

## AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF ALCOHOLISM CONNECTIVITY IN THENI DISTRICT

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### **Abstract**

*Alcoholism is a major social problem in India. The psychological problems with alcoholism such as, physical violence, social stigma for the family, financial difficulties, emotional problems in the spouse and children are well known for centuries. Youth form an important segment in any society. They are physically vigorous, and intellectually sensitive to their social obligations. From the view point of age span it is difficult to provide any straight forward category which is unanimously accepted as youth. The definition of youth is dependent upon various factors viz, psychological level of maturity, the sex of the individuals. Pre-adult stage, the nature of society, the level of socio-economic development of the society, and physical maturity. People consume alcohol in the form of toddy, wine, whisky, brandy, rum, arrach, dharu, etc. which contain ethyl alcohol and also propyl alcohol. The alcohol used in items like paint, varnish, paint remover, etc., is methyl alcohol. It is not drink which is consumed. It will lead to blindness and even death. Tamil Nadu state is known for its cultural and social values. Since 1960's this state has been generated by any one of the Dravidians Parties. In the early 60's the state was governed by DMK party whose mentor was E.V.Ramasamy called Periyar a staunch social reformer who was instrumental in the implementation of Prohibition policy in the state. Later on, there has been a dramatic shift in the prohibition policy followed by the successive governments. The purpose of relocation of prohibition policy is to mobilize revenue for the purpose of undertaking various social welfare measures which will benefit the poor and vulnerable sections of the society. But, instead of impressing the welfare, the current policy on Alcohol sales in Tamil Nadu is detrimental to the long run development of the youth. Instead of reaping the benefit of "Demographic Dividend" by enhancing the productivity, the policy on alcohol sales impedes the long run growth of Tamil Nadu. Total Government control on alcohol sales in Tamil Nadu leads to many social evils like under daceity, way side atrocities against women and parents. The crime record in Tamil Nadu clearly shows that persons who engage in the above said activity are in the age group of 18-27. Now-a-days even the school going boys are prone to this evil habit of drinking. This prompted I have undertake and study on the impact of alcoholism on socio-economic profile of the Theni district.*

**Keywords:** *Alcoholism, psychological problems, physical violence, Alcohol sales, prohibition policy, Demographic Dividend*

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To highlight the socio-economic characteristics of sample households presided over by an alcoholic in terms of rural and urban.
- To analyze and compare the average annual per capita income and expenditure of such a household rural or urban.

- To estimate and compare the elasticity's of expenditure and economies of scale in such a household, rural or urban.
- To identify the factors which determine the savings of such a household?
- To analyze and compare the forms and sources of savings of such a household.
- To offer suitable suggestions for redemption of such household.

### **Methodology**

Designing a suitable methodology and selection of analytical tools are important for a meaningful analysis of any research problem. This section attempts to discuss the methodology which includes sample design, collection of data, period of study, tools of analysis and operational definition of various concepts used in the study.

### **Sampling Design**

Before entering into the primary data collection, a tentative schedule was pre-tested with selected household respondents. Based on the experience gained while administering the interview schedule, the schedule was suitably modified and administered. Theni district consists of five taluks. In each taluk five rural and five urban area had been for primary data collection. In these 10 areas, total of 300 sample drunkard household respondents 30 from each areas were randomly selected by simple random sampling method.

### **Collection of Data**

For primary data collection, a well-designed detailed questionnaire regarding household income and employment, family size, land particulars, assets and liabilities, dependency, income from wage, income from other sources, consumption expenditure etc., was prepared. A personal interview method was adopted by the researcher to obtain all the necessary information.

### **Secondary data collection**

The secondary data have also been used for the present study. It has been collected from various sources such as Village Administrative Offices in the selected villages, Municipal office in Theni District and Block Development Offices. The data related to alcoholic households in Theni district were collected from the statistical offices at Theni district.

### **Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of the selected Drunkard Respondents**

The Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of the selected Respondents in nuclear family system is more prevalent among the poor due to low income and the inability to share their benefits with other members especially during lean seasons. In this

section, an attempt is made to discuss the demographic characteristics such as family composition, size, age, literacy level, caste and the like of the respondents.

### Age of the Respondents

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to the age**

Sl. No.	Age in Years	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Below 30	20 (13.33)	18 (12.00)	38 (12.67)
2.	30 - 40	32 (21.33)	38 (25.33)	70 (23.33)
3.	40 - 50	74 (49.34)	72 (48.00)	146 (48.67)
4.	50 and above	24 (16.00)	22 (14.67)	46 (28.67)
	Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

The above table inferred that out of 150 respondents, majority of 74 (49.32 per cent) of the rural sector are in the age group of 40-50 years, followed by 32 (21.33 per cent), 24 (16.00 per cent) and 20 (13.33 per cent) of the rural area in the age group between 30-40 years, 50 and above years and below 30 years respectively. In the case of urban sector, out of 150 respondents, majority of 72 (48.00 per cent) of them are in the age group between 40-50 years followed by 38 (25.33 per cent) 22 (14.67 per cent) and 18 (12.00 per cent) of them in the age group of between 30-40, 50 years and above and below 30 years respectively.

