

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE ABOUT ALCOHOL IN POST GRADUATE MEDICAL STUDENTS IN A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL**Dr. Aarushi Jain*¹ and Sudhir Bhave²**¹MBBS Student, ²Professor and HOD,
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ABSTRACT

Alcoholism is a chronic disease caused by problems in controlling one's drinking, leading to increased tolerance and experiencing withdrawal symptoms on decreasing or abruptly terminating intake. Doctors have to deal with many cases involving alcoholism on a regular basis. In this study we have attempted to know about the knowledge and attitude of post graduate medical students towards alcohol consumption, by getting a questionnaire filled up by the students anonymously after getting their consent. The questions included those about their knowledge of various alcoholic drinks and their constituents as well as their own drinking habits and also their ability to deal with alcohol dependent patients. The study shows that very few post graduate students are aware of the ill effects of alcohol and the legal aspects associated with the consumption of alcohol in India.

KEYWORDS: Alcoholism, postgraduate medical students, effects.**INTRODUCTION**

Alcoholism is a chronic and often progressive disease that includes problems with controlling one's drinking, always being preoccupied with drinking, continuous consumption of alcohol even when it causes problems, having to drink more to get the same effect (tolerance) or having withdrawal symptoms (physical dependence) when you rapidly decrease or abruptly stop alcohol consumption.^[1]

The DSM-IV definition is as follows:

- A. A maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, occurring within a 12-month period:

1.Recurrent and regular substance use resulting in difficulty or failure in fulfilling major obligations at work, school, or home (e.g., repeated absences or poor work performance; substance-related absences, suspensions or expulsions from school or work place, neglect of family and/or household)

2.Recurrent and regular alcohol consumption in situations in which it is physically harmful to self and others. (e.g., while driving an automobile or while operating a machine under influence.)

3.Recurrent legal problems due to substance abuse. (e.g., arrests for disorderly conduct while being in inebriated state.)

4.Continued substance abuse despite having persistent or recurrent inter personal and/or social problems caused by or exacerbated under the influence and by the effects of the substance (e.g., arguments with spouse, physical fights)

- B. The symptoms have never met the criteria for Substance Dependence for this class of substance.^[2]

Since the doctor's own knowledge and attitude in relation to alcohol influences his advice concerning the use of alcohol that he gives to his patients, this study proposes to assess the doctor's knowledge and attitude in relation to alcohol.

METHODOLOGY

- Sample size: 50 subjects.
- Duration of study: 2 months.
- Place of study: Lata Mangeshkar Hospital, Hingna, Digdoh hills, Nagpur -440019, Maharashtra, India.
- Type of study: cross-sectional.

Inclusion criteria

- Students pursuing postgraduation in any branch of Medicine in a tertiary care hospital.
- Students willing to participate in the study

Exclusion criteria

- Students not willing to be a part of the study.

The method of this study was to create a semi-structured questionnaire to be answered by postgraduate medical students of various subjects of Medicine. The data obtained was analyzed using appropriate statistical tests.

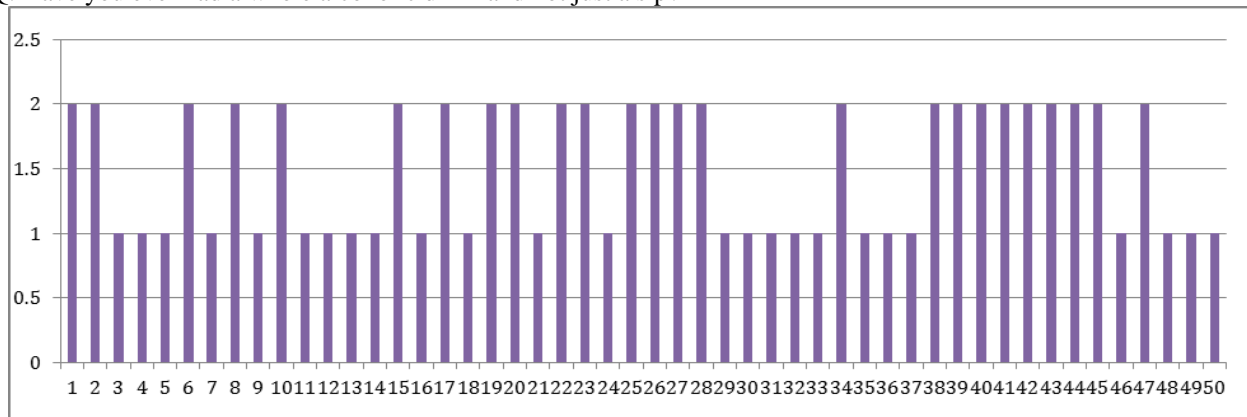
Since the legal age limit for drinking in Maharashtra is 25 years, the questions have been structured accordingly.

