

---

## Alcohol Use and Its Socio-Economic and Health Effects in the Tharu Community of Raptisonari Rural Municipality

Lalmani Acharya<sup>1</sup>

Article Information : Received : March 15, 2024 Revised : April 25, 2024 Accepted : June 06, 2024

---

### Abstract

This study examines the use and effects of alcohol consumption within the Tharu community of Raptisonari Rural Municipality, Banke District, Nepal. Alcohol, classified as a sedative, tranquilizer, hypnotic, or anesthetic based on consumption quantity, is the only drug whose self-induced intoxication is socially acceptable. The Tharu community exhibits a high prevalence of alcohol use, impacting health and socio-economic status. Despite its significance, no comprehensive study has been conducted on this issue within the Tharu community. This research employs a descriptive and quantitative approach, surveying 144 respondents from 200 Tharu households through interviews and observations. The findings reveal that 69.4% of male and 30.6% of female respondents consume alcohol, with significant use starting in teenage years. Home-made alcohol, or Raksi, is predominantly consumed (83.3%), with cultural habits (31.3%) and stress relief (22.9%) being primary motivations. The study highlights several adverse effects, including high blood pressure, family quarrels, low income, and other health issues. The research underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address alcohol-related problems in the Tharu community, emphasizing the importance of integrating screening for alcoholism into routine health practices. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for improving health outcomes and socio-economic conditions in the community.

**Keywords:** Alcoholism, Tharu Community, Socio-Economic Effects, Health Impacts, Cultural Practices

---

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Mahendra Multiple Campus, Nepalgunj

Email: [lalmaniacharya@gmail.com](mailto:lalmaniacharya@gmail.com)

ISSN : 2091-2161

©The Author(s)



Published by Autar Dei Chaudharain Research Centre (ADCRC), Mahendra Multiple Campus, Nepalgunj, Banke

The open access article is distributed under a Creative Common Attribution (CC BY-NC 4.0) licence.

### Introduction

Alcohol is a drug and may be classified as a sedative, tranquilizer hypnotic or anesthetic depending upon the quantity consumed. Alcohol is the only drug whose self-induced intoxication is socially acceptable. Over the past 30-40 years increasing percent of young people have started to drink alcohol. In Tharu community most of the people use alcohol which effects the health or socio-economic status directly or indirectly. Screening for problem drinking and alcoholism needs to become an integral part of the routine health. It's no secret that alcohol consumption can cause major health problems, including Denial is one of the biggest obstacles to getting help for alcohol abuse. Health problems caused by excessive drinking can include liver disease. Heavy drinking can cause alcoholic hepatitis. It is possible to have a problem with alcohol, even when it has not progressed to the point of alcoholism. No more study has been conducted on "Use and effect of Alcoholism in Tharu community", which is the burning problem of Nepal as well as less developed community like Tharu community. So, the problem is started as 'Use and effect of Alcoholism in Tharu community of Raptisonari Rural Municipality Banke District. Alcoholism seriously hamper the body's ability to digest food, absorb vitamins, and produce hormones which regulate metabolism. On the other hand, alcohol contain calories, reducing the patient's feeling of hunger, so he/she consequently may not eat enough proper food to supply the body with essential nutrients. Eventually it results into malnutrition. Alcohol may cause hardening of the liver. The person suffers from gastric catarrh, windy spasms and heart burns. The person becomes irritable, unreliable, socially withdrawn and irresponsible. Stomach pain and bleeding of stomach. Shaking of hands or even of the whole body when alcohol is not taken. Breakdown of family relationships. Economic problems because of money spent on alcohol and loss of work. Bodily co-ordination and balance may be impaired. Loss of judgment and dulling of the sense.

Health is wealth: so if health is lost everything is lost. Health is component of human beings that permits on to live happily and successfully. It helps towards attaining the goal and ambitions of life. Life style refers to the way of living or the way of people to live. Life style reflects social value, attitudes and activities of individuals. The health problem is only part of the total social damage. It is related to the socio-economic status in family life. So, the main purpose of this study was to evaluate the alcohol use and its effect in Tharu community of Raptisonari Rural Municipality Banke District. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- To identify the situation of alcoholism use in Tharu community.
- To find out the effect of alcoholism Tharu community.

### Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research method to investigate the use and effects of alcohol in the Tharu community. It utilizes a quantitative research design to systematically identify and analyze these effects. The research population consists of 144 respondents, including personnel, farmers, and members who consume alcohol, selected from the 200 Tharu households in Raptisonari Rural Municipality, Banke, using a simple random sampling method. Data collection involved primary data gathered through interviews and general observation, as well as secondary data from relevant books, research reports, and journals. The researcher, with the approval of the chairperson and support from social leaders, conducted household surveys over 14 to 20 days. Data were meticulously processed, classified, and analyzed using tables and percentages to ensure accuracy and relevance. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of alcohol use within the Tharu community through detailed interpretation and discussion of the quantitative findings. Study was focused on the Alcohol practitioner of Tharu Community on Raptisonari Rural Municipality, Banke. So, Demographic study has included the data related to same group of Tharu Community. The data were taken on the following areas. The selected total household of the study area is 144. It is about 70 percent out of the total household here. Among the selected respondents, 55.8 percent are male and 44.2 percent are female.

### Result and Discussion

#### Alcohol User Person with Sex

The sex also plays a vital role in the habit of drinking alcohol. In Tharu Community there is not too much gap with sex; so the male sex and female sex both use alcohol. Sometimes they drink together and sometimes they drink separate. However, in festivals the male and female persons drink alcohol sitting together.

**Table No. 1. Alcohol user person with sex**

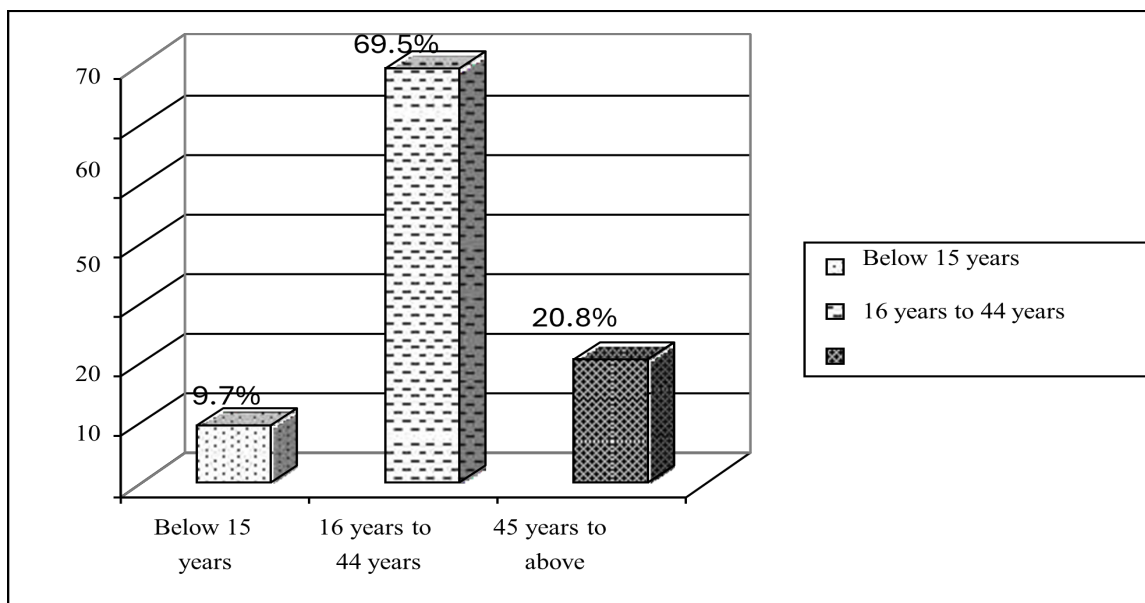
S.N	Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1.	Male	100	69.4
2.	Female	44	30.6
	Total	144	100

Most of Tharu people use alcohol. The table no. 1 shows that 69.4% male respondents use alcohol. Similarly, 30.6% female respondents use alcohol. It shows that in Tharu community male people use more alcohol, but female person also use alcohol.

