

*International Center for Alcohol Policies Series on Alcohol in Society*

# Alcohol and Emerging Markets

*Patterns,  
Problems,  
and  
Responses*

*edited by*  
Marcus Grant



*Executive Summary*

## **What is the main message of this book?**

**T**he main purpose of this book is to provide the most up-to-date, objective and comprehensive assessment available of drinking practices and alcohol abuse in areas of the world undergoing major socio-economic changes. The main message is that while alcohol beverages are an intrinsic part of all of the cultures described in this book, we in fact have a very limited understanding of the extent of its use or abuse in developing and emerging regions of the world. Though the problems associated with abusive drinking are evident in each of the case studies presented, each author also acknowledges the lack of reliable data to draw firm conclusions.

## **What are the lessons for the future?**

**I**t is clear that there is a need for better data collection methods and a greater focus on research methodologies generally as they relate to alcohol issues in the countries and regions discussed in the book. What is equally evident in the chapters is the lack of focused prevention strategies and alcohol policies that address abusive drinking behavior. There is now widespread support for the notion that people's pattern of drinking is more predictive of whether they will experience positive or negative consequences of their alcohol consumption. Though there is still much work to be done among researchers in developing a typology of drinking patterns, the patterns approach has much relevance to the diversity of populations within developing regions. It is therefore recommended that alcohol policies and prevention strategies focus on the most harmful patterns of drinking in order to reduce problems associated with excessive and irresponsible alcohol consumption.

In addressing alcohol problems in the emerging markets, it is also suggested that all parties who have a legitimate stake in the outcome of alcohol policies should be involved in the dialogue to develop appropriate strategies.

## **How did it come to be written?**

**T**he International Center for Alcohol Policies<sup>1</sup> (ICAP) was most interested in better understanding the drinking practices and level of alcohol abuse in developing countries. It thus commissioned a number of authors who were scientific experts in the countries or regions about which they were writing to provide this assessment and recommend areas for further study. This was also asked of the alcohol beverage industry in order for the readership to have a complete understanding of alcohol issues in developing regions and to hear suggestions on what steps the international alcohol community might take to reduce excessive drinking in those areas of the world where it has markets.

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<sup>1</sup> The International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP) is dedicated to helping reduce the abuse of alcohol worldwide and to promoting the understanding of the role of alcohol in society through dialogue and partnerships involving the beverage alcohol industry, the public health community and others interested in alcohol policy. ICAP is a not-for-profit organization supported by twelve major international beverage alcohol companies.

## **For whom is the book intended?**

**T**his book is intended for all those with an interest in alcohol issues in the context of the developing world and emerging markets. In the academic field, it will be of interest to a wide range of disciplines including anthropologists, sociologists, historians, public health professionals, and the medical sciences. Politicians and civil servants in the health, social affairs, trade, agriculture and finance sectors as well as public health practitioners and social workers; those working in the production and distribution of beverage alcohol and in the hospitality industry will also find the book useful.

## **How can the contents of the book best be summarized?**

**T**he book is divided into two parts. The first part, with the exception of the first chapter, is a series of case studies, and the second part looks at some specific issues common to all the countries and regions discussed in the book.

The authors of the case studies — all from renowned scientific institutions in the regions or countries about which they are writing — were asked to assess alcohol issues in four regions — Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa — and four countries — China, India, Mexico and Russia. The format of each chapter is relatively consistent, although, depending on the information available, certain topics are discussed in greater depth than others. Issues such as past and current public policy developments, prevention programs and treatment of alcohol-related disorders are addressed as well as the health consequences of alcohol use and abuse. Limitations in the data and future areas for research are also considered.

There is little doubt upon reading these case studies that alcohol abuse is a problem for most of these countries and regions, though these authors are not at all confident about the extent of alcohol-related problems given the serious lack of reliable research and data in the areas covered by this book. These chapters also highlight the cultural diversity within and between countries and their approach to drinking and to alcohol policies.

The first chapter and the second part of the book look at some of these issues from the viewpoint of the entire geographical region covered by the book. Thus, the opening chapter discusses the importance of looking at patterns of drinking and its relevance to the developing world. Another chapter provides an epidemiological and anthropological perspective on alcohol issues in developing regions.

A third chapter reviews economic issues in relation to alcohol. A fourth chapter, written from an industry perspective, looks at the role of the alcohol beverage industry in emerging markets and suggests a set of guidelines developed by ICAP's sponsors to address alcohol misuse issues in the developing world and emerging markets.

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