



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND HEALTH CONDITION: A STUDY IN SILCOORI TEA GARDEN OF CACHAR DISTRICT, ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol consumption is prevalent among some tea garden workers. Excessive alcohol consumption has been associated with various health problems such as harming liver which can lead to liver cirrhosis, Heart, Brain, Cancer, Stomach etc. Moreover, alcohol abuse can lead to depression, and increased risk of injuries, violence, and accidents etc. Studies have indicated that alcoholism among tea garden workers contributes significantly to morbidity and mortality rates. In this article, researcher will be discussing on the impact of alcohol consumption and health conditions of tea garden workers in Silcoorie Tea garden of Cachar district, Assam. The data has been collected from 50 respondents through the interview schedule and observation by using simple random sampling method.

Key words: Alcohol, Intoxication, Violence, Health.

INTRODUCTION

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” (WHO) Alcohol consumption affects health enormously. Alcohol (ethanol or ethyl alcohol) is the ingredient found in beer, wine and spirits that causes drunkenness. It is formed when yeast ferments (breaks down without oxygen) the sugars in different food. For example, wine is made from the sugar in grapes, beer from the sugar in malted barley (a type of grain), and cider from the sugar in apples, vodka from the sugar in potatoes, beets or other plants.

Alcohol is classed as a ‘sedative hypnotic’ drug, which means it acts to depress the central nervous system at high doses. Alcoholism, also known as alcohol use disorder (AUD) refers to drinking of alcohol that results in mental or physical health problems. The disorder was previously divided into two types: alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence. In a medical context, alcoholism is said to exist when two or more of the following conditions are

present: a person drinks large amounts of alcohol over a long time period, has difficulty cutting down, acquiring and drinking alcohol takes up a great deal of time, alcohol is strongly desired, usage results in not fulfilling responsibilities, usage results in social problems, usage results in health problems, usage results in risky situations, withdrawal occurs when stopping, and alcohol tolerance has occurred with use. Alcohol use can affect all parts of the body, but it particularly affects the brain, heart, liver, pancreas and immune system. Alcoholism can result in mental illness, delirium tremens, Wernicke – Korsakoff syndrome, irregular heartbeat, an impaired immune response, liver cirrhosis and increased cancer risk. Drinking during pregnancy can result in fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. Women are generally more sensitive than men to the harmful effects of alcohol, primarily due to their smaller body weight, lower capacity to metabolize alcohol, and higher proportion of body fat.

According to the American Medical Association, "alcoholism is an illness characterized by significant impairment that is directly associated with persistent and excessive use of alcohol. Impairment may involve physiological, psychological or social dysfunction."

Speaking, alcoholism has less to do with "how much" someone is drinking, and more to do with what happens when they drink (Cynthia, 2007).

Alcoholism is also defined as a condition in which a person loses control over consumption that she/he is unable to uphold without alcohol. In our country India, the stereotyped images of youth are irrational, undisciplined, rebellious. Alcoholism has been characterized into excessive intake, loss of control that may be because of the disturbances in functioning in his social world that affects physically, ruin family life, and demoralize the individual (Ahuja, 2006).

Alcoholism is known as alcohol dependence and it is considered a disease with symptoms such as craving or feeling a stronger get drink; loss of control or not being able to stop once drinking has begun; physical dependence such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety; and tolerance or drinking greater amounts of alcohol to "get high"(National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2006). Many people believe that drinking alcohol will and may ease their problems regarding their family, work and the society, but it would not. Personal consequences of alcohol dependency include trauma, violence, peptic and gastric ulcers, unsafe sex, pre mature death, organ systems failure, cirrhosis of liver, and poor nutritional status of the family. Thus, alcoholism leads to death or illness of a person life.

WHY ALCOHOL IS CONSUMED

Alcohol is a psychoactive substance with dependence-producing properties that has been widely used in many cultures for centuries. Consumption of alcohol and human history goes together from time immemorial. There are numerous ancient myths and biblical example that are associated to the consumption of alcohol but archeological findings as well as local, ritual, tradition and custom since a very long time. To explain why alcohol is consumed, it has not any specific reason. According to World Health Organization, alcohol consumption is a causal factor in more than 200 disease and injury conditions. Drinking alcohol is associated with a risk of developing health problems such as mental and behavioural disorders, including alcohol dependence, major non communicable diseases such as liver cirrhosis, some cancers and cardiovascular diseases, as well as injuries resulting from violence and road clashes and collisions. More than 2 billion people consume alcohol, but there is no specific reason why people consume alcohol. But stress, age, gender, culture, environment is a factor of alcohol consumption.

