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A Study on Attitude of College Students towards Alcohol in Tiruchirappalli District

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Abstract: Even though many people are not aware it, it is an undisputed fact that alcohol is a potent drug. Ethyl alcohol (C₂H₅OH) the intoxicating substance in alcoholic beverages, produces physical and psychological changes. Those who are in the age group of 18-25 years college students are called youth according to this study. Alcohol in small quantities usually stimulates people to be relaxed and socially responsive. However, alcohol is a represent certain behavior and attitudes usually repressed are exhibited by the person who has drunk alcohol. Typically he or she becomes disoriented, confused and drives a car or performs other physical activities erotically. There is a significant association between the age of the respondents and attitude towards alcohol. The researcher suggests that the government should taker strict actions to correct the behavior of the youth and should introduce values education, even at the level of higher education.

Keywords: potent drug, physical activities and behavior and attitudes.

I. INTRODUCTION

The word 'Alcohol' is derived from the Arabian term, 'Al-kuhul' which means 'finely divided spirit'. There are many types of alcohol-amyl, butyl, isopropyl, isobutyl, methyl, ethyl alcohol, etc. Different types of alcohol have various industrial and chemical uses.

Ethyl alcohol (Ethanol) is what is commonly consumed. (Alcohol is a clear; thin, highly volatile liquid, with a harsh burning taste.

ALCOHOL IS A DRUG

Even though many people are not aware it, it is an undisputed fact that alcohol is a potent drug. Ethyl alcohol (C₂H₅OH) the intoxicating substance in alcoholic beverages, produces physical and psychological changes. Therefore, alcohol is considered a drug. In the case of alcohol, these effects range from a feeling of well being experienced after one or two drinks, to drunkenness, which is the acute effect of having too many drinks

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. Factors that influence how alcohol will affect a person include:

- age
- gender
- physical condition

- amount of food eaten
- other drugs or medicines taken

In low doses, alcohol produces	In medium doses, alcohol produces:	In high doses, alcohol produces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ a relaxing effect ❖ reduces tension ❖ lowers inhibitions ❖ impairs concentration ❖ slows reflexes ❖ impairs reaction time ❖ reduces coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ slur speech ❖ cause drowsiness ❖ alter emotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Vomiting ❖ breathing difficulties ❖ unconsciousness ❖ coma

Effects of Alcohol on the Nervous System

As mentioned above, alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. It acts at many sites, including the reticular formation, spinal cord, cerebellum and cerebral cortex, and on many neurotransmitter systems. Alcohol is a very small molecule and is soluble in "lipid" and water solutions. Because of these properties, alcohol gets into the bloodstream very easily and also crosses the blood brain barrier. Some of the neurochemical effects of alcohol are:

- ✓ Increased turnover of nor epinephrine and dopamine
- ✓ Decreased transmission in acetylcholine systems
- ✓ Increased transmission in GABA systems
- ✓ Increased production of beta-endorphin in the hypothalamus

Chronic drinking can lead to dependence and addiction to alcohol and to additional neurological problems. Typical symptoms of withholding alcohol from someone who is addicted to it are shaking (tremors), sleep problems and nausea. More severe withdrawal symptoms include hallucinations and even seizures.

Chronic alcohol use can:

- ❖ Damage the frontal lobes of the brain
- ❖ Cause an overall reduction in brain size and increase in the size of the ventricles
- ❖ Lead to alcoholism (addiction to alcohol) and result in tolerance to the effects of alcohol and variety of health problems.
- ❖ Cause a vitamin deficiency. Because the digestion system of alcoholics is unable to absorb vitamin B-1 (thiamine), a syndrome known as "Wernicke's Encephalopathy" may develop. This syndrome is characterized by impaired memory, confusion and lack of coordination. Further deficiencies of thiamine can lead to "Korsakoff's Syndrome". This disorder is characterized by amnesia, apathy and disorientation. Widespread disease of the brain is a feature of both Wernicke's and Korsakoff's Syndromes.

ALCOHOL IS A DEPRESSANT

Alcohol is often misunderstood as a stimulant because it appears to make people more lively and less inhibited, it is actually a depressant. If taken in small quantities, it depresses that part of the brain which controls inhibitions, and so the person feels relaxed. when blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is low, the drinker experiences a feeling of relaxation, tranquility and a sense of well being. It slightly increases the heart rate, dilates blood vessels, stimulates appetite, and moderately lowers blood pressure.

