

Alcohol-Fuelled Violence by Men and its Impact on Family, with Special reference to the Wives of Alcoholics

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Introduction:

Alcoholism, also known as alcohol use disorder (AUD) and alcohol dependence syndrome, is a broad term for any drinking of alcohol that results in problems. Alcoholism is characterised by an increased tolerance to and physical dependence on alcohol, affecting an individual's ability to control consumption. These characteristics play a role in decreasing an alcoholic's ability to stop drinking (Hoffman and Tabakoff 1996). Alcoholism can have adverse effects on mental health, causing psychiatric disorders. The social problems arising from alcoholism are serious; it is associated with an increased risk of committing criminal offences, including child abuse, domestic violence, rape, burglary and assault.

Violence is defined as behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a major public health problem. Intimate partner violence refers to behaviour in an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours (Krug et al. 2002). A considerable proportion of the family violence is associated with alcohol. Alcohol may encourage aggression or violence by disrupting normal brain function. According to the disinhibition hypothesis, for example, alcohol weakens brain mechanisms that normally restrain impulsive behaviours, including inappropriate aggression (Gustafson 1994). Scientists and non-scientists alike have long recognized a two-way association between alcohol consumption and violent or aggressive behaviour (Reiss and Roth 1994). Alcoholics can be of any age, background, income level, social, or ethnic group. Alcoholism also affects highly educated people. The relationship between alcohol or other substance abuse and domestic violence is complicated. According to many social scientists alcohol and drugs are the

major causes of domestic abuse. Family problems that are likely to co-occur with alcohol problems include - Violence, Marital conflict Economic hardship, Divorce, Infidelity, Fatal alcohol syndrome etc. It also severely effects on the mental health of the children of alcoholics. Many of these children have common symptoms such as low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt, feelings of helplessness, fears of abandonment, and chronic depression (Berger 1993). Families who have issues with alcohol are often having poorly run and managed homes with no set schedules, structure or discipline. They have more conflict in the home including argument, fight and physical abuse. Due to these associated problems of alcoholism family members of alcoholics have to pass more stressful life.

Materials and Methods :

The main objective of the study was to study about the alcohol fuelled violence among the wives and children's of alcoholics. For this purpose woman from four villages of Sivasagar district of Assam had been selected as respondents whose husband's consumed alcohol. The villages are namely Palashani, No, 2 Chaulkora, Akhoiphutia and No, 2 Mothadang. There were 94 households who were reported to have persons with alcohol use, of which 63 women consented to participate in the study. The respondents were contacted, explained about the study and after obtaining their consent interviews were scheduled. The data were collected from October 2015 to December 2015. The collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics by using methods adopted by Govindappa and Pankajakshi, 1994.

Results and Discussion :

1. Details about the respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Caste	Schedule caste	28	44.4
	Schedule tribe	06	9.5
	Other Backward caste	21	33.3
	General caste	08	12.7
Religion	Hindu	61	96.8
	Muslim	02	3.2
	Illiterate	13	20.6
Education	Up to Class X	24	38
	HSLC	18	28.6
	HSSLC	06	9.6
	Graduate or Higher	02	3.2
Age	20 - 25 Years	16	25.4
	26 - 35 Years	21	33.3
	36 - 45 Years	20	31.8
	More than 45 Years	06	9.5

44.4 percent of the respondents' belonged to scheduled caste, 33.3 per cent of respondents belonged to other backward caste, 12.7 and 9.5 per cent of them belonged to forward community and schedule tribe, respectively. Majority of the (96.8%) respondents' are Hindu by religion and 3.2% are Muslim. Majority of the (38%) respondents' are educated up to class X and 20.6 % respondents are illiterate, only 3.2% respondents are highly educated. 33.3 % respondents belong to 26-35 years age group and 31.8 % belong to 36-45 years age group.