### Alcohol User Person with Age Group

The age also plays a vital role in the habit of drinking and enjoying. Mainly at the teenage, people start to drink alcohol. The teenagers are the beginners of drinking wine. The main reason for their early start is that the peer groups insist on using it. The teenagers are also found curious to experience new things. As a result, drinking alcohol becomes a new experiment in their life. This study shows that 9.7% persons of Tharu start alcohol below 15 years. Similarly, most of alcohol user persons are over 16 years of age. 69.5% respondents' alcohol user persons are between the age of 16 years to 44 years. 20.8% respondents use alcohol over the age of 45 years. This study shows that most Tharu people use alcohol but did not know much about its effects on their health and socio-economic status.

**Figure: 1 alcohol user persons with age groups**



they are jobless or unemployed. The younger Tharu people also use alcohol because they peer pressure, family pressure are the reason to use alcohol.

### Quantity of Alcohol Use

There has always been a debate as to the dose of alcohol to be used at one time. In fact, there is no hard and fast rule for drinking alcohol. At festive occasions and festivals, people use it more than the other ordinary occasions. When there is a gathering of two or more two guest or strangers, they begin to drink together. It is, therefore proved that the time and dose of alcohol has some role to play in this respect. We can find out the effects considering how much the users have used alcohol on certain occasions and in their daily life too. Questions related to this fact were asked to respondents and the result is given below.

**Table No. 2- Quantity of using Alcohol Per Day**

S.N	Quantity	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	1 glass	30	31.58
2.	One bottle	20	21.05
3.	Not fixed	45	47.37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>

The table No. 2 shows that 47.37 percent respondents are not sure about how much alcohol they use. It means sometimes they use one glass (250ml) of alcohol and sometimes they use more than one bottle (750ml). If alcohol is used in a limited quantity in view of a person's health and the climate in which he lives, it is good for him. But if someone uses it as an addict without considering his own health, the weather and his economic condition, it is bad for his health. 21.05 percent respondents use alcohol 1 bottle (750ml) daily which is dangerous for health and so on. Similarly 31.58 percent respondents use alcohol 1 glass (250ml) daily. In general Tharu people use more alcohol. They are not fixed to use alcohol so that it's effects also increase the rate of socio economic and health status.

### Types of Alcohol Use

Alcohol is various types like Beer, Whisky, Rum, Homemade Raksi etc. all alcohols are intoxicating but they have various effects on health. The degree of intoxication differs. So the users should consider the quality and quantity of wine themselves. Wine being made at home; it is increasingly being used among the Tharu community. The rate of alcohol use is ever increasing. Most of Tharu people are found of drinking homemade alcohol, which is made from foods and fruits. They make the alcohol themselves at home. Tharu people are involved in foreign service in countries; so they learn to use market production alcohol also. The following table shows the types of alcohol the Tharu people have used so far.

**Table No. 3- Types of Alcohol**

S.N	Types of Alcohol	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Home made Alcohol (Raksi)	120	83.3
2.	Market production alcohol (Beer, Whisky, Rum etc)	20	13.9
3.	Both	4	2.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

The home-made alcohol (commonly known as Raksi) is used at a greater percentage. The reason is that it is easily available for the users. If they cannot get it, they begin to use alcohol which they can get from the market. In the table above 83.3 percent of respondents use home-made alcohol and 13.9 percent respondents use market production alcohol. Similarly 2.8 percent respondents use both types of alcohol. This study shows that Tharu people use home made alcohol so that it is increasing ratio also high to use alcohol.

### Causes of Alcohol Use

There are several causes for the excessive use of alcohol among the alcohol users in Tharu community. Some respondents say that they use alcohol for the sake of enjoyment. Some other say that they use it so as to reduce their tiredness and mental tension. The teenagers and the young ones use it as a new experience in their life. Their curiosity to test wine makes them the habitual users of alcohol. It is therefore, significant to find out the causes and suggest ways to reduce the bad effects of alcohol.

