

**THE ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE OF FEMALE LABORERS**  
**IN CONNECTION TO ROAD /BUILDING**  
**CONSTRUCTION IN INDIA**

**(A RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED AT NAGPUR, GONDIA,**  
**BHANDARA & MUMBAI)**

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**ABSTRACT:-**

Road construction or repair is a troublesome and hard working job in India; like other developed western countries India doesn't have all the necessary equipment facilities in this area due to very high cost, only Crain and the Road rollers are available as automatic machines; most of the works are done manually. As ours is a tropical country, at this weather to do hard work on open roads need much physical strength. The male and female laborers suffer a lot, but as the men are stronger physically than the females, they manage somehow. The females have to manage their families after their work; so, their problems (physical and mental) are much more than their male counterparts. Besides all these factors, the women are physically weaker than men in general and they are not paid equally like the men. These women come from the remote villages where they can not work as domestic helps, factory laborers etc due to lack of scopes. If they want to earn money only this is the option for them to work as temporary laborers for road or building constructions. In most cases they are highly exploited by their contractors and male work mates financially and even sexually. The young women when reach at their middle age or more, most of them depend on alcoholism which is very much detrimental for our society and must be curbed.

**KEY WORDS:** Women Laborers; Exploitation; Severe Poverty; Drinking Habits; Health Problems; Social Menace.

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## INTRODUCTION:-

The female labor work force constitutes one third of the rural workers in India and they are 30% of labor force according to International Labor Organization.

The female laborers working in unorganized sectors, live a below standard and horrific life; as they are not included in official statistics and their performance is not documented. They lag their male counterparts in terms of quality of employment and monetary benefits due to 'gender bias' which is a different issue and not our subject of research work currently.

These women come from remote rural areas and are mostly illiterate, unaware regarding their rights, socially downtrodden, financially very weak and are unskilled. Harsh truth is that, they are the victims of poverty. As they are women and extremely needy, they are exploited by their contractors like anything. These women are made to work for very long hours and not paid according to their work; most of the time the labor contractors cheat them of their remuneration. They are helpless and are bound to accept this sort of unfair and disgraceful behaviour.

The working conditions of these women labor force are horrendous; there is no medical facilities, accidental measures & benefits, inadequate shelter facilities, no toilet facilities, no hygienic drinking water facilities etc. In one word, their working conditions are just unbearable. They have to face the intolerable heat, during peak summer which is of very long duration as ours is a tropical country. Their personal lives are also full of insecurities

and very much problematic by all means, as their husbands/male members of the families earn very poor wages and in some of the families the male members earn nothing. Their home environment is also equally adverse; these poor women have to manage their homes, cook, look after their children under tremendous adversities.

There are laws to protect these laborers from exploitation. Some of these are 'the interstate migrant workmen regulation of employment and conditions of service act 1979', 'the bonded labor system act 1976' etc., but these laws are not implemented properly and strongly and these women due to their ignorance are unaware of all these.

Due to the miserable conditions of their homes and working lives, these women are always under tremendous physical and mental stresses. With the increase of the age, their physical energy diminishes gradually and to cope up with these harsh conditions in personal and work-lives, some

of these women at their middle age or above, surrender to regular alcoholism or drinking habits. Due to their meager income, these women go for country liquor, which is highly crude very harmful and injurious to health.

These women afterwards suffer from diseases of liver, stomach and other abdominal ailments and many of them die due to these.

#### **OBJECTIVE:-**

The research study is supposed to (i) find out the inclination of very hardworking women laborers towards drinking hard liquor, to get rid of their day to day hardship in homes and working places, without any positive expectation. (ii) to correlate their aging with drinking habit and (iii) to draw the attention of Government and N.G.O.s to take immediate actions to this social menace.

#### **PLACES OF STUDY:-**

The samples were selected from road construction/ repairing sites of Nagpur, Gondia, Bhandara and Mumbai.

Total 75 samples were selected on random basis.

#### **HYPOTHESIS:-**

The null hypothesis (Ho) of the research study is- the regular drinking habits of the women laborers are irrespective of age.

#### **Research Methodology:-**

For this research study, 75 samples were selected on random basis and they were allowed to talk freely regarding their personal lives and work conditions. They answered whether they drink alcohol or not and stated their ages.