Table : 2. Sociodemographic condition of the respondents:

Variables	Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Family type	Nuclear	51	81
	Joint	22	19
Family size	Small family	45	71.5
	Big family	18	28.5
Current living status	Living with family of origin	03	4.8
	Living with husbands and children	50	79.4
	Living alone	07	11.1
How long respondents are married (in Year)	Living with others	03	4.7
	01 - 05 Years	11	17.5
	06 - 15 Years	30	47.6
	16 - 25 Years	15	23.8
	More than 25 Years	07	11.1
Family incomes of the respondents (Rs./ month)	Up to 5000	14	22.2
	5001-10000	41	65.1
	10001 and above	08	12.7

Large majority (81%) of the women had nuclear family and remaining 19 per cent of women belonged to joint family. 71.5 per cent of the respondents belonged to small family (Family member's 5 and below) and the remaining 28.5 per cent of them belonged to large family (Family member's above 5). 79.4 % respondents are living with husband and children. 47.6 % respondents are married for 06- 15 years. Economic position of the family of the

respondents indicated that 12.5 % of them belonged to high income category, 65.1% respondents belonging to medium income category and 22.2% percent of them belonged to low income category.

Table: 2. Details about Respondent's husband who is alcoholic

Variables	Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Age	20 - 25 Years	11	17.5
	26 - 35 Years	18	28.6
	36 - 45 Years	25	39.6
	More than 45 Years	09	14.3
Education	Illiterate	07	11.1
	Up to Class X	18	28.6
	HSLC	23	36.5
	HSSLC	12	19
	Graduate or Higher	03	4.8
Occupation	Agriculture	28	44.4
	Business	16	25.4
	Wage workers	06	9.5
	Govt. Employees	07	11.1
	Others	06	9.5
Year's Alcohol is being consumed	1-5 Years	14	22.2
	6-10 Years	12	19
	11- 15 Years	07	11.1
	More than 15 Years	30	47.7

Table 2 depicts the details of the respondents' husband's. 39.6 % of respondents husband's are of 36 -45 years age group, 28.6% belong to 26 - 35 years age group. 36.5 % are educated up to HSLC. Majority (44.4%) are engaged with agricultural activities by profession, 11.1 % are government employee, mostly of 3rd and 4th grade. 47.7 % respondents husband's have been consuming alcohol for more than 15 years.

Table: 3.1. Violence Experienced by Respondent's.

Variables	Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Physical Violence	Mid	32	50.8
	Moderate	18	28.6
	High	13	20.6
Emotional Violence	Mid	27	42.9
	Moderate	23	36.5
	High	13	20.6
Economic Violence	Mid	19	30.1
	Moderate	17	27
	High	27	42.9

Table 3.1 indicates that 28.6%, 36.5% and 27% of the respondents has experience of moderate physical, emotional and economic violence. 20.6% respondents experienced high physical and emotional violence and 42.9% experienced high economic violence.