**Table No. 4 Causes of Alcohol Use**

S.N	Causes	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Cultural habit	45	31.3
2.	To release physical & mental Tension	33	22.9
3.	For enjoyment	40	27.8
4.	Curiosity to test wine	8	5.6
5.	In party/festival	6	4.1
6.	Due to the pressure from peers & Relative	7	4.8
7.	The reason unknown	5	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

The table no. 4 shows that 31.3 percent people had taken the alcohol by cultural habit, 22.9 percent respondents had taken alcohol to release physical and mental tension or to reduce anxiety. In Tharu community they have their own culture. In their culture, 4.1 percent respondents use alcohol in party or festival. 27.8 percent respondents had taken alcohol to enjoy. 5.6 percent respondents take alcohol to feel the taste. 3.5 percent respondents had taken alcohol by unknown. Sometimes they also use alcohol under the pressure of their peers and relatives. In Tharu culture they use more alcohol. Sometimes their family also pressure to use alcohol that's why it also cause to use alcohol.

**Production of Alcohol**

Most of Tharu use home-made alcohol. They make alcohol themselves in their home. There are various sources of materials from which wine or alcohol is made. Fruits and food are the major stuff for making wine.

**Table No. 5- Production of Alcohol**

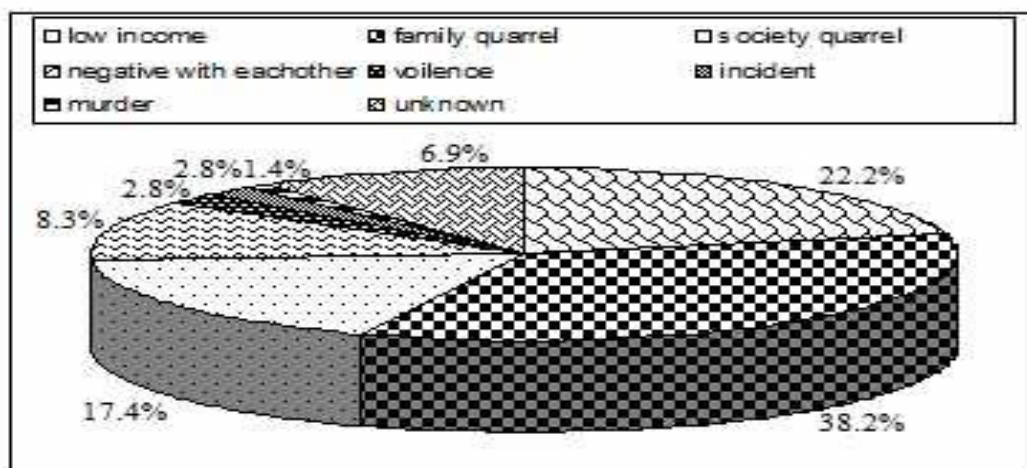
S.N	Cause	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Foods	50	55.6
2.	Fruits	30	33.3
3.	Others	10	11.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

The table No. 5 shows that 55.6 percent respondents use foods to make alcohol. 33.3 percent respondents use fruits. Similarly, 11.1 percent respondents use other materials. Other materials means to use sugar etc. alcohol is injurious to health but the quantity of alcohol is good by made of food, fruits alcohol also good but alcohol made by other things so dangerous because of alcohol percent not mentioned.

**Effect on Socio-Economic Status**

Socio-economic status of the people is an important determinant factor of the development as well as an important factor of health condition. There are so many effects of alcohol drinking on socio-economic status like low income, family quarrel, negative attitude to each other, violence etc. the researcher evaluated the socio-economic status which is known in the following table.