### Dependency Ratio

A Respondent has a low per capita income which means that his family size is large and it may be also due to the higher dependency ratio i.e., large number of dependents per earner. The numbers of dependents per earner are analyzed in following table

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents and number of dependents per earner**

Sl. No.	Number of Dependents per Earner	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Below 2	83 (55.33)	99 (66.00)	182 (60.67)
2.	Above 2	67 (44.67)	51 (34.00)	118 (39.33)
	Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

The above Table found that out of 150 sample respondents with rural background, majority of 83 (55.37 per cent) are having dependents per earner below 2 and remaining 67 (44.67 per cent) of them are having above 2. In the case of urban background, out of 150 respondents, majority of 99 (66.00 per cent) of them are having dependents per earner below 2 and rest of 51 (34.00 per cent) of them are having dependents per earner above 2.

### Literacy Levels

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to the educational status**

Sl. No.	Educational Level	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Non-Formal Education	64 (42.67)	7 (4.67)	71 (23.67)
2.	Upto X	44 (29.33)	48 (32.00)	92 (30.67)
3.	Higher Secondary	34 (22.67)	63 (42.00)	97 (32.33)
4.	Degree and Diploma	8 (5.33)	32 (21.33)	40 (13.33)
	Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

It is understood from above Table that out of 150 respondents, majority of 64 (42.67 per cent) of the rural sector have non-formal education followed by 44 (29.33 per cent), 34 (22.67 per cent) and 8 (5.33 per cent) who have education up to X, Higher secondary, degree and diploma respectively. From the above table, it clear that among the 150 respondents from the rural area, around 43 per cent with non-formal education have this drinking habit. The percent of respondents with this habit in rural area declines with increasing in educational attainment. From this it is evident that education plays an important role in making awareness about this habit.

In the case of urban, people out of 150 respondents majority of 63 (42 per cent) of them have higher secondary education, 48 (32.00 per cent) 32 (21.33 per cent) and 7 (4.67 per cent) of the urban have Upto X, higher secondary and non-formal respectively. The picture of drinking habit in urban area reveals that growing influence of affluence and culture reflects on the drinking habit with the increasing educational status in urban area, the influences of drinking habit also increases. Nearly 50 per cent of the respondents have educational standards up to X<sup>th</sup> standard whereas 32 per cent of the respondents have the education up to higher secondary level and only 13 per cent of the sample respondents have education up to college level.

### Caste-wise Classification

It is an accepted fact that caste system is so deep rooted in India; villages are no exceptions to this. It is being found that class system is to a considerable extent influenced by caste structure. The ownership of land and cultivation also reflected caste structure, with the upper caste owing land and low caste engaging them in cultivation. In the present study for the purpose of analysis the castes are divided into three broad categories. They are forward castes, most backward and backward class and scheduled castes as given in table

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to caste**

Sl. No.	Caste	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Forward Class	19 (12.67)	29 (19.33)	48 (16.00)
2.	Backward Class	50 (33.33)	44 (29.33)	94 (31.33)
3.	Most Backward Class	50 (33.33)	44 (29.33)	94 (31.33)
3.	Scheduled Castes	31 (20.67)	33 (22.00)	64 (21.33)
	Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

From the above Table it is observed that out of 150 respondents, in the rural area 33.33 per cent, of both most backward class and backward class are having the habit of drinking followed by 20.67 per cent and 12.67 per cent from the category of scheduled caste and forward class respectively have the habit of liquor consumption. In the case of urban area, out of 150 respondents, 29.33 per cent belong to most backward and backward class respectively, and 22.00 per cent are from the schedule caste and 19.33 per cent are from the forward category. In both the category of respondents from both rural and urban area mere percentage of respondents from Backward class and most backward class are having the habit of drinking. From this it is clear that the habit of drinking is deepened among the mid-level caste group namely Backward and Most Backward class. But in both rural and urban area schedule caste respondents constitute 21 and 22 per cent respectively. With the increasing percentage of alcohol users in these two social groups in rural and urban area will ultimately destroy the social emancipation as reached by social reformers like E.V.R Periyar and Anna who cultivated the seeds of Dravidian rule in Tamil Nadu.

