

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF POOR ALCOHOL CONSUMERS IN SRI LANKA

Ruwan Jayathilaka*

Abstract: *The investigation of the link between poverty and alcohol consumption plays an important role in designing poverty reduction strategies in some African and Asian developing countries. In this study, Sri Lanka used as a case study to analysis the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Alcohol Consuming Households (ACHs) and Non-Alcohol Consuming Households (NACHs) focusing on poverty. This study used data from the most reliable survey, which was Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2006/07, conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics in Sri Lanka. This study used the cost of basic needs approach poverty line to capture the number of poor, depth and severity of poverty among ACHs and NACHs. The basic statistical techniques, measurements of poverty were used in the study, and found that the social characteristics related to the ACHs were significantly different from other households. For instance headship, average number of younger and elderly people, education attainment, marital status and usual activities were significantly different in poor ACHs. This study also found that ACHs had a relatively higher percentage of dependents and a lower percentage of working persons. It recognised that illegal alcohol consumption is popular in the rural and estate sector and that legal alcohol consumption is popular in the urban sector. Furthermore poor ACHs and households belonging to the lowest income (expenditure) deciles tended to consume more kasippu and toddy. In addition, this study concluded that kasippu and toddy consuming households faced a relatively higher incidence, depth and severity of poverty.*

Keywords: Alcohol consumption, poverty, household characteristics.

* Senior Lecturer, Colombo School of Business & Management, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.

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