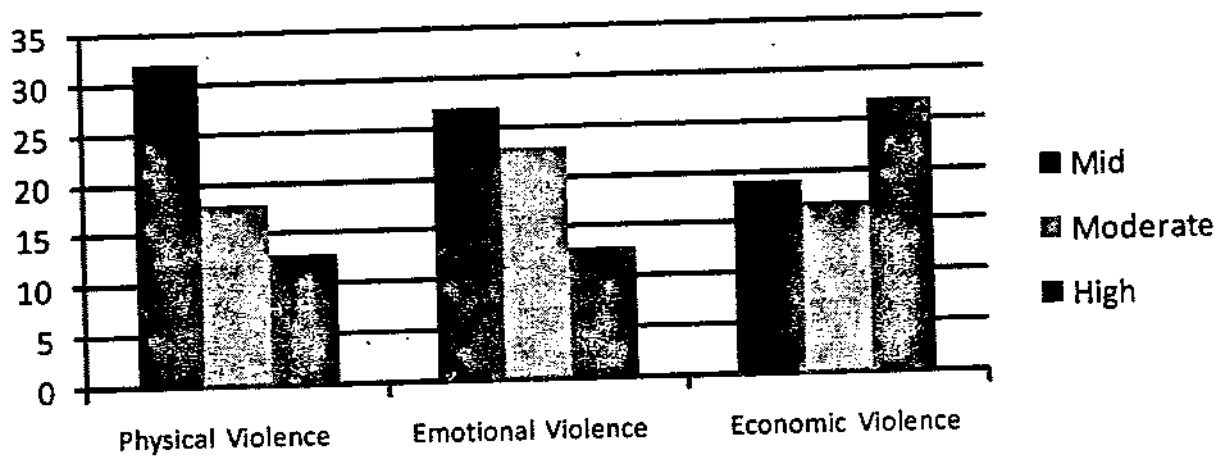


Fig. 1. Various kinds of violence experienced by respondents

Table: 3.2. Violence Experienced by Family members / Children

Variables	Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Physical Violence	Mid	34	54
	Moderate	25	39.7
	High	04	6.3
Emotional Violence	Mid	23	36.6
	Moderate	33	52.3
	High	07	11.1
Economic violence	Mid	29	46
	Moderate	14	22.2
	High	20	31.8

39.7 %, 52.3 % and 22.2 % family members of the respondents experienced moderate physical, emotional and economic violence respectively. 6.3 % family members experienced high physical violence, 11.1 % experienced high emotional violence and 31.8 % experienced high economic violence.

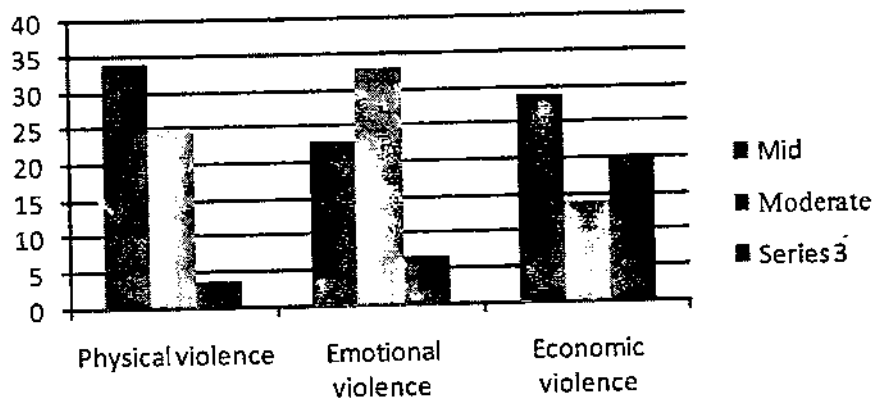


Fig.2. various kinds of violence experienced by the family members and children of the respondents

Table: 3.3. Relationship between alcohol consumption and violence

Variables and Categories	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
Violence before as well as after alcohol consumption	11	17.5
Violence after the consumption of alcohol	52	82.5

Table 3.3 depicts that most of the respondents and family members (82.5 %) are facing violence after the consumption of alcohol by their spouse or father. It indicates a strong relationship between alcohol consumption and family violence.

It is also revealed during the study that the children of alcoholic have certain symptoms such as low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt, feelings of helplessness, fear, depression, high levels of anxiety and stress.

Conclusion :

Alcohol affects each member of the family - child to the alcoholic's spouse. Each member of the family may be affected by alcohol differently. Men alcoholism has significant effect on the non-drinking spouse or wives; they have significant mental trauma and physical health problems along with poor spousal communication and increased anger and distress. Families who have issues with alcohol often have poorly run and managed homes with no set schedules, structure or discipline. They have more conflict in the home including argument, fight and physical abuse. Due to these associated problems of alcoholism family members of alcoholics have to pass more stressful life. Marital problems in many families often start because of alcoholism. Children are greatly affected when either their parents or any one parent are alcoholic. They develop certain common symptoms such as low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt, feelings of helplessness, fears, depression, high levels of anxiety and stress. Very often the spouse has to perform the roles of both parents. Family responsibilities shift from two parents to one parent. The risk for becoming future alcoholics is greater for children raised in alcoholic homes. This is the reason for the belief that alcoholism is influenced by environment and genetics, or by a combination of both. The present study reveals that there is violence in the families of alcoholics in the study site and there is a strong relationship between the alcohol consumption and family violence.

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