

A Study on the Vital Reasons for Alcohol Consumption in the State of Rajasthan

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Abstract

Alcoholism is considered as a chronic disorder accompanied with excessive and generally an irresistible urge to consume alcohol that leads to psychological and physical vulnerability or addiction to alcohol. The consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally accredited due to discrete reasons by divergent consumers throughout the country. 400 cases of drinkers in the seven divisions of the state of Rajasthan are examined in the study. This study attempts to analyze the causes and grounds of alcohol consumption and their opinions and perspective about alcohol addiction. The present study strives to escalate an awareness of the effects of alcohol consumption along with assisting the concerned authorities to devise steps to curtail, control and manoeuvre the alcohol consumption of the state. The paper also attempts to uncover the major causes of alcohol consumption along with the chief reasons behind those reasons. The analysis puts forward the reasons for alcohol consumption and the psychological aspects associated with these reasons.

Keywords: Alcoholism; Liquor; Vulnerability; Alcoholic; Excise.

Introduction

The dependence on alcohol is very prominent in the state of Rajasthan. Alcohol consumption or alcoholism is also considered to be a chronic disease carried on by its consumers since a long time. The consumer of alcohol develops a physical and emotional dependence on alcohol irrespective of health issues. One of the major reasons for the continuous increase in the consumption level of alcohol in the present day society is that alcohol is considered as a social lubricant by its consumers. Alcohol drinkers also consider it as a relaxant, it reduces social anxiety and many people are found to be alcoholics and they indicate it helps them to forget their problems and reduce their sorrows. Lot of times it is seen that people start drinking under peer pressure or by observing the adults of the family doing the same. Alcohol consumption temporarily makes the memory and the brain go fuzzy and this makes the alcoholics high and happy.

Objectives of The Study

- To acknowledge the causes responsible for alcohol consumption in the state of Rajasthan.
- To diagnose the sanity behind starting alcohol consumption by the consumers in the state of Rajasthan.

Research Methodology

The present study is an endeavor to examine the major causes of alcohol consumption by the consumers belonging to the state of Rajasthan. So as to have an in depth knowledge and a clear understanding to the subject considered in this study, the review of literature regarding the various causes of consumption of alcohol in the entire country is done, Further, to make the study comprehensive, two sets of data have been collected.

1. Primary Data

The collection of data for the present study has been done personally through interviews, surveys, questionnaire and direct observation. Although collection of primary data for this study was a time consuming and a tedious process, yet, the data collected is authentic and relevant for the research.

For this study, the head of the families, i.e. the primary bread earners (respondents) were interviewed, to find the pattern of alcohol consumption by themselves or the other members of the family. Cross validation was done by conducting Pilot testing of the information given by the respondents regarding the consumption of alcohol. In order to have rationality of the information on various causes of alcohol consumption, only the head of the families were considered as the principal respondents. The questionnaires were coded for further study.

The state of Rajasthan has seven divisions. The following table shows the names of the divisions and the number of respondents considered for study from each division:

DIVISION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
Ajmer	55
Bharatpur	55
Bikaner	60
Jaipur	60
Jodhpur	60
Kota	55
Udaipur	55

1. Secondary Data

The government of Rajasthan emphasis to a great extent on the health and sanitation, infrastructural development, and creation of awareness among the general public with special reference to the consumption of alcohol in the state. Reports from the Department of Health and Ministry of the state of Rajasthan were collected and analyzed regarding the same. Further, newspapers and websites of Rajasthan State Excise Department and Ministry of Statistics of India were used to collect the secondary data for the present study.

Vital Findings of The Study

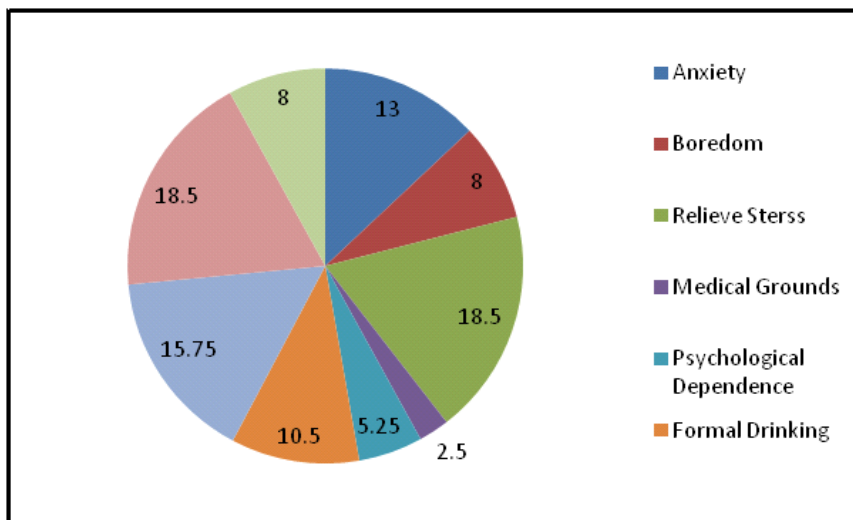
For people who do not have any kind of addiction, it becomes difficult to accept the logic given by the alcoholics for its increasing consumption rate. But with more and more number of people getting dependent on alcohol in the state of Rajasthan, it has become vital to find out the reasons for this alarming rate. The following were the major findings of the study:

- People suffering from nervousness, apprehension, depression or any other kind of mental illness tend to consume alcohol to relieve the anxiety. They feel normal and relaxed after alcohol consumption. 13 percent respondents from the seven divisions of Rajasthan were found to consume alcohol to reduce their anxiety and melancholy.
- When people see their family members, colleagues, seniors, friends, role models or others drinking alcohol, an urge to try something new and different creeps in their minds. They have a driving force to test and check out how it feels when they drink. This is gradually converted into a habit and people start consuming alcohol on a regular basis. 21 percent of the total respondents were found to have started alcohol consumption out of curiosity and have developed it as a habit now.
- One of the major factors for alcohol consumption among the teens and young adults is boredom. People in this age group generally do not have any responsibilities and thus seldom have anything to do. 8 percent respondents consume alcohol to reduce their boredom and try something new and interesting. They find themselves entering into an altered reality and move out of the mundane reality.
- Today's competitive world is full of stress faced by people to survive and grow in the business world. Although life has become much easier than the past but the burdens accompanying it cannot be ignored. The most simple things like having a family, bearing its expenses and doing a job have become very complicated and stressful due to the modern lifestyle. 13 percent respondents consume alcohol in order to calm the storm going on in their minds.
- Many a time it is found that people drink to improve their moods but they are unaware of the fact that excessive drinking is affecting their health and developing a psychological dependence thereby affecting the nervous system. This leads to palpitation and high blood pressure. 18.5 percent respondents believe that they consume alcohol for enjoyment in the state of Rajasthan.
- 10.5 percent respondents say that they consume alcohol on formal gatherings and 15.75 percent respondents were social drinkers. People of Rajasthan believe that alcohol consumption in formal of social gatherings gives them confidence thereby improving their relationships with others.

- 8 percent respondents drink alcohol as a symbol of them being a part of the society and enhancing their status. Even if they are not very fond of consuming alcohol but they prefer its intake as they think it has a positive impact on their status.
- 2.5 percent respondents from the state of Rajasthan drink alcohol on medical grounds.

Reasons for Alcohol Consumption

Reasons for Alcohol Consumption	No. of Persons	Percentage
Anxiety	52	13
Boredom	32	8
Relieve Stress	74	18.5
Medical Grounds	10	2.5
Psychological Dependence	21	5.25
Formal Drinking	42	10.5
Social Drinking	63	15.75
Enjoyment	74	18.5
Status Symbol	32	8
Total	400	100



Effects of Alcohol Consumption

The National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence and The Partnership at Drugfree.org explain that chemical changes in the brain occur with excessive drinking. Risk of alcoholism increases in a person has a low self control, low self esteem, high stress level, peer pressure or culture of drinking alcohol regularly in the family. The after effects of alcohol consumption may include:

- Physical illness like cirrhosis of liver and alcoholic ketoacidosis.
- Memory lapse after the night of alcohol consumption.
- Involuntary shaking i.e. tremors in the morning after alcohol consumption.
- Nausea, vomiting, etc, if not drinking.
- Gastrointestinal tract bleeding.
- Depression and high blood pressure.
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Violence towards family members
- Misbehaving in social gatherings.
- Increase in vulnerability towards crime and illegal acts.
- Expenditure on alcohol.
- Spending of financial resources of household/family unwisely.
- Medical expenditure due to problems creeping due to alcohol consumption.

Limitations of The Study

- The rationale behind alcohol consumption is a complex phenomenon. Various aspects like demographic factors, socio-economic variables, legal, mental and health issues, political situations etc., play a vital role in determining the reasons for alcohol consumption. Very less study has been done on these issues so far.
- The information for the study was collected through sample method, which may lack accuracy as compared to the census method and all the categories of the population may not have been included in the sample. The present study makes an attempt to derive samples from the entire population and get as accurate data as possible.
- The data collected is only from the respondents of the state of Rajasthan, the results cannot be applied to the national level as a general conclusion.

Conclusion

Alcoholism is associated with a lot of mental, physical, psychiatric, medical, social and family problems. Although the revenue derived from the sale of liquor is a major source of income for the

excise department, yet, it is causing a lot of negative effects on the society at large. Most of the information about drinking pattern is gathered through convenience sampling from the households of the selected areas of the study. Various reasons for alcohol consumption were constituted with different mindsets of the respondents. Generalizations were formed on the basis of the information collected. The drinking habit or addiction among the people leads to alcohol expectancies, drinking urges and negative mental and emotional state.

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