

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE - PUBLIC HEALTH

## SELF-ESTEEM AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS OF ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC PARENTS, IN DHARMAPURI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU - AN ANALYTICAL CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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## Abstract

**Introduction :** Alcohol being a psychoactive substance, its increasing trend of consumption in India poses threat to society in various forms including psychological ill-effects to the members of the family, Adolescent children who grew up in a chaotic environment are affected and are prone to get behavioral problems. Parental alcoholism can have a significant role in shaping them. Self-esteem is a feeling of one's own worth which could well be influenced by parental behavior. Hence this study was conducted with an objective to study the self-esteem among children of alcoholic and non-alcoholic parents among college-going students in a selected college in Dharmapuri district, Tamilnadu.

**Methodology:** An analytical cross-sectional study was conducted among the college students of Periyar University-affiliated Arts and Science College, Pappireddipatti, Dharmapuri district students were given a self-administered semi-structured questionnaire, (Part I- Socio-demographic details, Part II- Modified Children of Alcoholic Screening Test-CAST, Part III- Rosenberg Self Esteem scale-RSES). They were grouped based on the Modified CAST tool into Children Of Alcoholic (COA) and Children Of Non-Alcoholic (nCOA), 120 participants' responses from each group were taken up by simple random sampling and analyzed using SPSS version16.

**Results:** The mean age of the study participants was 19.7 + 1.33 years. There was no difference in demographic characteristics between the 2 groups. Mean Self-esteem scores are lower for the children of alcoholic parents (13.2) when compared to the children of non-alcoholic parents (17.5) and there was a statistically significant difference in the mean RSES scores between the 2 groups by independent 't' test with p-value<0.05. There was a statistically significant association between the Alcoholic status of parents(COA and nCOA) and the self-esteem of their children(Low and Normal) by chi-square test with a p-value <0.05.

**Conclusion:** The majority of the children of alcoholic parents had lower self-esteem than their counterparts. Alcohol, being a physical and behavioral teratogen can easily invade into an adolescent's behavioral pattern if not intervened timely. Self-esteem, as an important psychological drive during adolescence, has to be maintained high to make a productive future generation.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, Children of Alcoholics, Adolescent student.

## INTRODUCTION

Alcohol is a psychoactive substance with dependence-producing properties which is in use in human society since the beginning of recorded history and it is ubiquitous today.<sup>1</sup> Alcohol-related issues are swiftly becoming a major public health issue in India due to increased productivity, availability, and changing social values.<sup>2</sup>

India is the third-largest alcoholic beverage market in the world.<sup>3</sup> It is estimated that 20-40% of men between the ages of 15-60 years consume alcohol on a regular or intermittent basis.<sup>2</sup> The National Household Survey had reported alcohol use in 21% of adult men and <5% among women. The state-wise prevalence rate is highly variable, Gujarat with 7% and Arunachal Pradesh with 75% is at the lowest and highest, respectively. In South India, the prevalence rate of alcohol consumption has varied between 33% - 50%.<sup>3</sup>

India's per capita alcohol consumption doubled between 2005 and 2016, according to the World Health Organization's

(WHO) Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health 2018. Too many people, their families, and communities are suffering from the consequences of harmful use of alcohol in the form of violence, injuries, mental health problems, and illnesses such as cancer and stroke.<sup>4</sup>

The per-capita alcohol consumption figures do not give a factual picture of consumption of alcohol, because the local alcoholic drinks, either legal or illegal, are not taken into account in the national statistics. There are now signs that alcohol drinking is being introduced at a progressively earlier age in India.<sup>5</sup>



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Children of alcoholics (COAs) are the children who grow up in families where either one or both the parents are alcoholics. They grow up in an environment that lacks parental care and love, both of which are essential for the child's healthy development. Ideally, Parenting should be based on predefined rules and discipline, which, in alcoholic parents, are based on parents' alcohol consumption status and moods. This results in an inconsistent and erratic behavior of parents, leaving their children to feel unsafe and insecure.<sup>6</sup>

Children of alcoholic (COA) parents suffer from a variety of psycho-social problems. The psychological effects of alcoholism in parents were observed from infancy to adulthood. They are at a higher risk of adopting the habit of consuming alcohol, tobacco, and other illicit behavior frequently and at an early age.<sup>7</sup> They suffer from the deficiency of having a 'parental role model' for their life and they are denied a healthy home environment.<sup>8</sup>