Oral informed consent was secured from the postgraduate students after explaining the nature, purpose and benefits of the study.

Once the study was analysed various questions and misconceptions about alcohol consumption and its effects were entertained on an individual basis to the best of our knowledge.

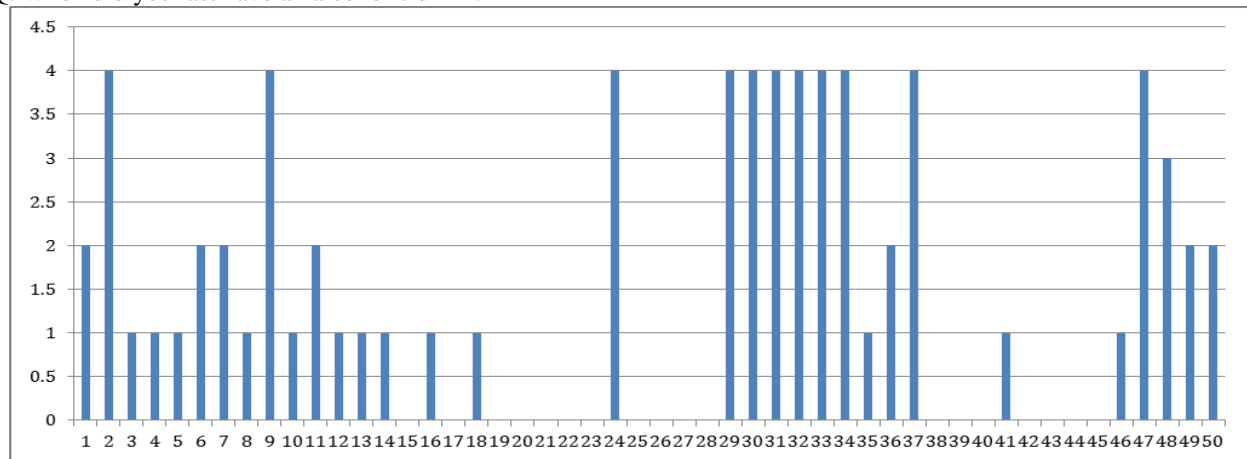
RESULTS

Q. Have you ever had a whole alcoholic drink and not just a sip?



