

# Community Opinion Regarding the Ban of Alcohol Sale among Adult Population in Chennai - A Cross Sectional Study

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**Abstract: Introduction:** Alcoholism is one of the leading causes of majority of the health problems in the world. A lot of measures have been taken by the governments of the states all over India to curb the effects of alcoholism at large. Alcohol ban is one such measure. **Objectives:** To explore the opinion regarding the ban of alcohol sale among the adult population residing in urban area of Chennai and to measure the association between selected factors associated with the supporters of alcohol ban among the study population.

**Materials and methods:** A community-based, cross-sectional study was carried out among the adult population residing in urban field practice area of ACS medical college (NERKUNDRAM) house-to-house survey was conducted, and pre-designed questionnaire was used as a study tool.

**Results:** In our study we found that 68% of study population supported the ban of alcohol. Among these, 63.9% supported for a gradual ban of alcohol. Gender and alcohol status were the factors significantly associated with opinion on ban of alcohol and were statistically significant.

**Conclusion:** Most of the population supported the ban of alcohol vindicated that the policy of alcohol ban is the felt need of the community.

**Keywords:** Alcohol; Ban; Cross Sectional; Policy, Adult population

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Alcoholism is considered as one of the psychiatric emergencies it is an urgent, serious disturbance of behaviour, affect (or) through that makes the patient unable cope with life situations, an alcoholic client is at risk of injury to self (or) others. Alcohol abuse is defined as self-administration of a drug for non-medical reasons in quantities and frequency which may impair an individual's ability to function effectively, and which may result in social, physical (or) emotional harm.

Alcohol is one of the commonly consumed intoxicating substances in India. It has traditionally been drunk in tribal societies, although it has won increasing social acceptance among other groups. It is easily available and widely used, especially at festivals such as Deepawali and Holi.

Alcoholism is a family problem and also a universal problem. When the abuse is a parent, it affects the family members. Families of alcoholics are more disturbed in all aspects such as socially, emotionally, physically than the non-alcoholic families, It will automatically shift the responsibility to the wives and she will take up the family responsibility and younger generations are mostly affected.

World Health Organization defines alcohol misuse as alcohol use that places people at risk for problems, including “at risk use”, “Clinical alcohol abuse,” and “dependence.” At Risk alcohol use is the consumption of alcohol in a way that is not consistent with legal or medical guidelines, and it is likely to present risks of acute or chronic health or social problems for the user or others.<sup>[1]</sup>

A publication of holistic nursing and health society article says alcohol intoxication shows disturbed and noisy behaviour.<sup>[2]</sup> National prohibition was advocated by Mahatma Gandhi, as well as by many Indian women.<sup>[3]</sup> Prohibition in the states of India that have implemented the policy has led to lower rates of drinking among men, as well as a decreased incidence of violence against women.<sup>[4]</sup>

WHO 2008 has shown that poor families have the high risk of malnutrition and infection with alcohol consumption and they developed the liver disease, unintentional accidents, and other psychiatric emergencies and the mortality rate is also relatively high that effects the survival rate gap between the rich and poor families.<sup>[5]</sup>

Alcohol dependence is described as a state, psychic and sometimes also physical, resulting from the interaction between living organism due to that Family relationship begin to deteriorate and family members are trapped with shame anger and guilt. Alcoholism leads to emotional, physical harassment and sexual abuse.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Objectives

1. To explore the opinion regarding the ban of alcohol sale among the adult population residing in urban area of Chennai.
2. To measure the association between selected factors associated with the supporters of alcohol ban among the study population.

## 2. MATERIALS & METHODS

### Study Area:

Study was conducted in the Urban field practice area of ACS medical college, (NERKUNDRAM)

**Study design:**Community based cross-sectional study

**Study period:** May-June 2020 (2 months duration)

**Study participants:** Adult Population (Individuals aged 18 years and above in study area)

**Inclusion criteria:** All adult people who are aged 18 years and above.

### Exclusion criteria

- Those people who are critically ill and mentally challenged.
- Not willing to participate in the study

Sample size was calculated assuming that 50% of the adult population favor the ban of alcohol sale, with 95% confidence interval (CI) and 10% of relative precision

- Calculated sample size was 384.
- Sample size achieved was 400.