The term "Self-esteem" is derived from a Greek word meaning "reverence for self." It pertains to the attitudes, values, and beliefs one holds about themselves. In short, self-esteem is the acceptance of an individual for whom and what they are at any given point of time in their lives. It is a positive or negative orientation towards an individual self.<sup>9</sup>

Morris Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem in terms of a specific type of attitude, one that is believed to be based on the insight of a sense, a feeling about one's "worth" or value as a person.<sup>10</sup>

Self-esteem embraces a person's beliefs and emotions like a triumph, pride, and shame. It refers to the extent to which the individuals value themselves and has long been recognized as a significant predictor of adjustment to stress. An appropriate level of self-esteem claims the individual to feel honorable, enjoy their efforts, and autonomously express their desires. Self-esteem is thought to be the single best predictor of success and it is the integrated sum of self-confidence and self-respect.<sup>11</sup>

The self-esteem of an individual can be influenced by a multitude of factors. But none is more noteworthy than the family. Parental involvement has a greater role in deciding the levels of self-esteem of their offspring.<sup>10</sup>

As adolescence has been globally acknowledged to be the period of turbulence parental alcoholism generates an unfavorable environment for the adjustment and character development of the adolescent.<sup>11</sup>

## JUSTIFICATION :

Alcohol is a physical and behavioral teratogen.<sup>12</sup> It is often alleged that alcoholism is a family disease since the

entire family and every individual who is a part of it suffers. Alcoholism takes a specifically high toll on adolescent children, who often carry the scars related to alcoholic parents into their adulthood.<sup>13</sup>

Self-esteem is an indicator of one's own worth subjectively, which has an influence over the individual's self-competence, which in turn has a linkage with the behavioral pattern in adolescents, all of which are influenced by alcoholism in parents. This study intends to compare and analyze this factor.

## OBJECTIVES

To study the self-esteem among college students of alcoholic and non-alcoholic parents in the selected college of Dharmapuri district.

## METHODOLOGY

After obtaining ethical approval from the Institutional Ethics Committee of Madras Medical College and Official Permission from the Principal, Periyar University-affiliated arts and science college, Pappireddipatti, Dharmapuri district, an analytical cross-sectional study was conducted among the college students during the month of October 2021- November 2021. The sample size was calculated using the formula  $N = ((Z\alpha + Z\beta)(P1Q1 + P2Q2)) / L^2$ , with a error at 95% CI,  $\beta$  at 80% power, and taking the proportion of nCOA and COA with lower self-esteem from a study done at Coimbatore by Jabasroon et al., which was 38% and 26% respectively.<sup>11</sup>

The sample size was arrived at 120 per group and a total of 240. All the final year students (400 students) who were present on the day of the visit were included in the sampling frame and they were given a self-administered semi-structured questionnaire which includes 3 parts, Part I- Socio-demographic details, Part II- Modified Children of Alcoholic Screening Tool<sup>14</sup>(CAST) Part III- Rosenberg Self Esteem scale<sup>15</sup>(RSES)

After obtaining participants' consent, and ensuring strict confidentiality, responses were collected from 380 participants and they were grouped based on the Modified Children of Alcoholic Screening Tool (CAST) and 120 from each group is chosen by simple random sampling.

Collected data were entered in epicollect5 tool from which it is extracted as an excel document and imported into SPSS Version 16 and analyzed. Descriptive statistics are expressed in frequency and percentage and inferential statistics were done using 't' test and chi-square test and p-value <0.05 is

considered to be significant.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

- **Self-esteem** - It is simply one's attitude towards oneself, assessed by Rosenberg's self-esteem scale. Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) ranges from 0-30. Scores between 15 to 25 are within the normal range and the scores <15 suggest low self-esteem.
- **Children of Alcoholics** - children who score > 3 in Modified Children of Alcoholic Screening Test (CAST tool)14
- **Children of non-alcoholics** - children who score <3 in Modified Children of Alcoholic Screening Test (CAST tool)14