**Figure 2: Effects on Socio-Economic Status**

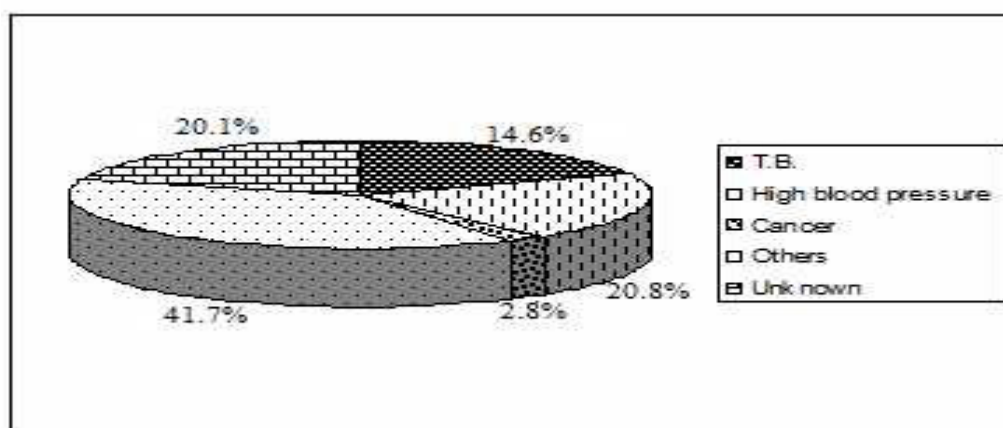


The figure no. 3 shows that 38.2% people had family quarrel. 22.2% people had low income, 17.4% people had society quarrel, 8.3% people had negative with each other, 2.8% people incident. Similarly 2.8% respondents had violence, 1.4% respondents had murder. Likewise 6.9% respondents were ignorant about the effects of the alcohol they were not interested to tell about the effect of alcohol. This study shows that the biggest problem is family quarrel. There are so many effects of alcohol drinking on socio-economic status like low income, family quarrel negative attitude to each other, violence etc. The study shows that the biggest problem is family quarrel in Tharu people.

### Effect on Health of Alcohol

Alcohol creates many health problems. It is already mentioned that it has negative effects on mental, emotional and physical health. In Tharu community the respondents didn't agree they had to bear adverse effects from alcohol. But the researcher has detected the bad results of alcoholic users or alcohol practitioners.

**Figure 3: Effects on Health Status**



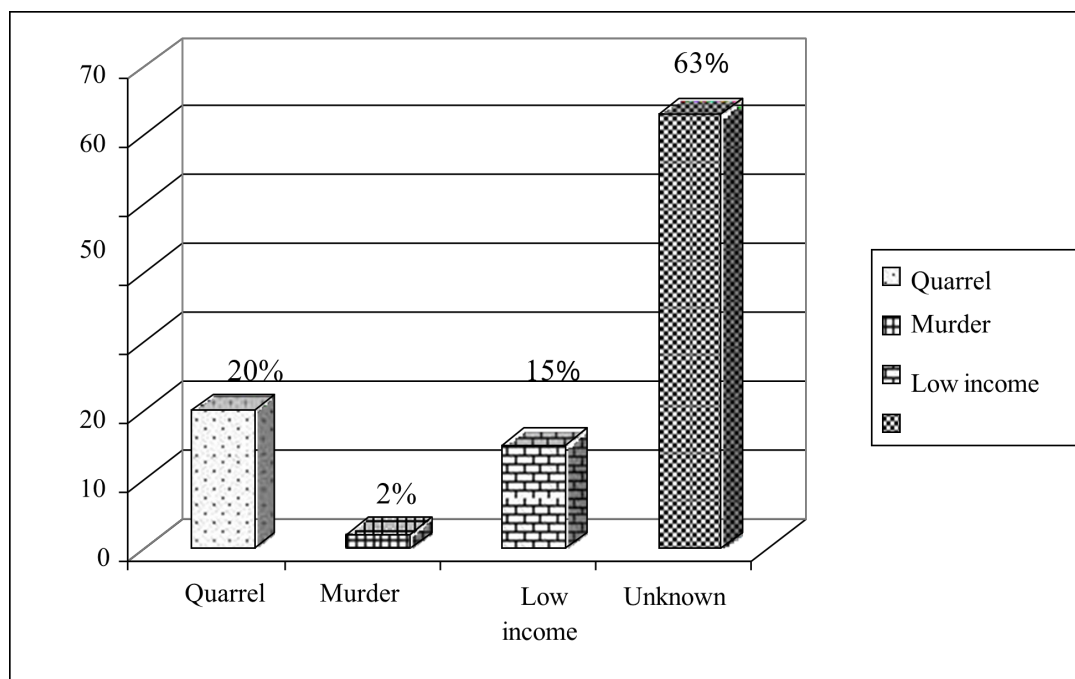
The study shows that 20.8% respondents were affected with high blood pressure, 14.6% respondents were affected with T.B. Similarly 2.8% respondents suffered from cancer, 20.1% respondents were ignorant about the effects of alcohol. 41.7% respondents were affected from other health problems like head ache, vomiting, gastric, ulcer, etc. so alcohol also affects the health status in family life. Alcohol causes so many effects on physical and mental state of the users. Headache, vomiting, gastric, nausea etc. are the immediate effects of alcohol. High blood pressure, T.B, cancer, jaundice, hepatitis etc are the long term effects of alcohol. But the users of alcohol do not know anything about such bad consequences. The highest percentage of effects from high blood pressure in Tharu people. The lowest percentage of effects from T.B. in Tharu people. Similarly, alcohol cause so many effects on others causes like vomiting headache, nausea etc.



