive alcohol consumption by women has become an increasingly relevant issue, because it is often presented as an attempt to imitate men and transgress traditional gender roles (54). In this regard, in studies such as that of Lobjová et al. (43), it is documented that women consume alcoholic beverages to break gender stereotypes, achieve non-traditional identities and emancipate themselves from male alcohol consumption culture. However, other studies show that women who support traditional gender norms, such as sexual fidelity and domestic norms, are less likely to report excessive alcohol consumption (55). In the United States of America, Iwamoto et al. (56) reported that women who adhere to these norms are less likely to engage in risky behaviors related to alcohol consumption.

Furthermore, women recognize the importance of maintaining control of their drinking to achieve an appropriate “female” identity. Social norms that reinforce traditional codes of femininity prohibit women from consuming alcohol as they may expose themselves to greater health risks. For instance, some young women in Africa consume this substance secretly so as not to be seen as violating traditional codes of femininity (40). Likewise, women also recognize the importance of mutual care as another way to build friendship and trust. For instance, on a girls’ night out, friends always support and take care of each other (53). This suggests that the way women perceive their gender identity also plays an important role in their relationship with alcohol.

## Double Gender Standard in Women Alcohol Consumers

There is a double standard regarding alcohol consumption in women since male drunkenness is accepted while female drunkenness is condemned (57) due, in part, to imbalanced gender-specific consumption norms and social sanctions attributed to women who consume alcohol (55). Furthermore, women who consume alcohol excessively tend to be judged as promiscuous and unfaithful, whereas men who consume this substance are perceived as sexually experienced and capable (58-60).

This double standard reflects the way social norms and gender stereotypes influence perceptions and attitudes toward alcohol consumption. According to some studies, alcohol is seen as something good only for men, so women should not consume it (40, 61). Likewise, both young men and women perceive female drunkenness as more shocking and unacceptable than that of men, i.e., women who are seen in public in a state of intoxication are judged negatively and are given an unfavorable sexual reputation (62).

Alcohol consumption is commonly considered an indicator of sexual availability and interest in young women, making them more susceptible to sexual advances, although they are expected to handle these situations when intoxicated (63). Evidence shows that women who consume alcohol are aware of the stereotypical risks that position them as vulnerable (64). According to recent research, the combination of alcohol and sexualization only occurs in young women (21).

Furthermore, there is a culturally persistent gender double standard surrounding female intoxication, justified by discourses about women’s greater vulnerability to sexual or physical assault compared to men. This leads women to consider going out to consume alcoholic beverages and being victims of lascivious looks as well as physical contact without consent in nightclubs as a common situation (62), which is also reflected in the perception of sexual experiences (63, 65).

Furthermore, when young women talk about their sexual experiences in the context of excessive alcohol consumption, feelings of regret prevail (66). However, in narratives about excessive alcohol consumption, the good experiences always outweigh the bad ones (43), which may make sexual violence less visible in contexts of alcohol consumption (66).

In these circumstances, women attempt to convey an image of respectable femininity while engaging in a practice that has traditionally been framed as masculine (53). However, despite these strategies, smearing still occurs when women consume alcohol excessively. In fact, young women are judged more than young men when they exhibit “inappropriate” alcohol behavior in real life as well as on social media (21).

## The Representation of Women and Drink

The relationship between gender and alcoholic beverages is a topic that has been studied by several researchers in recent years. According to Lojdová (43), in women’s stories, gender stereotype confirmation is connected with the structure of alcoholic beverages, since the narratives serve to concretize traditional gender identities. In this regard, in the research carried out by Dumbili (40), men consider women to be vulnerable, which is why they recommend wine and other sugary/flavored brands described as less “strong” for women.

Regarding alcoholic beverages appropriate for women, those perceived as sweetened or “light” are believed to be more appropriate (40). Nicholls (53) points out that several participants associate beer with masculinity, whereas the supposedly most “feminine” drinks, such as cocktails and wine, are also considered more “elegant,” “luxurious,” and “less clunky” than beer. Additionally, women are expected to consume alcohol in small, dainty glasses, as the emphasis is placed more on how a drink looks and feels than on the taste itself. Hence, certain drinks can function as “accessories” in social contexts and become identity signals driven by consumption (67, 68). This happens, in part, because women who adhere to appearance norms are more aware of how others view them and therefore place more emphasis on integrating with their peers and obtaining social attention (40).

Unfortunately, during youth, when excessive alcohol consumption is most normative by peers, social pressure to attract and maintain social relationships has continually exposed young women to media images of unrealistic standards of physical appearance (56). According to Hussman and Goldstein (55), the ideal of a thin body and social relationships is associated with an increase in alcohol consumption. Additionally, women appear to be much more aware than men of how they are represented online, as suggested by Lennox et al. (62), and they spend time and effort ensuring that their virtual identity projects the image

they want to show to others. This may include carefully editing and curating the photos they share on social media, as well as updating their profiles and managing their online presence.

The discourse of alcohol consumption on social media is more than just a social practice, as this is reflected in people's behavior in public spaces, influenced by awareness of how this is represented on social media (62). This is expressed by Belova and Fadeeva (69) when representing a series of sociocultural meanings that include social normativity, accessibility, daily routine, normalization, sacredness, sociocultural integration, and orientation towards stereotypes. However, the discourse also reflects a gender double standard around appearance and alcohol consumption (70).

Because of this, some young women have found specific ways to present a fun and “up to par” online identity without compromising their respectability, as described by Lennox et al. (62). Unfortunately, young women continue to experience significant stress when expressing their “alcoholic femininities” both in public and online. In other words, they minimize the appearance of drunkenness to (un)known audiences and walk a fine line to comply with acceptable femininities under the predominant patriarchal regime (57).

## Conclusions

The present review systematically assessed quantitative and qualitative studies that identified four themes related to the influence of gender on alcohol consumption. These findings allow for a better understanding of alcohol consumption among young people. Moreover, they enable intervention components that can be incorporated into future gender-based prevention programs.

The review showed that gender constructions, particularly masculinity conceptualization, carry significant health risks by promoting excessive consumption and its subsequent associated social risks. In this regard, interventions aimed at destigmatizing gender stereotypes, addressing long-held beliefs, supporting the disapproval of masculine norms and re-assessing the perspective of masculinity and virility could raise awareness of the way men relate to alcohol consumption. Likewise, these interventions could impact the way alcohol consumption is encouraged in various social contexts.

Alternatively, interventions targeting women could focus on promoting responsible alcohol consumption, emphasizing concerns related to image and reputation. It is crucial to consider female alcohol consumers' inherent biological vulnerability, underscoring the need for specific preventive strategies that address physiological and metabolic differences.

Normalization of alcohol consumption and the social pressure exerted on young women emerge as additional factors that require special attention in interventions, recognizing the significant influ-

ence that these elements have on alcohol consumption-related decisions. Furthermore, a comprehensive approach that addresses both gender constructions and biological and social aspects will be essential to promote healthy behavior and mitigate risks associated with alcohol consumption.

Therefore, alcohol consumption analyzed according to consumer gender allows us to observe and determine how this influences its increase. In short, considering gender in research design and nursing prevention and intervention strategies could ensure an understanding of gender differences in alcohol use and success in them.

**Acknowledgments:** The research and preparation of this manuscript were possible thanks to the grant from the *Instituto de Innovación, Ciencia y Emprendimiento para la Competitividad para el Estado de Guanajuato* (IDEA GTO).

**Funding:** None

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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