II. SOCIAL DRINKERS

- ❖ A social drinker is one who drinks the way his social group permits. He never oversteps their unwritten, unspoken, but clearly understood boundaries. He either drinks occasionally, or drinks regularly in moderate quantities. His intake of alcohol does not cause any problem whatsoever in his life, who is an ‘alcoholic’.
- ❖ “An alcoholic is one, whose drinking causes continuing problems in one or more areas of his life (family-relationship, financial position, occupation, etc)” –MARTY MANN. In spite of these problems, he will keep on drinking. Here, ‘continuing’ is the key word. This is what differentiates him from a social drinker.
- ❖ An ‘alcoholic’ will not be able to take note of his problems and stop drinking totally. He tries, but never succeeds on a long – term basis. He develops a physical and psychological dependence on alcohol. He will have no control over his drinking, and even if he stops drinking for a short duration, he will definitely go back to obsessive drinking. Out of the ten people who start drinking for the pleasure associated, it, two become alcoholics. Unfortunately, the cause is still not.

III. ADDICTION – A DISEASE

World over, there is an increasing tendency to study both alcoholism drug addiction as ‘chemical dependency’. The term ‘addiction’ has used to refer to both addiction to alcohol and to other drugs.

IV. ADDICTION ON TO ALCOHOL

The common man sees ‘alcoholism’ as a weakness of character. The moralist looks at it as a vice. Law finds the consequential acts of alcoholism crime; the clergyman considers it a sin.

After extensive research, in the year 1956, American medical men came to the conclusion that it is a DISEASE.

Before elaborating on the disease concept of alcoholism, let us clearly understand who an alcoholic is, and in what respects he is different from the social drinker.

V. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

The effects of alcohol are directly related to its concentration in the blood (Blood Alcohol Level). Alcohol is directly on the brain and changes its working ability. The effects depend on the speed at which the person thinks, his weight, presence of food in the stomach, and type of beverage taken. The effects of alcohol on an individual also depend on a variety of other factors like the situation, one's attitude to drinking and one's drinking experience.

Here are a few factors:

Speed of drinking

The more rapidly an alcoholic beverage is taken, the higher will be the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC).

Body weight of the drinker

The greater the weight of a person the lower will be his BAC. Because of the way alcohol circulates in body fluid, the weight of the drinker is also a factor related to the effect of alcohol. For instance, a person weighting 80 kilos will not feel the effects of one glass of whisky as much as a person weighting 50 kilos.

These people who do not drink or take drugs but are victimised by chemical abuse, are called codependents. Codependency is a normal reaction to the abnormal behaviour of people around.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOLISM

As people progress through the degenerative progress of alcohol dependency, they experience a number of psychological effects of alcoholism. It is important to point out that the spiritual, the social, and the psychological effects of alcohol dependency can be just as, if not more, painful and problematic as the physical effects of alcoholism.

When the topic of the "effects of alcoholism" is discussed, many people focus on the physical consequences of alcoholism and exclude or downplay many of the other effects of alcoholism such as the psychological effects of alcohol dependency.

The following list will be presented as a combination or a collective of the different psychological effects of alcoholism that are common to the disease, regardless of the stage at which they usually occur:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Loss of interests
- Loss of willpower
- Sleep problems
- Poor concentration

Social Effects of Alcoholism

There are also social effects of alcoholism that are very much related to the psychological effects of alcoholism. The following represents some of the social effects of alcoholism:

- Withdrawal from social activities
- Legal problems
- Difficulties performing at work or home
- Difficulties and arguments with family or friends
- Financial insecurity
- Unemployment
- With from family and friends

VI. ATTITUDE

Attitude is a concept in psychology. Attitude are positive, negative or neutral views of an "attitude object": i.e. a person, behaviour or event. People can also be "ambivalent" towards a target, meaning that they simultaneously possess a positive and a negative bias towards the attitude in question.

Attitude comes from judgments. Attitudes develop on the ABC model (affect, behavioral change and cognition). The affective response is a psychological response that expresses an individual's preference for an entity. The behavioural intension is a verbal indication of the intention of an individual. The cognitive response is a cognitive evaluation of the entity to form an attitude most attitudes in individuals are a result observational learning from their environment.

The link between attitude and behaviour exists but depends on human behaviour, some of which is irrational. For example, a person who is for blood transfusion may not donate blood. This makes sense if the person does not like the sight of blood, which explains this irrationality

JUNG'S DEFINITION OF ATTITUDE

Attitude is one of Jung's 57 definitions in chapter XI of psychological types. Jung's definition of attitude is a 'readiness of the psyche to act or react in a certain way'(Jung (1921,1971 : Par. 687). Attitudes very often come in pairs, one conscious and the other unconscious. Within this broad definition Jung defines several attitudes.

The main (but not only) attitude dualities that Jung defines are the following.

Consciousness and the unconscious. The 'presence of two attitudes is extremely frequent, one conscious and the other unconscious. This means that consciousness has a constellation of contents different from that of the unconscious, a duality particularly evident in neurosis' (Jung (1921,1971: par. 687).

Extraversion and introversion. This pair is so elementary to Jung's theory of types that he labeled them the 'attitude-types'.