### RESULTS

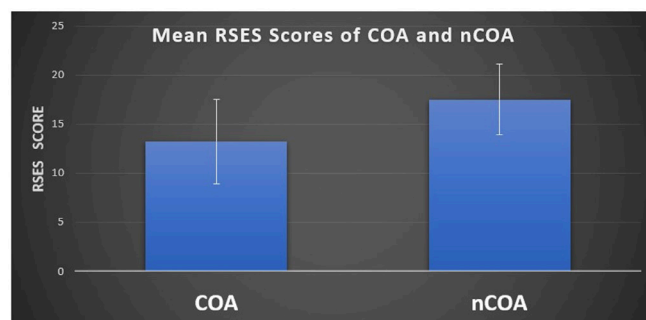
The mean age of the study participants was 19.7 + 1.33 years, with a minimum age of 18 and a maximum of 25 years. The mean age in the COA group is 19.5 + 1.3 years and in nCOA group is 19.9 + 1.3 years.

Table 1 : Comparison of demographic characteristics between COAs and non-COAs

S.No	Variable	Categories	COA (n=120)		nCOA (n=120)		Chi-Square	p-Value
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
1	Sex	Male	60	50%	51	42.5%	1.36	0.24
		Female	60	50%	69	57.5%		
2	Religion	Hindu	118	98.3%	118	98.3%	2.34	0.5
		Christian	1	0.8%	2	1.7%		
		Muslim	1	0.8%	0	0.0%		
3	Education of the Father	Illiterate	36	30.0%	41	34.2%	4.16	0.53
		Primary	27	22.5%	18	15.0%		
		High School	29	24.2%	36	30.0%		
		Higher Secondary	19	15.8%	19	15.8%		
		Diploma	1	0.8%	0	0.0%		
		Degree	8	6.7%	6	5.0%		
		Illiterate	51	42.5%	42	35.0%		
4	Education of the Mother	Primary	24	20.0%	22	18.3%	2.59	0.76
		High School	30	25.0%	40	33.3%		
		Higher Secondary	12	10.0%	12	10.0%		
		Diploma	1	0.8%	1	0.8%		
		Degree	2	1.7%	3	2.5%		
5	Occupation of the Father	Unemployed	6	5.0%	7	5.8%	2.46	0.93
		Unskilled	34	28.3%	28	23.3%		
		Semi-skilled	3	2.5%	6	5%		
		Skilled	21	17.5%	23	19.2%		
		Clerical/Farmer/Shop keeper	39	32.5%	36	30.0%		
		Semi - Professional	3	2.5%	3	2.5%		
		Professional	14	11.7%	17	14.2%		
6	Occupation of the Mother	Unemployed	18	15.0%	38	31.7%	11.48	0.75
		Unskilled	35	29.2%	21	17.5%		
		Semi-skilled	4	3.3%	3	2.5%		
		Skilled	11	9.2%	8	6.7%		
		Clerical/Farmer/Shop keeper	39	32.5%	37	30.8%		
		Semi - Professional	4	3.3%	5	4.2%		
		Professional	9	7.5%	8	6.7%		
		Nuclear	87	72.5%	94	78.3%		
7	Type of Family	Joint	32	26.7%	26	21.7%	1.89	0.39
		Three Generation	1	0.8%				
		Upper Class	13	10.8%	12	10.0%		
8	SES	Upper Middle class	13	10.8%	9	7.5%	0.42	0.94
		Middle Class	26	21.7%	30	25.0%		
		Lower Middle class	42	35.0%	45	37.5%		
		Lower class	26	21.7%	24	20.0%		

Table 1 shows the descriptive details of the demographic characteristics of the study participants such as Gender, Education, and Occupation of the father and mother, Socio-

Economic status as classified by Modified B.G.Prasad scale (2021), and type of family in both the groups. It also shows that there is no significant difference in the demographic characteristics between COA and nCOA groups as evident by the chi-square test (p-Value >0.05) No statistical significance was observed with respect to Religion, Type of Family, Education & Occupation of the father and mother, and Self-esteem by chi-square analysis.



