



EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTI-ALCOHOL MEASURES INCLUDING TAXATION, NEGATIVE ADVERTISEMENT AND MEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol causes 3 million deaths a year. Alcohol is responsible for 5% of disease burden. Alcohol is responsible for 10% of health problems. Alcohol costs 1 trillion dollar annually in direct costs and 1 trillion dollars in indirect medical problems costs. Hence, it incumbent on governments of world to try to reduce alcohol consumption by taxation, negative advertisement and medication. This paper tries to assess the effectiveness of taxation, negative advertisement and medication in reducing alcohol consumption.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

Alcohol consumption causes 3 million deaths per year as well as disabilities and poor health of millions of people. Overall alcohol is responsible for 5% of disease burden – 7% for males and 2 % for females. Alcohol is responsible for 10% of deaths in 15-49 age groups. Alcohol is responsible for range of mental and behavioral problems including alcohol dependence. Harmful use of alcohol is causal factor in 200 diseases. Almost 20 to 40% of hospital admissions are due to complications of alcohol. The unfortunate part is that doctors do permit some alcohol consumption. High taxes on alcohol, medical treatment for alcohol withdrawal and adequate negative advertisements can reduce alcohol consumption drastically. Alcohol control can reduce at least 10% of health problems.

This paper explores the effectiveness of taxation, negative advertisement and medication on reducing alcohol consumption.

Taxation And Alcohol

As mentioned above there is strong and compelling evidence that increasing the price of alcoholic beverages through taxation is one of the most effective and cost effective policies used to lower alcohol consumption and alcohol attributable harm. The reviewed studies provide consistent evidence that higher alcohol prices and alcohol taxes are associated with reductions in both excessive alcohol consumption and related, subsequent harms. The societal levels of alcohol consumption—the majority of estimates of price elasticity fell within the range of approximately –0.30 to –1.00, indicating that a 10% increase in alcohol prices would be expected to result in a 3% to 10% decrease in alcohol consumption. That means that if 50% additional taxation was imposed one could expect a reduction in alcohol consumption by as much as 35%.

Negative Advertisement and Alcohol

Studies were conducted on effect of

1. Alcohol promoting advertisements
 2. Alcohol reducing advertisements
- On Alcohol Consumption.

Participants exposed to alcohol-promoting advertisements showed increased positive affect and an increased approach/reduced avoidance bias towards alcohol relative to those exposed to non-alcohol advertisements. There was an indirect effect of exposure to alcohol-warning advertisements advertisements.

Hence it could be said that restricting alcohol-promoting advertising could remove a potential influence on positive alcohol-related emotions and cognitions among heavy-drinking young adults. Producing alcohol-warning advertising that generates negative emotion may be an effective strategy to reduce alcohol consumption.

Medication and Alcohol Consumption

There are many medicines used to treat alcohol addiction – naltrexone, disulfiram and topiramate.

Disulfiram and Naltrexone were equally effective in reducing craving, reducing amount of alcohol intake, and preventing relapse in 12 weeks follow up period. Naltrexone was found to be better in tolerability whereas disulfiram was better in terms of dropout from treatment.

So while alcohol prevention medicines are not completely effective there are no doubt that these medications do have a role in reducing alcohol craving and alcohol dependency.

CONCLUSION

Hence all three ways of reducing alcohol consumption have a certain degree of effectiveness:

1. Alcohol reducing medication
2. Negative Alcohol Advertisement
3. Taxation

Hence alcohol reduction strategies have certain degree of effectiveness that cannot be denied. Hence governments instead of imposing ineffective prohibitions are better off applying taxation, negative advertisements and medication to reduce alcohol consumption.

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