Rational and irrational attitudes. 'I conceive reason as an attitude' (Jung (1921,1971: par. 785).

- ▶ The rational attitude subdivides into the thinking and feeling psychological functions, each with its attitude.
 - ▶ The irrational attitude subdivides into the sensing and intuition psychological functions, each with its attitude.
- 'There is thus a typical thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuitive attitude'

- ▶ Individual and social attitudes. Many of the latter are isms.

IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT ATTITUDES

There is also considerable research on "implicit" attitudes, which are unconscious but have effects (Identified through sophisticated experiments using people's response time to stimuli).implicit and "explicit" attitudes(i.e. ones people report when they ask themselves how much they like an object) seem to affect people's behaviour, though in different ways. They tend not to be strongly associated with each other, although in some cases they are. The relationship between is poorly understood. It is basically a process of inside out.

ATTITUDE FORMATION

Unlike personality, attitudes are expected to change as a function of experience. Tesser (1993) has argued that heredity variables may affect attitudes – but believes that may do so indirectly. For example, if one inherits the disposition to become an extrovert, this may affect one's attitudes to certain styles of music. There are numerous theories of attitude formation and attitude change. These include: Consistency theories, which imply that we must be consistent in our beliefs and values. The most famous example of such a theory is Dissonance-reduction theory, associated with Leon Festinger, although there are others, such as the balance theory of Fritz Heider. (Self perception theory) associated with Daryl Bem (meta Programs), associated with Neurolinguistic programming (Persuasion)(Elaboration Likelihood Model) associated with Richard E. Petty and the Heuristic Systematic Model of Shelley Chaiken.(social judgement theory) (Balance theory) (Abundance theory) (intellect).

ATTITUDE CHANGE

Attitudes can be changed through persuasion. The celebrated work of Carl Hovland, at Yale University in the 1950s and 1960s, helped to advance knowledge of persuasion. In Hovland's view, we should understand attitude change as a response to

communication. He and his colleagues did experimental research into the factors that can affect the persuasiveness of a message:

1. **Target Characteristics:** these are characteristics that refer to the person who receives and processes a message; one such is intelligence – it seems that more intelligent people are less easily persuaded by one-sided messages. Another variable that has been studied in this category is self-esteem. Although it is sometimes thought that those higher in self-esteem are less easily persuaded, there is some evidence that the relationship between self-esteem and persuasibility is actually curvilinear, with people of moderate self-esteem being more easily persuaded than both those of high and low self-esteem levels (Rhodes & Woods, 1992). The mind frame and mood of the target also plays a role in this process.
2. **Source Characteristics:** the major source characteristics are expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness. The credibility of a perceived message has been found to be a key variable here (Hovland & Weiss, 1951); if one reads a report on health and believes it comes from a professional medical journal, one may be more easily persuaded than if one believes it is from a popular newspaper. Some psychologists have debated whether this is a long-lasting effect and Hovland and Weiss (1951) found the effect of telling people that a message came from a credible source disappeared after several weeks (the so-called “sleeper effect”). Whether there is a sleeper effect is controversial. Received wisdom is that if people are informed of the source of a message before hearing it, there is less likelihood of a sleeper effect than if they are told a message and then told its source.
3. **Message Characteristics:** The nature of the message plays a role in persuasion. Sometimes presenting both sides of a story is useful to help change attitudes.
4. **Cognitive Routes:** a message can appeal to an individual’s cognitive evaluation to help change an attitude. In the central route to persuasion the individual is presented with the data and motivated to evaluate the data and arrive at an attitude changing conclusion. In the peripheral route to attitude change, the individual is encouraged to not look at the content but at the source. This is commonly seen in modern advertisements that feature celebrities. In some cases, doctors and experts are used. In other cases it starts are used for their attractiveness.

VII. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Conceptual definition:

Alcoholism:

American Medical Association defines alcoholism as “an illness in which there is pre-occupation with alcohol and loss of control over its consumption as a type of drug dependence that can harm a person’s health and interfere with his ability to work and get along with other people

Operational Definition:

Those who are in the age group of 18-25 years college students are called youth according to this study.

VIII. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Alcohol in small quantities usually stimulates people to be relaxed and socially responsive. However, alcohol is a representative certain behavior and attitudes usually repressed are exhibited by the person who has drunk alcohol. Typically he or she becomes disoriented, confused and drives a car or performs other physical activities erotically.

The success is depends upon the attitudes and behavior perception of the individual and to possess these good qualities can be developed only by insisting the cultural values. At present the youth are indulged in many immoral activities it’s due to

cultural degradation Alcohol is generally socially accepted, although alcoholism is one of the most prevalent addictions and a major health problem in the country and it's primarily from youth people.

Generally, most of the researcher covered various aspects of youth problem. So the researcher interested to know attitudes of college students towards alcoholism.

