

IMPACT OF LIQUOR CONSUMPTION ON WORK LIFE OF KERALITES

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Abstract *Work-life balance has become one of the top items on the agenda of many large organisations and a top priority for workers everywhere. The role of work has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. This paper addresses the objective of finding out the impact of liquor consumption on work life of people of Kerala, a state known for the highest rate of per capita liquor consumption in India. A descriptive research is carried out for addressing the objectives and the results are discussed. Questionnaire using a Likert framework was constructed and developed based on CAGE questionnaire for detecting Alcoholism. This study was designed to cover pan Kerala and so all the 14 districts of Kerala were considered while taking the sample. The main avenues of Alcohol consumption like, bar hotels and beverages outlets were identified as the place to meet the respondents. Sample size was estimated to be 500 and quota sampling was deployed. This study reveals that detrimental effects of alcoholism will be there irrespective of the type of drinkers, but the impact will be worse, when one drinker moves from normal drinker to moderate and then to heavy drinker and conclude that the more a person drink, the worse his work life will become.*

Keywords: *Liquor consumption, Work-life balance, Work Life Impact Score*

INTRODUCTION

The inseparable elements for a working person despite his/her positions are work and life. Leading a problem-free life is a thing one can only dream of. In the real world every single person faces problems of one sort or the other. Perhaps the degree varies but the fact remains that absolutely no one is fortunate enough to have a problem free life. Tremendous leaps in technology, increased competition and globalization have brought about an accelerated change in every sphere of life. Living has turned increasingly complicated with more choices, more opportunities, more demands. Work-life balance has become one of the top items on the agenda of many large organisations and a top priority for workers everywhere (Lake, 2004). The role of work has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. Originally, work was a matter of necessity and survival. Throughout the years, the role of work has evolved and the composition of the workforce has changed. A good balance in work and life can play a phenomenal role in the attainment of personal and professional goals (Resnique, 2012).

Keralites are famous for their flair in hospitality and that could be the reason why Kerala is one of the most sought after tourist destinations in the world (Biswas, 2010). In spite of all such things, Kerala stands first in per capita consumption of alcohol in India. Alcoholism of employees

can affect productivity, impair job performance, and threaten public safety in the work place. Hence how the habit of alcohol consumption is affecting the work life of people is an important question (Slavit, 2009).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Alcohol-related job performance problems are caused not only by on-the-job drinking but also by heavy drinking outside the work. Researchers found a positive relationship between the frequency of being “hangover” at work and the frequency of feeling sick at work, sleeping on the job, and having problems with job tasks or co-workers. The hangover effect was demonstrated among pilots whose performance was tested in flight simulators (Gordis, 1995). Drinking on the job presents a variety of problems. For these reasons, an alcohol problem at work can spell big trouble, not only for the employee with the problem, but for the employer as well. American Council for Drug Education says, in US more than 70 percent of substance abusers hold jobs; one worker in four, ages 18 to 34, used drugs in the past year; and one worker in three knows of drug sales in the workplace. Alcohol abusers find it hard to conceal morning-after hangovers. Their productivity declines and they may show signs of physical deterioration (Wagner, 2005). The situation is not different in India also. It is estimated that 3% of females and 20% of males are suffering from

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alcoholic related problems in the work place worldwide. In the workplace, the costs of alcoholism and alcohol abuse manifest themselves in many different ways. Absenteeism is estimated to be 4 to 8 times greater among alcoholics and alcohol abusers. Other family members of alcoholics also have greater rates of absenteeism. Accidents and on-the-job injuries are far more prevalent among alcoholics and alcohol abusers (Mullahi & Sindelar, 1991). Frequent heavy drinking or episodic heavy drinking patterns were associated with reduced quality of life. Alcoholics had lower levels of quality of life compared with general population norms or with other chronic health conditions. This relationship appears to be moderated by a number of socio-demographic and client characteristics, such as age, education, gender and co-occurring psychiatric disorders. Alcohol-dependent individuals experience improvements in quality of life (QOL) across treatment and with both short-term and long-term abstinence (Donovan & Mattson, 2005). Treatment of the alcoholic, to be successful, must be multidisciplinary and the use of counselling with special focus on work life balance should be carried out. For the social isolation of the alcoholic, and often for his employment difficulties, it will be necessary to use the many ancillary resources of the community (Fox, 1967). Studies have shown that quality of life (QOL) is improved significantly when people do not relapse to heavy drinking, and QOL deteriorates significantly on prolonged relapse (Foster, Marshall & Peters, 2000). It is learned that early alcoholism can adversely affect education and in a later stage will have a negative impact on earnings and occupation (Mullahey & Sindelar, 1989).

OBJECTIVE

This paper aims to study about the impact of liquor consumption on work life of Keralites.

METHODOLOGY

The study followed an exploratory design approach since the area is unexplored in a state like Kerala. For the said purpose, basic details about the scenario persisting was explored and the objective was formulated accordingly for the present study.

SAMPLE

A total of 500 respondents were contacted to participate in the present study. It was ensured that all the participants were regular liquor users (drinkers). Sample size was calculated based on the mean and standard deviation of the key variable. The data for this study was taken from 500 respondents located in all the fourteen districts of Kerala. People who have the habit of consuming liquor were taken as the respondents for this study. They were selected from Indian

made foreign liquor (IMFL) retail outlets and bar hotels in Kerala by adopting the quota sampling method. The quotas were fixed in proportion to the population in each district. On an average 60% of IMFL sale is through retail outlets and the remaining 40% is through bar hotels. So the quota fixed for every district is split up into quotas for retail outlets and bar hotels in 60:40 proportions. Thus, survey method was used to collect the data for the present study. Even though the questionnaires were circulated among 500 respondents, the researcher was able to retrieve 495 filled questionnaires only. Remaining 5 questionnaires were not catering to the requirements since several questions were unanswered.

