



A STUDY ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND STUDENTS ATTITUDE

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ABSTRACT

Back ground: Alcohol consumption has increased in recent times due to various cultural transformation. It has become a part and parcel of social habits. More and more cases of alcohol induced liver disease start surfacing and thereby causing economic impact on the society.

Objective: Identify the prevalence of alcohol consumption among medical students, to assess attitude of students towards alcohol consumption.

Materials and methods: A total of 100 students of Government medical college were informed about the proposed survey and asked to fill up questionnaire in an anonymous manner with consent. The data collected were general opinion about consumption of alcohol by students, whether students know about ill effects of alcohol, frequency of alcohol consumption, amount spent on alcohol consumption.

Results: The response rate was 92%. 76(82.6%) felt that students consume alcohol, 88 (95.6%) know about ill effects of alcohol, 12(13.04%) accept that they consume alcohol occasionally, 14(15.2%) consider that consumption of alcohol in small quantities is not bad and 6 (6.5%) accepted that they consume alcohol and spend some money for alcohol regularly.

Conclusion : Sizable portion of students feels that students consume alcohol and significant portion consume specific brand of alcohol and spend some money. It is advisable to create more awareness among students regarding the health and economical impact of alcohol consumption.

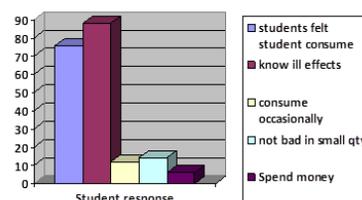
KEYWORDS : Alcohol abuse , Students attitude.

Background:

Alcohol is one of the most openly available and generally consumed mood-altering substances. Patterns of intake vary among different geographic regions. Men who drink more than 80 g of ethanol per day are at substantial risk for development of clinical liver disease.^[1] Liver disease in women who drink excessively is two to four times more likely to develop than in men who drink excessively.^[2] The risk of liver disease begins at relatively low levels of alcohol consumption (30 g/day), this finding has led to a general recommendation that the maximal safe level of ethanol consumption is 20 g/day of ethanol, or two "drinks" per day, even among those who ingest large amounts of alcohol (more than 60 g /day), serious liver disease develops in only approximately 1 in 10. When disease occurs, it can take many forms, ranging from steatosis, to alcoholic hepatitis, to hepatic fibrosis or cirrhosis, because disease severity does not correspond to classic dose dependency, other factors are likely to play an important role in pathogenesis. These factors may be hereditary, environmental, or both.^[3] The spectrum liver disease as a result of chronic ethanol ingestion ranges from mild fatty infiltration to cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.^[4,5] In more than 90 % of alcohol abuse fatty infiltration of hepatocyte is the earliest predictable response to alcohol ingestion. Fatty changes in liver is usually a reversible following alcohol stoppage but structural alterations of liver can develop within five years if the continued drinking. Alcoholic hepatitis have extremely high short-term mortality rates, and a precursor of cirrhosis.^[6,7] Alcohol consumption has increased in recent times due to various cultural transformation. It has become a part and parcel of social habits. More and more cases of alcohol induced liver disease start surfacing and thereby causing economic impact on the society. Alcohol abuse is commonly seen in colleges as party culture as depicted in movies, TV serial, and in the news. College students can prevent the development of devastating consequences of alcohol addiction if they are properly educated about the dangers and warning signs. The quality of their academic performance will be affected if students use alcohol. Approximately one out of four college students accept that they have suffered academic consequences due to alcohol use which includes missing class, failure in an exam or assignment, lagging in completion of assignments.

Aim: The objective of the study is to identify the prevalence of alcohol consumption among medical students and to assess attitude and opinion of students towards alcohol consumption. **Materials and methods:** Cross sectional study. This study was conducted in a Government Medical college of Tamilnadu state, India in July 2017. A total of 100 students were informed about the proposed survey and asked to fill up pretested questionnaire in an anonymous manner after obtaining consent. The data collected were general opinion about consumption of alcohol by students, whether students know about ill effects of alcohol, frequency of alcohol consumption, amount spent on alcohol consumption. **Results :** The response rate was 92%. 76 students (82.6%) felt that students consume alcohol, 88 students (95.6%) stated that they knew about ill effects of alcohol, 12(13.04%) accepted that they consume alcohol occasionally, 14 students (15.2%) considered that consumption of alcohol in small quantities is not bad, and 6 (6.5%) accepted that they consume alcohol and spend some money.

Figure:1 Opinion on Alcohol consumption

**Discussion:**

Alcohol dependency will result in wide range of legal, financial, institutional and family problems. Early exposure to alcohol in the teen age group can result in improper development of intellectual skills of the brain. If this problem is left unattended it may result in difficulty in getting out of the addiction by the individual. It was estimated that roughly 1,825 college students die in a year due to alcohol-related injuries and automobile accidents. Alcohol intoxication is another problem college students face, especially when they consume a large amount of alcohol over a short period which

can result in acute severe pancreatitis with multi organ failure and death. In the process of alcohol abuse college students can have various forms of depression or anxiety and sometimes false belief and over confidence resulting in psychiatric illnesses. Due to improper decision-making abilities these individuals are more prone for suicidal attempts or commit suicide under the influence of alcohol. College students who reside in the hostel and own private apartments are likely to suffer from alcohol dependency because of high prevalence of alcohol flourishing culture in the uses. College students who reside with their parents are least likely to have alcohol abuse problem. Majority of the Students (82.6%) themselves expressed their opinion that students consume alcohol. In our study nearly 18 percent of the students consume alcohol either occasionally or regularly and 15.2% believe that consuming alcohol in small quantities is not bad for health even though nearly 96 percent of the students knowing the ill effects of alcohol.

Conclusion : Sizable portion of students feels that students consume alcohol and significant portion consume specific brand of alcohol and spend some money for alcohol despite knowing the ill effects of alcohol. Hence it is advisable to create more awareness among students regarding the health and economical impact of alcohol consumption and counsel them to quit alcohol consumption.

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