IX. HYPOTHESIS

- ❖ There is a significant association between the age of the respondents and attitude towards alcohol
- ❖ There is a significant association between the consuming habit of the respondents and attitude towards alcohol.
- ❖ There is a significant difference between the type of the family of the respondents and attitude towards alcohol.
- ❖ There is a significant difference between family income of the respondents and their overall attitude towards alcohol.
- ❖ There is a significant association between the place of the respondents and their overall attitude towards alcohol
- ❖ There is a significant difference between the residence of the respondents and their overall attitude towards alcohol.

X. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is useful to know the mentality of the students and to make some prevention measures to eradicate alcoholism. Generally most of the college students in the beginning stage didn't use alcohol and tobacco products. But later period, their friend circle, if anyone uses alcohol they watch and addicted. Alcoholism is not only affected by the individual but it also affected the person in term of economical, social, physical, psychological problems. So it is most important to know the present youth alcoholic among the college students attitudes towards alcoholism. It will be useful for organizing awareness programmes and and we can suggest the government to appoint social worker in the educational institution.

XI. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the study is to know about "The Attitude of College Students towards Alcohol" in Tiruchirappalli district. The following are the more specific objectives.

1. To find out about the attitude of college students towards alcoholism;
2. To know about the consuming habit of the respondents;
3. To examine the socio demographic characteristics of the respondents; and
4. To find out the relationship between the socio demographic & attitude of the respondents.

XII. RESEARCH DESIGN

The design of the study is descriptive cum diagnostic. It attempts to describe the drinking habit of alcohol among the youth and also to describe the problem related to alcohol is in the design and attempts to analyze the association between variables.

UNIVERSE

The universe of the present study comprises the U.G. arts students of Tiruchirappalli district Colleges. The total number of universe is 162 students in various arts colleges. There are 2 Departments in the Arts (B.B.A & B.Com). In the B.Com Department there are 73 students and 89 students in the B.B.A department. The researcher selected the students from lottery method for collecting the data.

SAMPLING

To select the sampling from the universe the researcher used probability sampling method, hence every item of universe have an equal chance of being included in the sampling population. Researcher has used simple random method by using lottery method for selecting the respondents. The sampling of the study comprised 50 students.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher conducted the study at Tiruchirappalli District Arts and Science Colleges (Arts Departments only) during the study period through personal interview. To analyse the data the statistical test namely Mean, Medium, Standard Deviation, and Chi-square.

Findings of this study

- ❖ More than half of the respondents (58%) are under the age group of 18-20 years.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents (70%) are from nuclear family
- ❖ Regarding their father's occupation more than one - fourth of the respondents (26%) are belong to Daily Wages and others.
- ❖ Regarding their mother's occupation more than half of the respondents (58%) are housewives.
- ❖ More than one - third of the respondents (36%) family income is between Rs.1001 -3000.
- ❖ More than half of the respondents (60%) from Tamil medium schooling.
- ❖ Vast majority of the respondents (84%) are not having any kind of bad habits
- ❖ Regarding their alcoholic habit that vast majority of the respondents (84%) are not having any kind of bad habits.
- ❖ Vast majority of the respondents (90%) are day scholars.
- ❖ More than half of the respondents (60%) from rural.

XIII. SUGGESTIONS

At present, youth are in the status of unset because of various reasons. Research on alcohol use and related problems in college students is lacking in many regions of the world. In countries where there is a tolerant or permissive attitude towards youth alcohol use, youth patterns of risky use tend to be higher than in countries where the climate is less favorable towards youth alcohol use.

Alcohol is a drug, and it is the drug most abused by teens. Many kids have their first drink at an early age, as even younger.

It's easy for kids to get the wrong message about alcohol. They might see their parents drink or watch TV commercials that make drinking look like a lot of fun. You might see people drinking and watching sports together or having a big party.

But alcohol is actually a depressant. That means it's a drug that slows down or depresses the brain. Like many drugs, alcohol changes a person's ability to think, speak, and see things as they really are. A person might lose his or her balance and have trouble walking properly. The person might feel relaxed and happy and later start crying or get in an argument

The government should taker strict actions to correct the behavior of the youth and should introduces values education, even at the level of higher education.

→ Social workers should be appointed in school and colleges also.

→ Parents should aware on effects of alcohol and periodically follow their children.

- Non-governmental organization will conduct awareness programme to the college students.
- Government should prohibited alcohol under 18 years.
- Every students be a role model for colleagues

XIV. CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted on Attitude of College Students towards Alcohol in Tiruchirappalli Districts. Alcoholism is most important problems in India due to Alcoholism families are disintegrating and their children also affected seriously. The problem could be easily dealt with by using effective measure as suggest earlier. This study in a way contribute to help the students who are our future and our most precious resources.

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