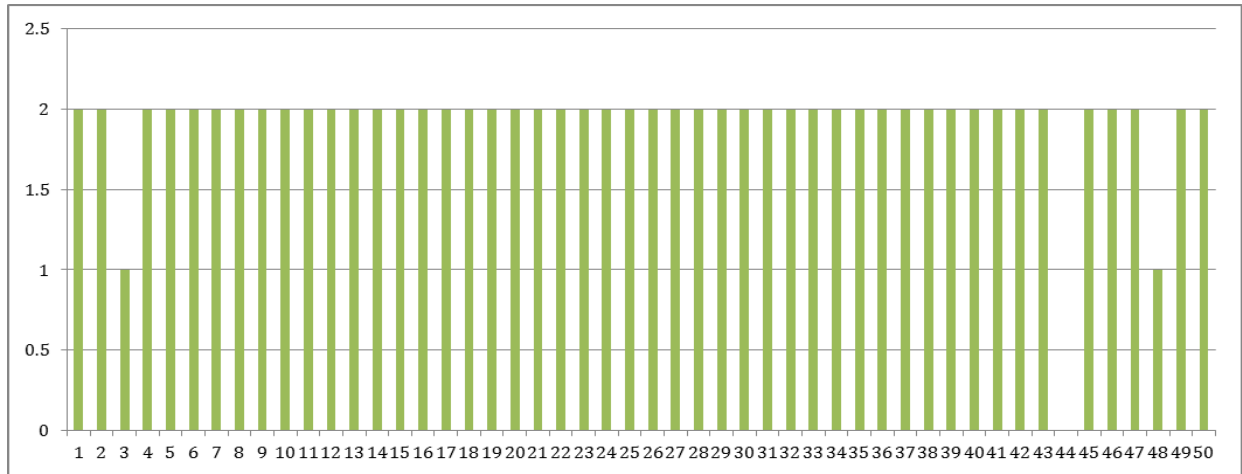
1= yes, 2= no

Q. When did you last have an alcoholic drink?



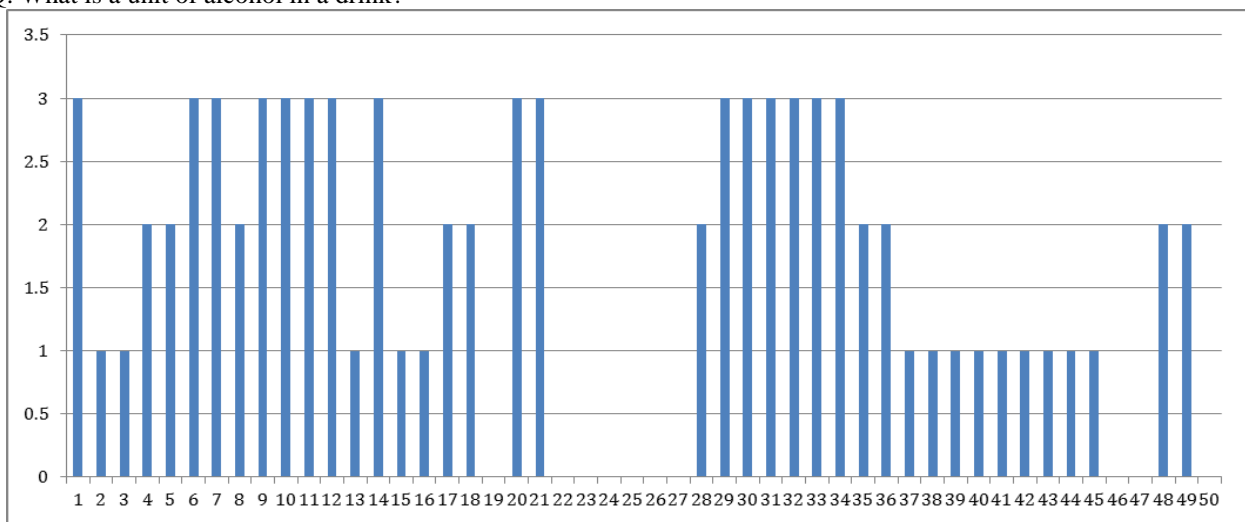
1= within the last week, 2= within the last month, 3= before taking part in this survey, d= 6 months or more ago.

Q. Before taking part in this survey, have you ever been admitted to hospital due to drinking/ or drinking related accident?