### Effects on Family of Alcohol

Alcohol brings many problem in family it makes quarrel and murder. It effects on mental, emotional and education. There are so many effects of alcohol using on family like simple quarrel, murder and low income etc. The researcher evaluated the family of alcohol which is known in the following figure.

**Figure 4: Effects on Family of Alcohol**



The study shows that 20 percent respondents were affected with quarrel, 15 percent respondents were affected with low income and 2 percent respondents were affected with murder. So, alcohol affects on family.

### Conclusion

Alcohol practice is a common phenomenon in Tharu community of Nepal, the situation is not different in this community. The main cause for alcohol practice is their culture ice. For worshipping their God, Alcohol is necessary. The other reasons are to get relaxed after working hard in the fields as men are engaged in agriculture profession. To respect the guests, alcohol is considered as an essential thing. Many relatives and friends encourage themselves to get together. Another interesting fact is that many of practitioners use homemade wine which is popular by the name of ‘Chhang’ which is considered equivalent to beer etc. percentage of alcohol is low. Since they use homemade alcohol (Raksi) which is made by ruining or rotting millet, rice, corn, fruits etc., they don’t feel any burden economically. Majority of the respondents do not have to spend more on alcoholic drinks from the market.

### Reference

- Best, J.W. and Khan, V. (1995). Research in Education, New Dehli: Prentice Hall of India, Private Limited.
- Campbell, D.T. and Stanley, J.C. (1963). Experimental and Quasi Experimental Design for research, Chicago: Rand McNally and company.
- Chava, F.N. and Nachamlas D. (2000). Research methods in the social science (Sixth ed.). New York: worth publisher.
- Chhetri, H.S. and Mudwari, N.R. (2006). Educational technology and health education, Kathmandu: Jupiter publisher and distributors Pvt. Ltd.
- CWIN, (May 2001). Alcohol and drug use in Nepal (With reference to children), Kathmandu
- Devkota, Bhimsen, (1999). Hand Book of Health Research Methodology. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Kathmandu: Buddha Academic Enterprise Pvt. Ltd.
- Dhakal, Som Nath, (2060). Family life education. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar. Dhital, (2001), Alcohol and drug use in Nepal, Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.
- Filstead, W.J. (Ed.) (1970). Qualitative methodology Chicago Markhan.
- Epstein, E. (1998). Classification of Alcohol related problems and Dependence New York.
- Gyanwali, Dines, (1998). Alcohol and Drug problem at work proposal for thesis, T.U., Kathmandu.
- Joshi P.R. (2001). Research methodology, (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Kathmandu: Buddha Academic enterprises Pvt. Ltd.
- Karki, Ashok Kumar. (2060). Foundation of population and reproductive health. Kathmandu Kashitiz prakashan, Nayabazar.
- Kharal, Pesal. (2060). Educational research methodology. Kirtipur, Kathmandu: Student Book publisher and distributors.
- Koul, Lokesh (1997). Methodology of educational research, New Dehli: Vikash publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- Lall, Keshar. (1996). The origin of Alcohol and other stories. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.
- Lama, Siddhartha, (2007). Drug and Drug Addiction (Experience and Retrospect), Kathmandu: variety printing press.
- Maharjan, Ramkrishna and Maharjan, Shyam Krishna, (2053) Family life education, faculty of education kirtipur, Kathmandu.
- Mills, M.B., and Huberman, A.M. (1973). Qualitative Data Analysis: A source book of new methods (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New bury Park, CA: Sage publications.
- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism August (2015). WHO Global Status Report on Alcohol, (2004)