	COA	nCOA
Mean	13.2	17.5
Standard Deviation	4.3	3.6

Figure 1 : Comparison of Rosenberg's self-esteem scores among children of alcoholic and non-alcoholic Parents

Figure 1 shows the Comparison of the Mean and Standard deviation of the RSES scores between COA and nCOA parents. Mean RSES scores are higher for the children of non-alcoholic parents when compared to the children of alcoholic parents.

Table 2 : Mean difference of RSES scores among COA and nCOA parents:

Variable	COA(n=120)				nCOA(n=120)				P-Value
	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	
Rosenberg's Self-esteem score	13.2	4.3	3	25	17.5	3.6	9	17	0.000*

\*p<0.05

Table 2 shows the statistically significant difference in the mean self-esteem scores of the participants in the COA and nCOA groups by the 't'-test. The mean self-esteem scores were statistically significant between COA and nCOA groups by independent 't' test with a p-Value < 0.05.

Table 2 : Mean difference of RSES scores among COA and nCOA parents:

Variable	Category	Score by RSES		Chi-square	p-Value	OR	95% CI
		Low SE	Normal SE				
Alcoholic status of Parents by CAST tool	COA (n=120)	83 (69.2%)	37 (30.8%)	33.75	0.000*	4.84	2.8-8.4
	nCOA (n=120)	38 (31.7%)	82 (68.3%)				

**\*p<0.05**

There is statistically significant association between the Alcoholic status of parents and the self-esteem of their children are considered by chi-square test with a p-value <0.05. Children of Alcoholic parents are at 4.84 times higher odds of having low self-esteem when compared to the children of non-alcoholic parents, as shown in Table 3.

**DISCUSSION**

There is substantial evidence that adolescents who grew up in a home with discordant atmosphere are at increased risk of developing several problems and disorders once they reach adulthood.<sup>16</sup> A systematic review of research on children of alcoholics by Park and Schepp et al.,<sup>17</sup> shows that if the problems are identified at an earlier age and if appropriate rehabilitation services could be provided then the complication can be prevented and this study aims at the same.

This study assessed the level of self-esteem among college students in a selected college of Dharmapuri district. The majority of Children of Alcoholic parents had low self-esteem and it shows a statistically significant association between the alcoholic status of the parents and the self-esteem of their adolescent children, which is supported by the findings of Hussong et al.,<sup>18</sup> which shows a significant association between COAs and their emotional and behavioral aspects such as insecurity, shyness, and low self-esteem. Our results are also in accordance with the results of Omkarappa et al.,<sup>7</sup> which studied Anxiety, depression, self-esteem among children of alcoholic and non-alcoholic parents and concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between COA and non-COA groups with regard to depression, anxiety self-esteem, social phobia, obsessive-compulsive problems, and physical injury. Our results are also supported by the results of Stanley and Vanitha et al.,<sup>19</sup> which studied the psychosocial correlates in children of alcoholics and concluded that there is lower self-esteem and poor adjustment in all domains, in the COAs than the nCOA controls that could be attributed to the amplified stress and compromised alcohol complicated internal environment of the COAs.

**CONCLUSION**

This study has provided another substantial evidence for lower self-esteem among adolescent children of alcoholic parents and their statistically significant association. Since the adolescent age group is considered to be the age group with fluctuating moods and a variety of choices, parental

care, and role model plays a major role in shaping their future. As the good old saying "Prevention is better than cure", early identification of psychologically derailing students can ensure a productive output. With that intention, an interactive session was coordinated in the college where this study was conducted, by joining hands with the Psychiatrist, District Mental Health Program(DMHP) for all the students to boost up their morale and to clear them about the ill effects of alcoholism and ways to counter the influence of parental alcoholism.

**LIMITATIONS**

- The results cannot be generalized to all college students of the Dharmapuri district as the study was conducted among students of one college only.
- As the entire questionnaire was based on self-reported data, bias could be there as some might have reported only socially acceptable responses.
- Factors related to alcohol consumption such as quantity, duration, and factors related to self-esteem such as academic performances, stress and other psycho-social factors were not included in the study.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Periodical interactive sessions for adolescent students and individual counseling sessions for students who find themselves low.
- Educating parents through affective domain approach, periodically through parent-teachers interactions.
- Periodical Life skill awareness and training sessions for teachers to identify and counsel students who are in need of psychological support.

**RECOMMENDATIONS : Nil****ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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