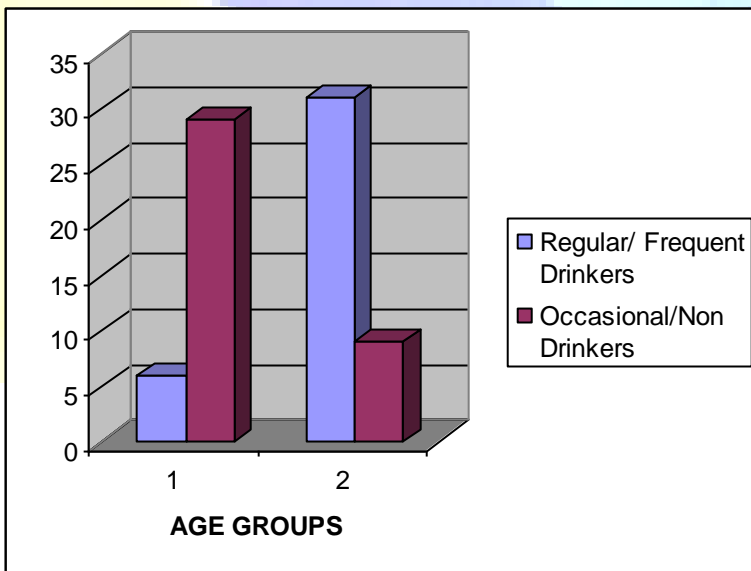
They were divided into two groups (a) age group of above 20 to below 40; (b) age group of above 40 to below 55. In each age group, how many of them are frequent drinkers and how many of them are non drinkers are noted. A table was formed in this context and CHI SQUARE TEST was done. As a result the hypothesis was tested.

**RESULTS:-**

**Table of the samples (drinkers/non drinkers) of two different age group**

AGE GROUP	REGULAR/FREQUENT DRINKERS	OCCASIONAL/ DRINKERS	NON	TOTAL
ABOVE 20 TO BELOW 40	6	31		37
ABOVE 40 TO BELOW 55	29	9		38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>75</b>

**TABLE-1**



**CHART-1**

It is evident from chart-1 that, the number of regular/frequent drinkers is more in higher age group and less in lower age group.

CHI SQUARE TEST carried out based on observed frequencies (O) and expected frequencies (E) (as calculated from the totals of observed frequencies) from Table-1.

OBSERVED FREQUENCIES (O)	EXPECTED FREQUENCIES (E)	2 (O-E)	2 (O-E)/E
06	17.27	127	7.35
29	17.73	127	7.16
31	19.73	127	6.44
09	20.27	127	6.27

$$\sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} = 27.22 = X$$

The degree of freedom = (Row-1) (Column-1) = (2-1)\*(2-1) = 1. At this degree of freedom, from the Chi Square Distribution Table, the observed value of X = 3.84 at 5% level of significance; it is much lower than the calculated value; so, the null Hypothesis Ho is rejected.

It can be proved that, the regular drinking habits of the women laborers are not irrespective of age. It increases with the increase of age.

From the interview with the samples, the reason can be attributed to the lack of physical energy, fatigue, mental stress, body ache, never ending anxiety, menopausal weakness, want of proper food etc. at the middle age of the women. To cope up with these adversities, hardship and difficulties at this age level, they try to get rid of all these by drinking hard liquor before sleep at night; so that, they can begin their next day full of toiling and difficulties.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:-

The sample number is small and the result is dependent on the verbal replies of the samples

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION:-

From the result obtained it can be stated that, among the samples the female laborers of the age group of 20 to below 40 are not habituated to drinking habit, as they are able to cope up with all the hardship of their lives and work places due to their young age; but, as their age increases, their physical strength goes down due to lack of nutritious/proper food, lack of rest, lack of sleep, anxiety etc and most of them get solace in hard liquor to get rid of all these problems. As they are ignorant regarding the bad and negative effects of drinking hard liquor, it takes a heavy toll on their health and family. The other young members/ children learn the bad habit from them and the social menace go on increasing from one generation to other.

The Indian Government and the N.G.Os must pay heed to this menace and find the way out regarding the curbing of this bad habit of women by conducting awareness programmes, and providing some incentives to these section of laborers. The Govt. must introduce strict policies so that, the remuneration of these women increase substantially and not consumed by the labor contractors who must be strongly punishable by Indian laws if they cheat these women of their wages.

If our Indian Govt. and big N.G.Os take serious steps to stop this menace then only, it can be stopped to a certain extent; otherwise there is no improvement of these poor, helpless womenfolk.

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