REASON WHY PEOPLE CONSUME ALCOHOL

According to a study on Alcoholism conducted by Tim Stoddart, there are seven common reason of why people consume alcohol. They are as discuss below –

Stress

For some people, drinking alcohol is a way of relieving stress. The alcohol numbs them to the various stressors in their life, such as work, school, relationships, money, etc. The problem is that when people drink too much for releasing their stress, they usually make the problems they're stressed out about even worse, and they can develop worse problems, like alcoholism. They cannot get rid of their problem.

Fun

People generally tend to drink alcohol in order to have fun. Being drunk makes them feel happy and “spirited,” and drinking alcohol with friends can be a fun experience. If people are nervous in social situations, drinking helps them “let loose” and have more fun. People drink to have fun at parties, nightclubs, barbecues, and more, because they think alcohol enhances their experience.

Peer Pressure

Many people drink just because the people around them are drinking, and they might feel an indirect peer pressure to drink so they aren't “the odd one out.” Someone might feel obligated to drink when the rest of

their co-workers are enjoying happy hour, for example. Direct peer pressure is even stronger, and it's when people are actively encouraging someone to drink. It can be very hard to say no to a drink when someone is pushing it in your face, and it's even harder for youth who are being ridiculed for not drinking.

Curiosity

The reason of curiosity generally applies to a younger crowd. Kids, teens, and college students who've never drank before might drink alcohol because they're curious about what it tastes like, or they're curious about what it feels like to be drunk. They begin to drink alcohol in a purely experimental way, just because they want to experience drinking firsthand. However, there are plenty of examples of young people getting sober, and increasing their quality of life.

Preference

Some people drink alcohol simply because they enjoy the taste. When they are thirsty and want to enjoy a beverage, in some situations they prefer to drink alcohol, such as a glass of wine or a beer, over other drinks, such as soda, iced tea, or water.

Accessibility

This is a very simple reason. People drink because alcoholic drinks are quite available. In most of the families drinking alcohol is a very common thing. Another reason people drink alcohol is just because it's available. They might enjoy alcohol for any of the other reasons, but they wouldn't seek it out. They choose to drink only because the alcohol is already there and it's easy to – “because they can.”

There are also some factors like Biological factor, environmental factor, psychological factor and social factor etc.

Alcohol dependence

Alcohol dependence is a previous psychiatric diagnosis in which an individual is physically or psychologically dependent upon drinking alcohol. Alcohol dependence (alcoholism) consists of four symptoms.

1. Craving: a strong need, or compulsion to drink.

2. Loss of control: The inability to limit one's drinking on any given occasion.
3. Physical dependence: withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness and anxiety, occur when alcohol use is stopped after a period of heavy drinking.
4. Tolerance: The need to drink greater amount so alcohol in order to get high.

HEALTH

Health is the most important and long lasting wealth. But unfortunately most of people in a race to earn materialistic wealth, ignore it. According to World Health Organization, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Huber et al. (2011) proposed a new definition of health as 'the ability to adapt and to self-manage', which includes the ability of people to adapt to their situation as key to health. Thus, the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, and political belief, economic or social condition. The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent on the fullest co-operation of individuals and States. Thus taking care of health is considered important. The main domains of health are:

1. Physical Health—The ability to carry out his daily activities without any difficulty.
2. Mental Health—Mental health talks about a sound psychological condition to think properly.
3. Social Health—Social Health starts from our very socialization process in a positive environment to a positive direction.
4. Reproductive Health - A reproductive health provides a means for addressing health and population issues with an emphasis on needs of women and men.

EFFECT OF ALCOHOL ON HEALTH

Alcohol has an impact on health. Excessive consumption of alcohol is not good for the health which can lead too many problems. Drinking too much or on a single occasion or over time, it can take a serious effect on the health. Effect of alcohol on health is discussing below –

Brain

Drinking too much can affect your concentration, judgment, mood and memory. It increases your risk of having a stroke and developing dementia. Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways,

and can affect the way the brain looks and works. These disruptions can change mood and behavior, and make it harder to think clearly and move with coordination.

Heart

Heavy drinking increases your blood pressure and can lead to heart damage and heart attacks. Drinking a lot over a long time or too much on a single occasion can damage also the heart, causing problems including:

1. Cardiomyopathy – Stretching and drooping of heart muscle
2. Arrhythmias – Irregular heart beat
3. Stroke
4. High blood pressure

Liver

Drinking 3 to 4 standard drinks a day increases your risk of developing liver cancer. Long-term heavy drinking also puts you at increased risk of liver cirrhosis (scarring) and death and can lead to a variety of problems and liver inflammations including:

1. Steatosis, or fatty liver
2. Alcoholic hepatitis
3. Fibrosis
4. Cirrhosis

Stomach

Drinking even 1 to 2 standard drinks a day increases your risk of stomach and bowel cancer, as well as stomach ulcers. Alcohol consumption can give rise to or exacerbate existing stomach and intestinal ulcers. When the alcohol travels to the small intestine, it can do damage by interrupting the digestive system. It blocks the body from absorbing, folic acid, fat, Vitamin B1, B12, and amino acids.