#### Income Earnings Classification

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents by monthly income**

Income ( ` )	Number of Respondents		
	Rural	Urban	Total
Below 5000	10 (6.67)	4 (2.67)	14 (4.67)
5000 - 7000	93 (62.00)	18 (12.00)	111 (37.00)
7000 - 9000	30 (20.00)	92 (61.33)	122 (40.67)
9000 and above	14 (11.33)	36 (24.00)	53 (17.67)
Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

The above table shows that the average monthly income of `5000-7000 is found to be higher at 62 per cent in the case of rural Respondents as compared to 12 per cent in the case of urban Respondents . The monthly earnings of `7000-9000 are found to be lower at

20 per cent for rural Respondents compared to 61.33 per cent in the case of urban Respondents. Similarly, monthly income `9000 and above is also found to be lower at 11.33 per cent for rural respondents compared to 24 per cent in the case of urban respondents.

#### Family Composition and Size of the Respondents

The study of family pattern of sample Respondents shows that an average family size for rural Respondent is 5.36 whereas it is 2.62 for urban. The family size is found to be less for urban Respondents. Moreover, the percentage of children was 61.51 per cent in rural sector which is considerably higher than the percentage of urban areas. Hence, the dependency ratio is higher for the rural Respondent and it results in deficiency of earning member in the family. It is interesting to find that the size of the family decreases with the rising levels of income. The details of demographic characteristics of the sample Respondents are furnished in below table

**Table 6: Population of respondent's households**

Sl. No.	Item	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Total Population of which	804 (67.17)	393 (32.83)	1197 (100.00)
(a)	Adult Males	294 (69.83)	127 (30.17)	421 (100.00)
(b)	Adult Females	216 (72.48)	82 (27.52)	298 (100.00)
(c)	Children (0-14)	294 (61.51)	184 (38.49)	478 (100.00)
2.	Average Family Size of the Respondent	5.36	2.62	3.99

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

The fact that high per capita income is reflected in small size of the family and low per capita income in big family size is analyzed in below table

**Table 7: Average size of respondent by per capita income**

Sl.No.	Per Capita Income Group	Average Size of Respondent
1.	Below 5000	2.43
2.	5000 - 6000	2.98
3.	6000 - 7000	3.98
4.	7000 - 8000	4.21
5.	8000 - 9000	5.28
6.	9000 - 10000	5.31
7.	10000 - 11000	5.36
8.	11000 and above	5.62
	Overall Average	3.99

Source: Survey data

It is quite evident from that Table that the family size which is 2.43 for per capita income group below `5000 has increased to 5.62 for per capita income of `11000 and above. This supports the researcher's view that per capita income and family size are directly related to each other.

#### Number of Living Rooms per Respondent

The number of living rooms must at least be equal to one plus the number of married couples in the respondent households. Table below gives the distribution of respondents by number of living rooms.

**Table 8: Distribution of respondents by number of living rooms**

Sl. No.	Respondents Reporting	Number of Respondents		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Single Room	63 (42.00)	91 (60.67)	154 (51.33)
2.	Two Rooms	21 (14.00)	30 (20.00)	51 (17.00)
3.	Three and Four Rooms	3 (6.00)	16 (10.67)	19 (6.33)
4.	No Rooms	63 (42.00)	13 (8.67)	76 (25.34)
	Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	300 (100.00)

Source: Survey data.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

It is understood from the above Table that out of 150 rural areas, majority of each 63 (42.00 per cent) of the respondents have single room and no rooms followed by 21 (14.00 per cent) and 3 (2.00 per cent) of them who are living in two rooms and three and four rooms respectively. In the case of urban area out of 150 respondents, majority of 91 (60.67 per cent) of the respondents are living in single room followed by 30 (20.00 per cent) 11 (10.67 per cent) and 13 (8.67 per cent) of the respondents who are living in two rooms, three and four rooms and dwelling with no rooms respectively. Hence most of the sample respondents do not find it comfortable.

#### Conclusion

- It is understood from the analysis that the individual does not recognize himself as an alcoholic.
- Alcoholism leads to the socio-economic problems of loss of wages, per capita earnings, failure of health and finally debt status. Thus it may be concluded that alcoholism is dangerous and disastrous for life.

### Suggestions

- As the illiteracy rate among the rural mass is found to be more, it is suggested that education of rural youth may be effectively done, so as to be perceived and practiced by the rural masses.
- From the study it was found that the health of the rural youth is very poor. Medical treatment is to be given to improve health. Side by side they can also give psychological treatment. Because maintaining the family is a big task to the rural alcoholic family counseling and individual care can be given by a competent counselor.
- It is seen from the study that respondents are drinking because they could not give up the habit or because of improper awareness, and de-addiction programme is a must.
- From the study it was found that the alcoholism goes along with adultery and drug addiction. Therefore steps should be taken to prevent.
- Majority of the respondents want alcohol prohibition. It should be implemented with full force.
- In rural area the recreational facility and library facility can be improved to lead the youth in proper direction. In panchayat unions monthly weekly seminars, drama, debate can be arranged to make the rural youth to actively participate in them. These will enable the youth from sliding into alcoholism.
- Since most of the respondents are engaged in agricultural occupation and it is suggested that proper technical guidance may be given, so as to contribute for the development of national economy.

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