### Study tools

- Questionnaire – A structured questionnaire was used. The questionnaire includes all the study variables.

### Study variable

- Socio demographic profile
- H/O Alcohol intake
- Opinion regarding the policy of ban of alcohol sale.
- Measures to suggest to control the alcohol use

## 3. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In the study area, individuals were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the research team. Questionnaire captured data regarding sociodemographic details of the study population, status of alcohol consumption, opinion regarding the policy of ban of alcohol sale. Data were collected by the investigator from the study participants after getting their informed consent, we introduced ourselves to the family members, and all information obtained from them were immediately filled in the questionnaires in the same house and then moved on to the next house.

**Statistical analysis:** Data were entered in MS Excel and analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 21.0 version. Descriptive statistics such as proportions were calculated and 95% CI was calculated appropriately.

## 4. RESULTS

A sum total of 400 persons were interviewed for the study, among them 57.5%(230) belonged to age group of 18-25 years, 28.7%(115) belonged to the age group 26-45 and 36.1%(55) belonged to the age group 46-60 years. 65.5% (262) were male subjects and 34.5%(138) belonged to female gender. Only 1.5% of study participants were illiterates & most of the study participants were Hindus 71.8%(287) and majority of the participants are from nuclear family 81.8%(327). (Table 1) Most of the study population, i.e., 68% (274) supported any form of the ban of alcohol sale. Among the supporters, 63.9% (175) favoured for gradual ban of alcohol sale. Many of the study population (47.5%) suggested that number of alcohol shops to be reduced to control the alcohol use (Table 2 and Table 3). It was found that 71.9% (99) of females had positive opinion toward the ban of alcohol when compared to males (50.86%). Association was found statistically significant. It was found that significantly higher proportion of people who do not consume alcohol (72.63%) favoured for the ban of alcohol when compared to alcohol consumers (35.67). Association was found statistically significant (Table 4).

Table 1: Socio Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N=400)

CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<b>AGE GROUP</b>		
18-25	230	57.5%
26-45	115	28.7%
46-60	55	13.8%
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Married	204	51.5%
Unmarried	187	46.8%
Widowed	7	1.2%
Divorced	2	0.5%
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
Illiterate	06	1.5%
Primary	16	4.0%
Middle	16	4.0%
High school	22	5.5%
Higher secondary	35	8.8%
Undergraduate	245	61.2%
Post graduate	60	15.0%
<b>OCCUPATION</b>		
Employed	275	68.8%
Unemployed	125	31.2%
<b>RELIGION</b>		
Hindu	287	71.8%
Muslim	76	19.0%
Christian	37	19.2%
<b>TYPE OF FAMILY</b>		
Nuclear family	327	81.8%
Joint family	58	14.4%
Three generation family	15	3.8%

Table 2: Opinion Regarding Ban of Alcohol Sale (N=400)

OPINION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes, required.	274	68
Not required.	126	32

Table 3: Measures Suggested To Control the Alcohol Use (N=400)

MEASURES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Reduce the number of shops	190	47.5%
Awareness creation among community	141	35.2%
Increase price	120	30.0%
Reduce the working time of liquor shops	101	25.2%
Other	11	3.0%

Table 4: Types of Ban of Alcohol Among the Study of the Participants (N=274)

TYPES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Immediate ban	70	25.5%
Gradual ban	175	63.9%
Partial ban	29	10.6%

Table 5: Association Between Demographic Factors and the Opinion on Ban of Alcohol (N=400)