Cancer

Based on extensive reviews of research studies, there is a strong scientific consensus of an association between alcohol drinking and several types of cancer. In its Report on Carcinogens, the National Toxicology Program of the US Department of Health and Human Services lists consumption of alcoholic beverages as a known human carcinogen. The research evidence indicates that the more alcohol a person

drinks—particularly the more alcohol a person drinks regularly over time—the higher his or her risk of developing an alcohol-associated cancer.

Clear patterns have emerged between alcohol consumption and the development of different types of cancer are – head and neck cancer, liver cancer, breast cancer, colorectal cancer, esophageal cancer etc.

Pancreas

Drinking can also damage to the pancreas, a two-in-one hormone-producing endocrine and digestive exocrine gland. Even a single, isolated incident of binge drinking has been known to result in an episode of acute pancreatitis. Alcoholic inflammation of the pancreas can lead to chronic fibrosis, which can cause insufficiency in both the exocrine (digestive enzymes) and endocrine (insulin) systems. When inflammation blocks digestive enzymes from being released normally into the GI tract, they can attack the pancreas itself, as well as seep out to other surrounding tissues. Pancreatitis can lead to other medical conditions as well, such as severe abdominal pain, diabetes, jaundice, and even circulatory collapse.

Fertility

Regular heavy drinking reduces men's testosterone levels, sperm count and fertility. For women, drinking too much can affect their periods.

Thus, alcohol effect both physically and mentally of a person were a person not able to get up early in the morning to go to work and there are respondents when he go to work also he will be able to working the work place properly. There maximum gens respondent have stomach pain. There, respondents also said that, after taking alcohol they got relax and free from body pain.

CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF ALCOHOL

The pattern of Alcohol consumption as per the survey ithas been discussed in the table and diagram below –

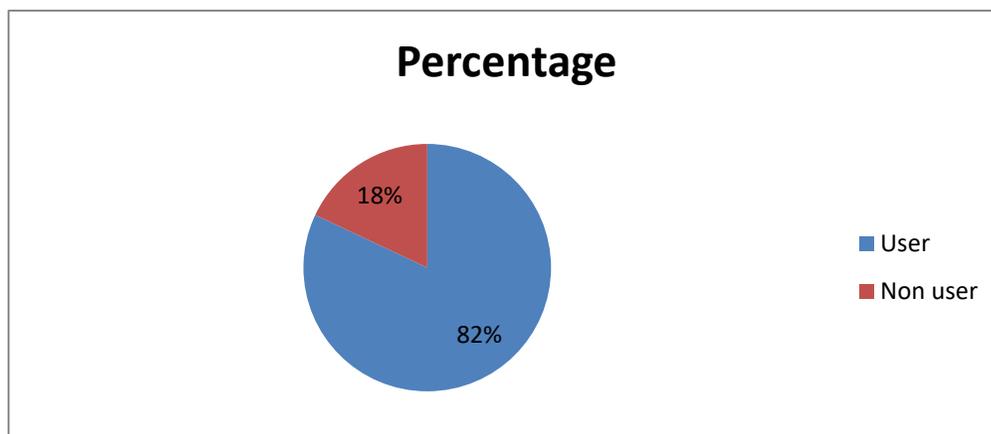
Table no-1

Distribution of respondent on the basis of alcohol consumption

Alcohol	Respondent	Percentage
User	41	82
Non User	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram – Distribution of respondents on the basis of alcohol consumption



Sources- Field survey

The above table and diagram shows that 82% respondent belongs to alcohol consumption and 18% respondents are not use alcohol consumption.

FREQUENCY OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

The percentage of alcohol consumers as per their frequency of consumption of alcohol is listed in below table:

Table no-2

Distribution of respondent on the basis of frequency of alcohol consumption

Duration	Respondent	Percentage
Daily	23	46
Weekly	10	20
Monthly	03	6
Occasionally	05	10
Non user	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram: Distribution of respondent on the basis of frequency of alcohol consumption



Sources- Field survey

The above table and diagram shows that 46% respondents are daily drinkers, 20% respondents are weekly drinkers, 6% respondents are monthly drinkers, 10% respondents are occasional drinkers and 18% respondents are not drinkers.

BRAND OF ALCOHOL

The respondents are uses different brand of alcohol that is Rice bear, Sulai, Foreign Liquor, rum, whisky etc.