The respondents were classified into three groups namely low drinkers - whose average liquor consumption is less than or equal to 120 ml (2 pegs) of liquor per day, moderate drinkers - whose average liquor consumption is more than 120 ml (2 pegs) of liquor per day and less than or equal to 180 ml (3 pegs) of liquor per day, and heavy drinkers are those people, who averagely consume more than 180 ml (3 pegs) of liquor per day.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire, using a Likert framework, was constructed based on CAGE questionnaire developed for detecting Alcoholism (Ewing, 1984). CAGE is an internationally used assessment instrument for identifying alcoholics. It is particularly popular with primary care givers. CAGE has been translated into several languages and has demonstrated high test-retest reliability (0.80-0.95) and adequate correlations (0.48-0.70) with other screening instruments. The CAGE questionnaire is a valid tool for detecting alcohol abuse (average sensitivity 0.71, specificity 0.90) (Dhalla & Kopec, 2007). The reliability was measured during this study and the same was found to be 0.905 (Cronbach Alpha). Here the questionnaire was developed from the basic theme of CAGE and further developed based on the necessities of the researcher. It is then translated into the local language Malayalam and then circulated to the respondents in person and the data was collected before the respondent starts consuming liquor.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This study mainly focuses on the liquor consuming population of Kerala and hence non-drinkers were not included. People belonging to different demographic, economic and socio-cultural groups were included in this study since the sample size was sufficiently large and collected from all the 14 districts of Kerala.

A Likert framework was constructed so as to generate a score which represents the impact of alcoholism on the work life of those people who consumes liquor. The maximum work

life impact score possible on the framework was 75 and the minimum was 15. In such a work life impact scoring pattern, a score above 37.5 for any group was regarded to be very risky.

The mean work life impact score (WLIS) is 39.02 with a standard deviation of 8.85. The minimum and maximum score recorded on the construct was 19 and 71 and the range is 52. As explained earlier, a mean score above 37.5 is alarming and can cause problems to the work life balance of people. In Kerala the mean work life impact score (WLIS) is 39.02 which is much above 37.5.

Work Life Impact variations on Different type of Drinkers

Next part of the paper is oriented towards identifying the work life impact variations among different type of drinkers.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation for Work Life Impact

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low Drinkers	105	36.9429	8.72863
Moderate Drinkers	167	39.4671	8.71350
Heavy Drinkers	203	40.1576	8.98485
Total	475	39.2042	8.90257

Source: Survey Data

Of the total 495 respondents approached, 475 respondents are consuming drinks which come under the category of liquor and others are consuming beer which cannot be treated as liquor consumption. From Table 1 it can be inferred that the impact of liquor consumption on work life increases along with increase in consumption. The work life impact score for low drinkers was reported to be 36.94 with a standard deviation of 8.72 and that for moderate drinkers was reported to be 39.46 with a standard deviation of 8.71. The work life impact score was highest for heavy drinkers with a mean of 36.94 with a standard deviation of 8.72. In order to check the statistical significance of the variations explained above, one way ANOVA was attempted and the results are explained in Table 2.

Table 2: ANOVA Summary for Work Life Impact Score

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	733.010	2	366.505	4.696**
Within Groups	36834.182	472	78.039	
Total	37567.192	474		

** Significant at .01 level

It can be studied from Table 2 that the test was found to be significant ($F = 4.696$, $p < 0.05$). Hence we can conclude that, the detrimental effects of alcoholism will be there irrespective of the type of drinkers, but the impact will be worse, when one drinker moves from normal drinker to moderate and then to heavy drinker.

Work Life Impact variations among Different frequency of Drinkers

Next part of the paper is oriented towards identifying the work life impact variations among different frequency of drinkers. For that purpose the drinkers are classified into two groups. It can be studied from Table 3 that the highest mean is for people who drink for more than three days (Mean = 41.92, SD = 9.5). Those people who are taking drinks for less than three days in a week are having low mean value (Mean=36.91, SD= 7.66).

Table 3: Group Statistics

	Drinking Frequency	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Life Impact Score	Drinks More than 3 Days a Week	203	41.9212	9.53906
	Drinks Less than Three Days a Week	284	36.9120	7.66268

It can apparently be stated that, the work-life balance will worsen, if number of consumption days are increased in a week. Those people who are consuming drinks for less number of days are having less impact on work life. In order to check the statistical significance of the variations explained above, a T test was attempted and the results are explained in Table 4.

From Table 4, it can be interpreted that the Levene's test for equality of variance was found to be significant ($F=13.69$, $p<0.05$) and hence the significance level of equal variance not assumed will be taken. That was also found to be significant ($t = 6.18$, $p < 0.05$). Finally it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the mean score of both the groups. That means more the drinking more the impact on work life of people.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that a relatively high work life impact score (WLIS) points towards the uncertainty faced by the household and moreover on the negative impact of liquor consumption on once work life. It is very serious to note that work life impact score gets worsen across the higher

Table 4: Independent Sample Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t Test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
WLIS	Equal variances assumed	13.690	.000	6.416	485	.000	
	Not assumed				6.189	374.45.	.000

consumption category. That clearly explains that, the more a person drink, the worse his work life will become.

Depending on the culture of the workplace, an employee may react accordingly. From this study it is evident that the detrimental effects of alcoholism on work life will get worse when one individual moves from a normal drinker to a heavy drinker. Thus it is the duty of the society as a whole to make sure that these types of behaviours are not creating much harm.

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