

## Nature, Prevalence, And Risk Factors Of Alcohol Use In Urban Slum Of Southern India

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## Abstract

**BACKGROUND:** Alcohol-related problems are becoming a major public health concern in India, yet little data exists on alcohol use in urban slums of southern India.

**METHODS:** We screened 2811 men for alcohol use via a household-level census in an urban slum in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, and interviewed 220 age-and-area-matched pairs of male drinkers and non-drinkers to examine the factors associated with alcohol use.

Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT), a standard instrument, was employed on 354 drinkers to assess risk levels of drinking. Prevalence rates were calculated using age-adjusted direct standardization. Odds ratios (OR) of drinking status and higher risk drinking were calculated using conditional logistic regression and ordinal logistic regression, respectively. **RESULTS:** Among all men, we estimated that 46.1% consumed alcohol and 31.4% were hazardous drinkers (19.0% increased-risk, 7.7% high-risk and 4.7% dependent drinkers). Factors associated with drinking status were manual labour occupations (OR 2.08), presence of common mental disorder (OR 1.50), and smoking (OR 2.08), while Muslim religion was protective (OR 0.43). Factors associated with higher-risk AUDIT class were: being reported as a non-drinker during the census (OR 3.96), presence of common mental disorder (OR 3.83), smoking (OR 1.78), drinking before legal age of 21 (OR 2.71), spending more than Rs. 100 per day on alcohol (OR 6.17), and mainly drinking Indian Made Foreign Liquor (OR 5.45). **CONCLUSION** High prevalence of hazardous drinking and the factors associated with it suggests a need for population-wide interventions and further investigations to effectively reduce hazardous alcohol use and its harmful effects.

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