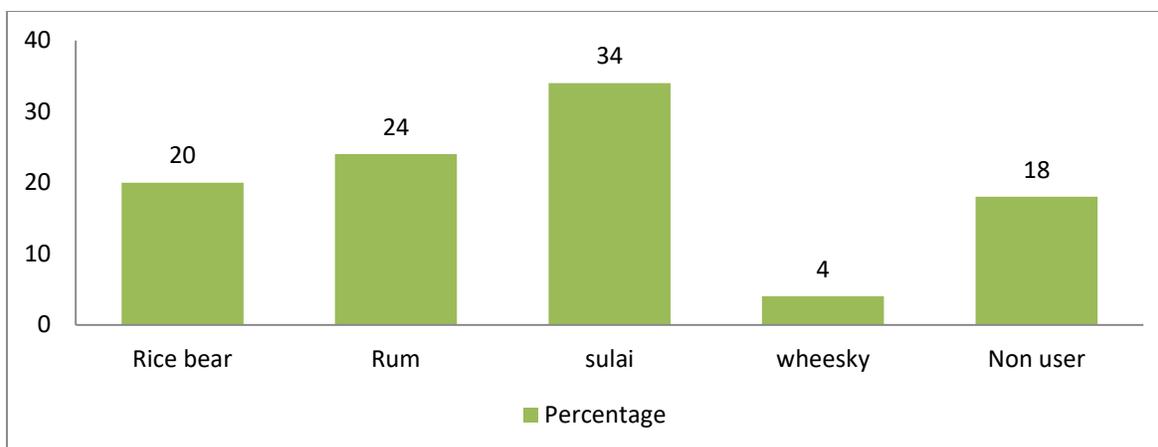
Table no-3

Distribution of respondents on the basis of use of brand of alcohol

Brand	Respondent	Percentage
Rice bear	10	20
Rum	12	24
Sulai	17	34
Wheesky	02	4
Non user	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram: Distribution of respondents on the basis of Brand of alcohol



Sources- Field survey

The above table and diagram reveals that 20% respondents consume rice bear, 24% respondents consume Rum, 34% respondents consume Sulai. Whereas, 4% respondents consume whisky. The remaining 18% of respondents are non user of alcohol.

PLACE OF DRINKING ALCOHOL

According to the survey most of the respondent revealed that they were allowed to drink or consume alcohol inside as well as outside the home. The table is showing the respondents on the basis of the place where they consume.

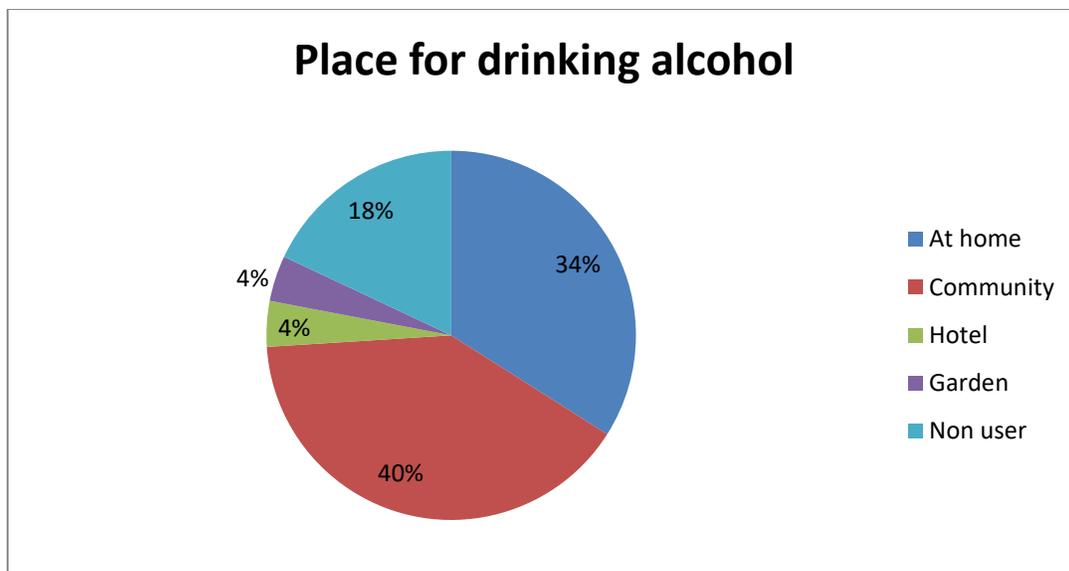
Table no-4

Distribution of the respondent on the basis of place of drinking alcohol

Place	Respondent	Percentage
At home	17	34
Community	20	40
Hotel	2	4
Garden	2	4
Non user	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram- Distribution of respondent on the basis of place of drinking alcohol



Sources- Field survey

The above table shows that most of the people drink alcohol in their community that is 40% respondents. 34% respondents drink alcohol at home, 4% respondent drink in hotel and other 4% respondent drink alcohol in garden. There 18% respondents are non user.