1= yes, 2= no

Q. What is a unit of alcohol in a drink?



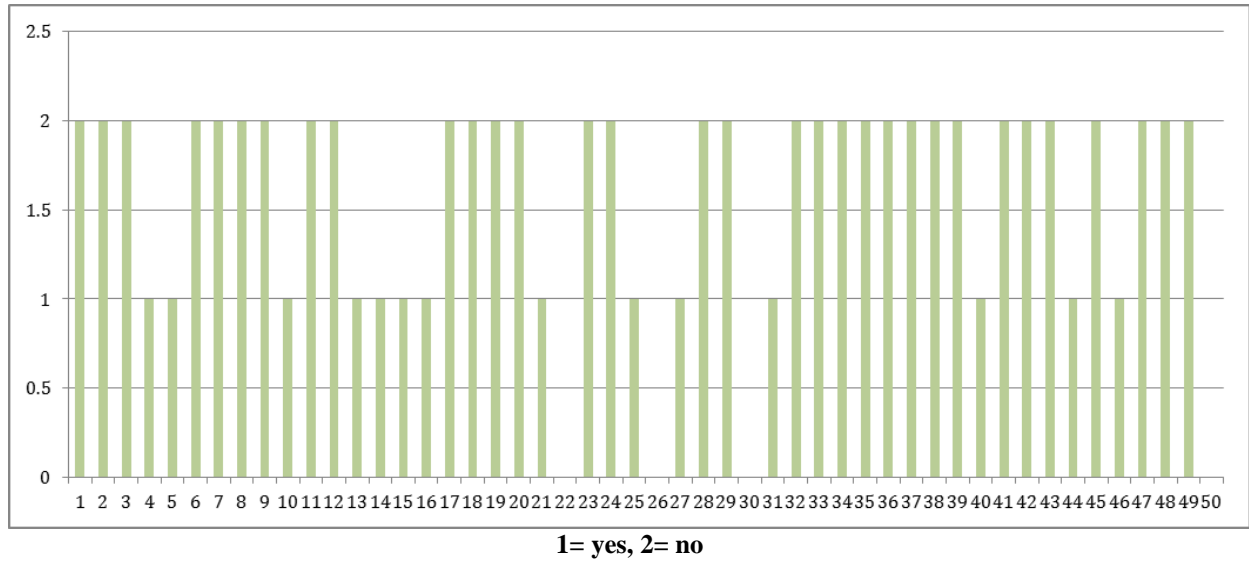
1= 8g of alcohol, 2= 10g of alcohol, 3= 6g of alcohol.

Q. What are the recommended limits of alcohol for men/women?

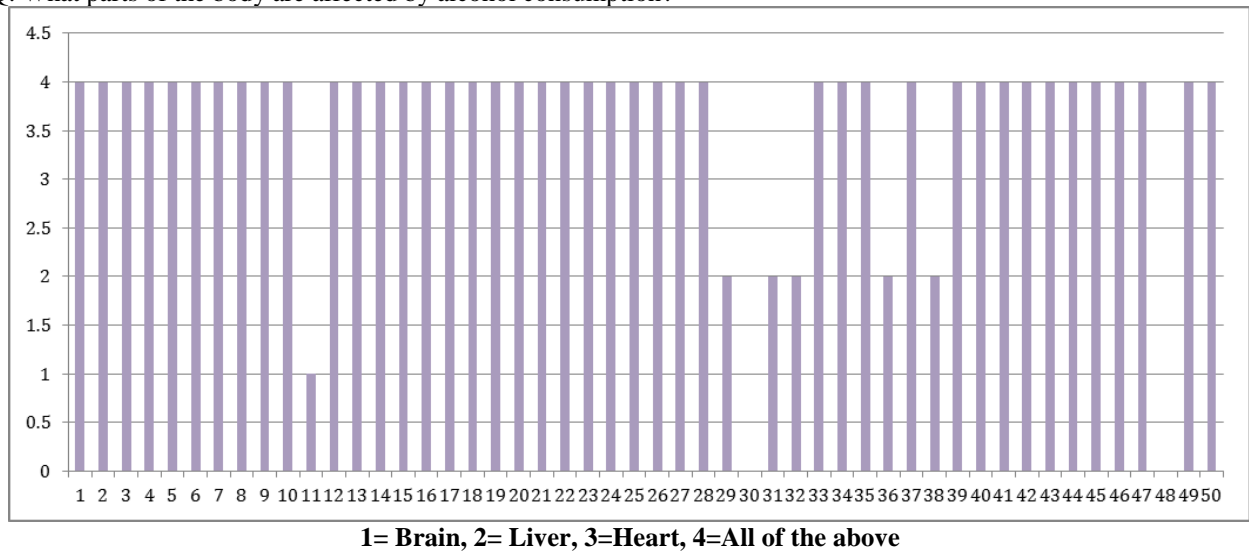


1=10 units/day for both men and women, 2=no safe limits, 3=2-3 units/day for women and 3-4 units/day for men.