VARIABLES	OPINION REGARDING BAN OF ALCOHOL n(%) YESNOTOTAL			P VALUE
<b>AGE</b>				
18-25	72 (48.3)	77 (51.6)	149 (100)	0.254
26-45	116 (59.1)	80 (40.8)	196 (100)	
46-60	22 (52.3)	20 (47.6)	42 (100)	
Above 60	7 (53.8)	6 (46.15)	13 (100)	
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	118 (50.86)	114(49.13)	232(100)	0.000
Female	99 (71.7)	39 (28.26)	138 (100)	
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
Illiterate	3 (50)	3 (50)	6 (100)	0.006
Primary school	7 (43.75)	9 (56.25)	16 (100)	
Middle school	4 (25)	12 (75)	16 (100)	
High school	12 (54.54)	10 (45.46)	22 (100)	
Higher secondary	18 (51.4)	17 (48.6)	35 (100)	
Under graduate	128 (52.24)	117 (47.76)	245 (100)	
Post graduate	45 (75)	15 (25)	60 (100)	
<b>OCCUPATION</b>				
Employed	151 (54.90)	124 (45.09)	275 (100)	0.388
Unemployed	66 (52.8)	59 (47.2)	124 (100)	
<b>ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION</b>				
Yes	71 (35.67)	128 (64.32)	199 (100)	0.000
No	146 (72.63)	55 (27.36)	201 (100)	

## 5. DISCUSSION

Our country should ensure responsible usage of alcohol among its various states. Since independence various states have been taking various efforts to combat the menace of alcoholism. Gujarat is the only state, in which a complete ban of alcohol had been successfully implemented. Recent initiatives by the state like Kerala & Bihar regarding the ban of alcohol sale in different forms resulted in mixed opinions among the experts and public. Due to the various ill effects of alcohol in both health and social aspects we decided to address this issue in our study. In our study we have found that 68% of the study population were in support of the ban of alcohol. Among these 54% wanted the ban of alcohol to be gradual as they feared it may cause more harm than good. They believed that the sudden withdrawal of alcohol may lead to a lot of side effects in alcoholics. They also feared the unemployment of the people who worked in the alcohol industry which was most likely to happen following the sudden ban of alcohol. Therefore we understand that this endorses the current government policy which has been implemented in some Indian States like Kerala<sup>(7)</sup> & Bihar<sup>(5)</sup>. There has also been attempts in Tamilnadu to introduce alcohol ban in a phased manner.<sup>(8)</sup> We also know that in Tamilnadu the total number of alcohol shops has reduced in the past few years however the sale of alcohol is still legal. In our study we found that females (71.7%) were in favour of the ban of alcohol more than males. The after effects of usage of alcohol by men in their households are very harmful- domestic violence, verbal abuse, difficulty in management of household finances, work place harassment, providing for child nutrition and education, rape. In a patriarchal society like India, females are direct and indirect victims of all the harmful effects of alcohol use such as domestic violence.<sup>(9)</sup> This might be the reason for their strong support for the ban of alcohol. However we also know that whenever government imposed prohibition, the illegal sale of toddy and arrack along with consumption of methanol, an industrial solvent resulting in loss of several lives, Which paving way for lifting the ban.<sup>(10)</sup> In our study we found that literate people with a minimum of high school education are more inclined towards the ban of alcohol. They are well aware on the adverse effects of alcohol and its usage. It is also noted in our study that the ban of alcohol is not favoured amongst the employed (54.9%). It may be because alcohol consumption is one of the major stress relieving and recreational practices. Majority in favour of the alcohol ban were people who did not consume alcohol (72.63%). However, 71 out of 199 people who consumed alcohol were in favour of alcohol ban. This shows these people are becoming aware of their actions and are willing to take steps to change their habits which is a huge step in this process.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Majority of the population support for the ban of alcohol sale. Therefore, appropriate measures should be taken by the state government to enforce alcohol ban to save the life of the people and their families provided concerned efforts can be taken for the rehabilitation of alcohol dependents and to curb the black market/resurgence of country liquor/Arrack (methyl alcohol-related health hazard) and other detrimental effects of alcohol.

## Recommendations

From this study we may recommend that it is integral for the government to take appropriate action to not only successfully implement alcohol ban in the state but also to ensure that the

legislation provides facilities to the alcohol dependents through necessary revival and rehabilitation steps in order to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

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