REASON FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Some of the reasons for alcohol consumption are given below-

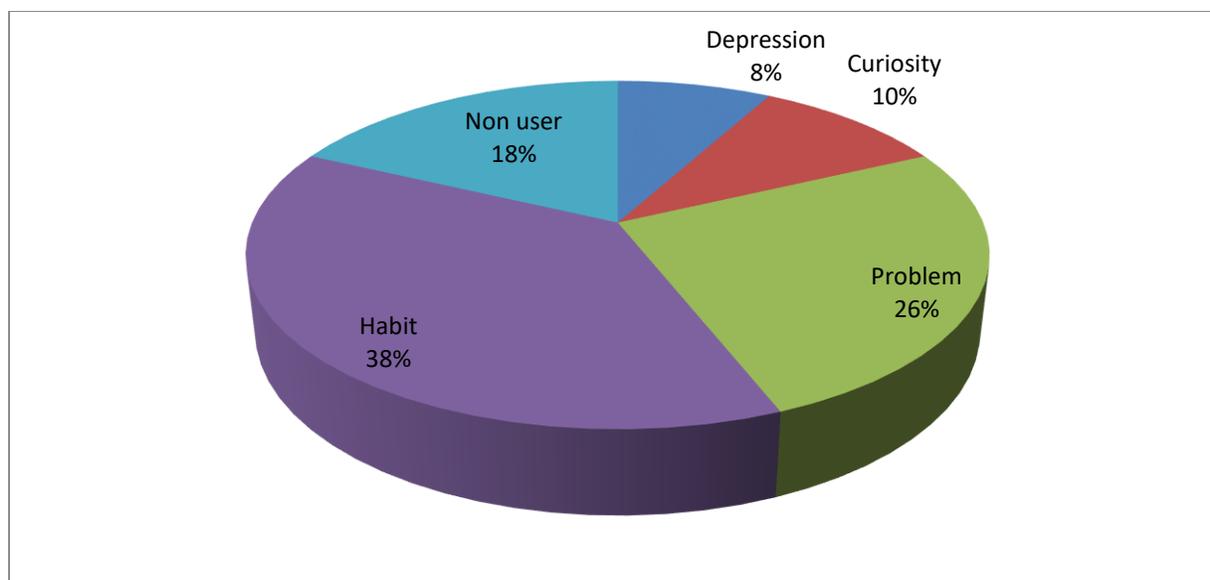
Table no-5

Respondent on the basis of reason for alcohol consumption

Reason	Respondent	Percentage
Depression	4	8
Curiosity	5	10
Problem	13	26
Habit	19	38
Non user	9	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram - respondent on the basis of Reason for alcohol consumption



Sources- Field survey

The above table shows that 38% of the respondents consume alcohol as habits, 26% of the respondents consume alcohol consumption cause of problem, 8% of the respondents are belongs to lead alcohol consumption because of depression and 10% of the respondents consume alcohol because of curiosity. Whereas 18% of the respondents are not alcoholusers

SPEND MONEY FOR ALCOHOL (MONTHLY)

People spend lots of money for alcohol consumption. Sometime they spend beyond their capacity which leads to financial crisis of the family.

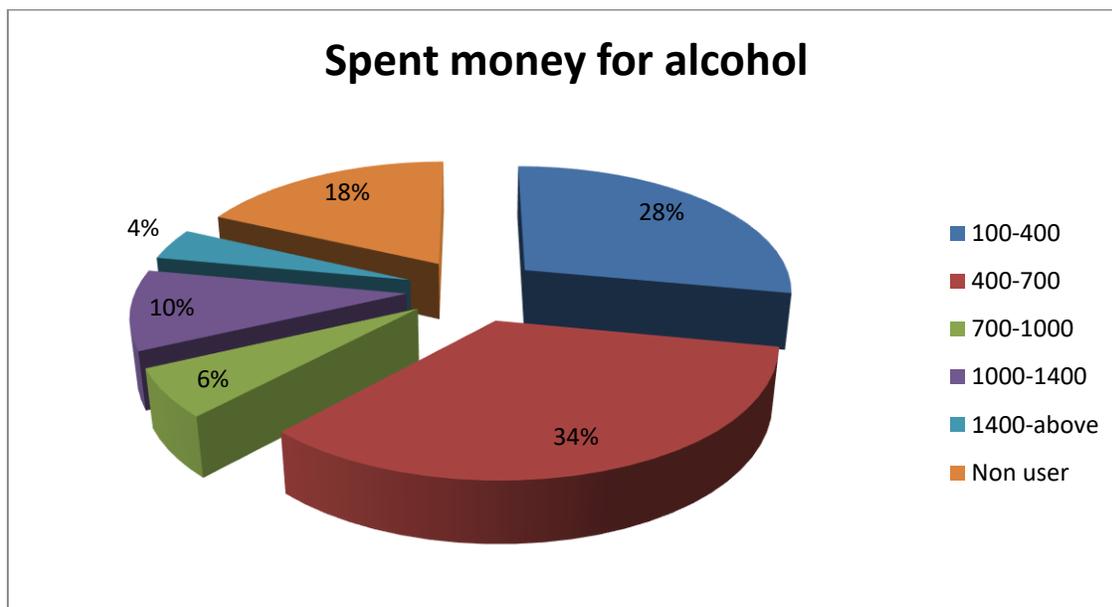
Table no-6

Distribution of the respondent on the basis of money spendingfor alcohol

Money	Respondent	Percentage
100-400	14	28
400-700	17	34
700-1000	03	6
1000-1400	05	10
1400- above	02	4
Non user	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram:Distribution of the respondent on the basis of spending money for alcohol



Sources- Field survey

The above the table reveals that, the majority 34% of the respondent spent around 400-700 for consuming alcohol. 28% of the respondents spent around 100-400 on alcohol monthly. 6% and 4% of the respondents spent money between 700-1000 and 1400- above respectively and 10% respondents spent around 100-1400. The remaining 18% of respondent are not uses alcohol.

OPENION ON THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF ALCOHOL

Distribution of respondents on the basis of opinion on the negative effect of alcohol are given below –

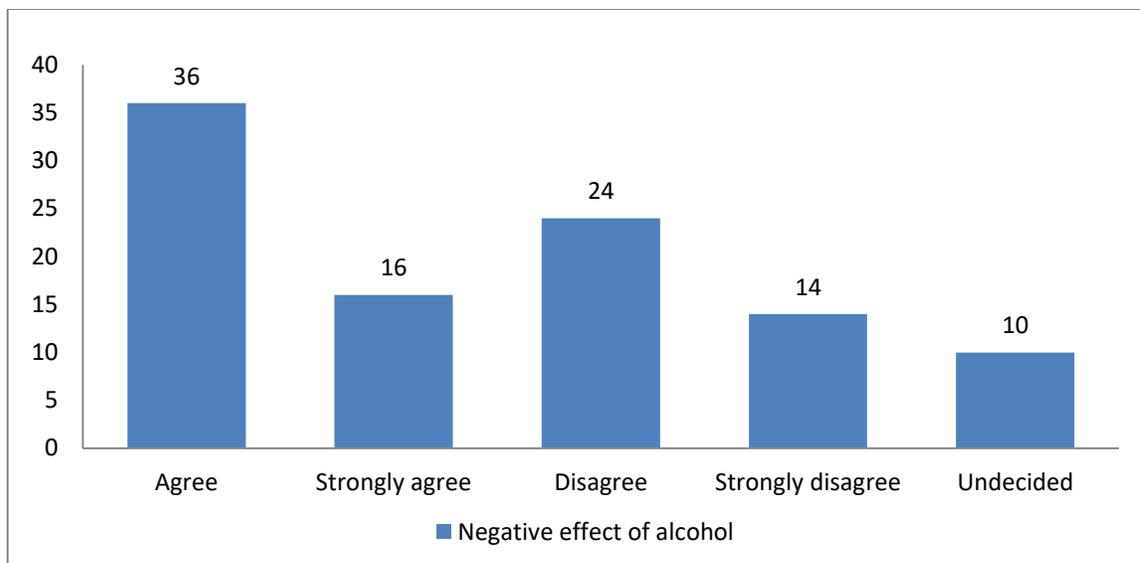
Table no-7

Distribution of respondents on the basis of opinions on the negative effect of alcohol

Negative effect	Respondents	Percentage
Agree	18	36
Strongly agree	8	16
disagree	12	24
Strongly disagree	7	14
undecided	5	10
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram: Distribution of respondents on the basis of negative effect of alcohol



Sources- Field survey

The above table shows that 36% of the respondents are agree on negative effect of alcohol consumption and 16% of the respondents strongly agree of the negative effect of alcohol consumption, 24% of the respondents disagree on the negative effect of alcohol. Whereas 14% of the respondents strongly disagree on negative effect of alcohol consumption and 10% of the respondents are undecided to explain about the negative effect of alcohol consumption.

EFFECT OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION ON HEALTH

Alcohol consumption is injurious to health. People know that it is injurious for the health and it leads to health problem but they ignore and consume it. Majority of the respondents face health problems like liver disease, stomach pain, brain damage, accident and injuries. They are discussing below-

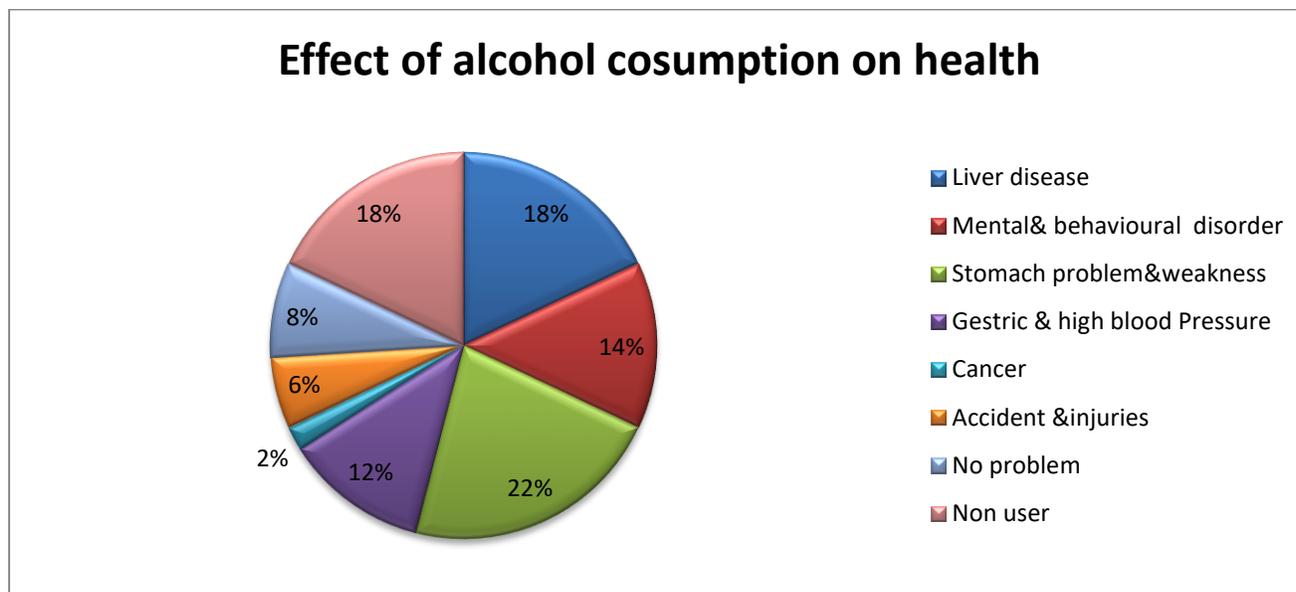
Table no-8

Distribution of the respondent on the basis of effect of alcohol consumption on health

Health issue	Respondent	Percentage
Liver disease	9	18
Mental & behavioural disorder	07	14
Stomach problem & weakness	11	22
Gastric & high blood pressure	6	12
Cancer	01	2
Accident and injuries	03	6
No problem	4	8
Non user	09	18
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram: Distribution of the respondent on the basis of effect of alcohol consumption on health



Sources- Field survey

The above table shows that 18% respondents are having to liver disease, 14% respondents have mental & behavioural disorder, 22% respondents have stomach problem and 12% respondents are facing gastric and high blood pressure. Whereas 2% respondent are belongs to cancer, 6% respondent are faced/met accident and injuries. Only 8% respondent have no health related problem. There 18% respondent are non user of alcohol.

TREATMENT THEY PREFER

Treatment is a medical attention given to a sick or injured person. Many patients are not getting the medical treatment when they need. Treatment of something involves putting a particular substance into it, in order to clean it, to protect it, or give it special properties. The respondents prefer many treatments like Ayurvedic, allopathic, homeopathic and self medicine. They are discussing below-

Table no-9

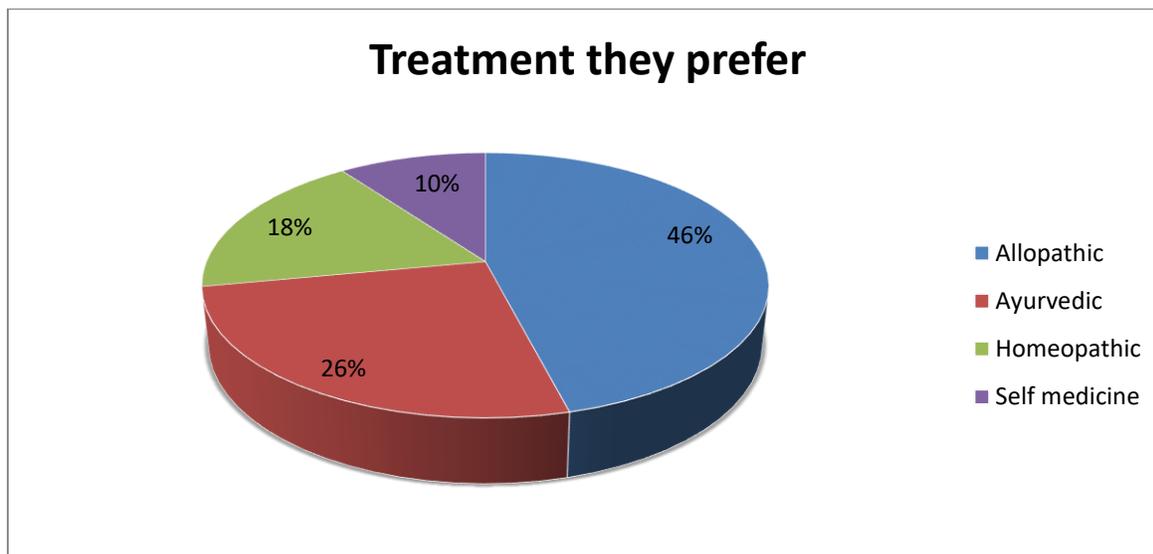
Distribution of the respondents on the basis of treatment they prefer

Treatment	Respondents	Percentage
Allopathic	23	46
Ayurvedic	13	26
Homeopathic	9	18

Self medicine	5	10
Total	50	100

Sources- Field survey

Diagram: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of treatment they prefer



Sources- Field survey

The above table and diagram shows that 46% respondents prefer allopathic treatment, 26% respondents prefer Ayurvedic treatment, 18% respondents prefer homeopathic treatment and 10% respondents prefer self medicine.

Major findings

Majority of the respondents know about the positive and negative effect of alcohol consumption on health, they know how alcohol affects the liver, cancer, headache, stomach pain and brain. The researcher learns that the respondents know about the negative effect of alcohol on health but they couldn't stop drinking alcohol. They also face problems due to consumption of alcohol and also knew about the serious consequences of alcohol consumption on health. Positive effect of alcohol is that if a man drinks in a limit it will be a medicine for health.

Moderate or limit alcohol intake may be effective in reducing stress which is known as physiological stress. Emotional shock or anger triggers the sympathetic nervous system, releasing epinephrine or norepinephrine, leading to either a rise in blood pressure and may ultimately lead to cardiac arrhythmia and sudden death. Diabetes is an important risk factor of coronary heart disease, closely linked with alcohol intake. The relationship between

alcohol and diabetes is considered J-shaped. Several studies have suggested that a moderate alcohol intake leads to decreased insulin resistance and thereby lowers the risk of diabetes. In addition, moderate alcohol intake increases insulin sensitivity in skeletal muscles, which could protect against obesity and diabetes.

The researcher had learn that if a person, drink too much alcohol than he/she will be more depend on alcohol and he cannot able to do work properly. The respondent told that they feel weak after taking alcohol and there majority of people having stomach pain. Alcohol is an organic solvent, which in high doses has both direct and indirect harmful influence on a large number of organs, and a high alcohol intake during a longer period of time implies an increased risk for developing alcohol dependency syndrome. But a light to moderate alcohol intake for many people; is a natural part of the diet and it has a positive effect on health. The picture of alcohol as an important risk factor for morbidity and mortality and therefore to some extent complicated of the known positive somatic effects as well as the beneficial mental and social influence of a light to moderate alcohol intake. But too much drinking alcohol leads to negative impact on the income source, create problem to the family and society too.

Thus, it can summarize that alcohol and health are related to each other and excessive consumption of alcohol leads sickness, crimes and even death is increasing day by day in the society.

EFFECT OF ALCOHOL ON FAMILY, WORK AND SOCIETY

Family:

Family is the basic unit of community. Alcohol consumption had a bad impact on family members. Consuming alcohol primarily effect on peace, harmony and stability of a family. So family members has to play a crucial role to control it. When the head of the family becomes alcoholic he neglects his family and the wife has to play his role in the family. When the wife and children are unable to cope up with these stresses, they may land with problems relating to social, psychological and economical perspective. And there is a possibility of other members or children starting of consuming alcohol, because they have already seen and learnt it how to consume alcohol. The financial crisis is also visible in those families; an alcoholic person always asks for money from their family members on a daily basis. They avoid taking responsibility of their family members and their children.

Society:

It has been observed that those who consume alcohol are short tempered; they easily disrupt peace in the society. They also make arguments among them and started quarrelling in public place.

Work:

Drinking too much alcohol create concentration problem during work. They couldn't do their duty properly and also faced work place accidents. Thus it adversely affects the working culture. Heavy drinking or alcohol abuse may lead to unemployment.

Financial and economic problem:

The economic consequences of alcohol consumption can be severe particularly for poor. Apart from money spent on drinks, heavy drinkers may suffer from other economic problems such as lower wages and lost employment opportunities increased medical and legal expenses and decreased eligibility for loans.

Health problem:

Too much alcohol is harmful for the health physically and mentally. Alcohol related diseases are liver damage, stomach pain, heart disease, brain and anemia etc. It also leads to cancer in various parts of the like- mouth, breast cancer etc.

CONCLUSION

Alcohol consumption has a negative impact on health. The health risk of alcohol includes heart, brain, liver, stomach, Pancreas and cancer. . The Tea garden labour is still live in miserable condition, they are illiterate and living unhygienic condition. Due to alcohol consumption, majority of the worker's economic conditions are not so good and they hardly send their children to school. From the study it is very clear that, labourers are not conscious about their health. In spite of, stringent measures taken by government, they are still living in unhygienic condition and consuming alcohol.

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