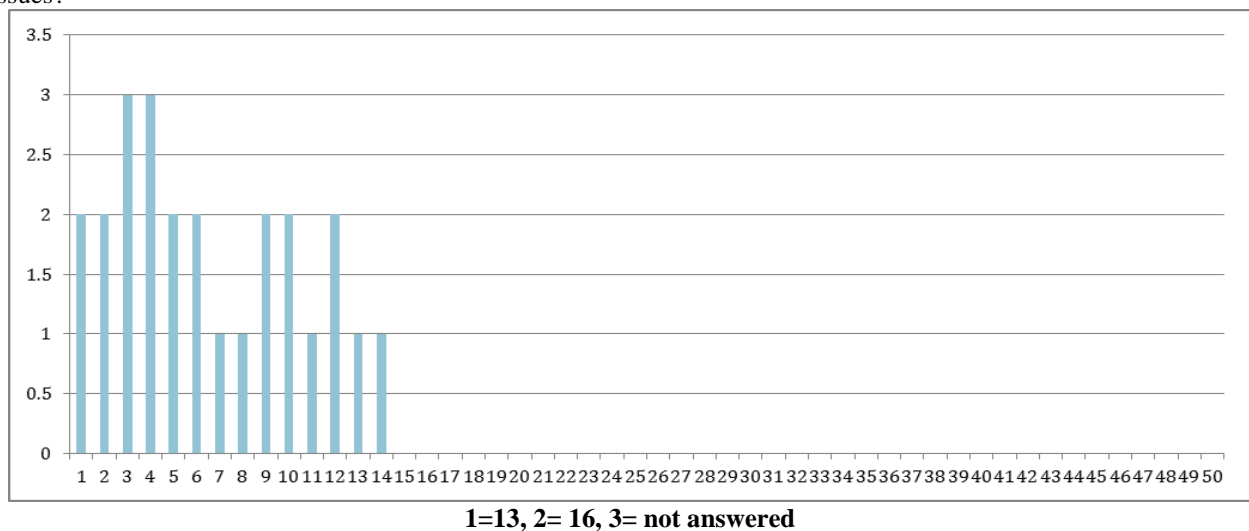
Q. Are the recommended limits of alcohol same for those under the age of 25?



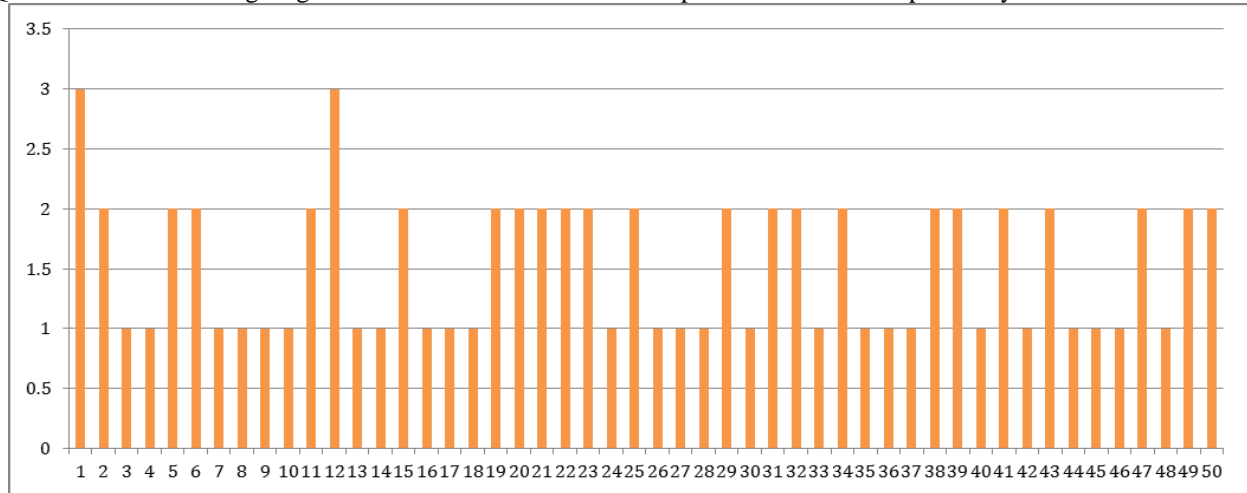
Q. What parts of the body are affected by alcohol consumption?



Q. Are you aware of any service, organisation or agency for young people that offer advice/support on alcohol related issues?

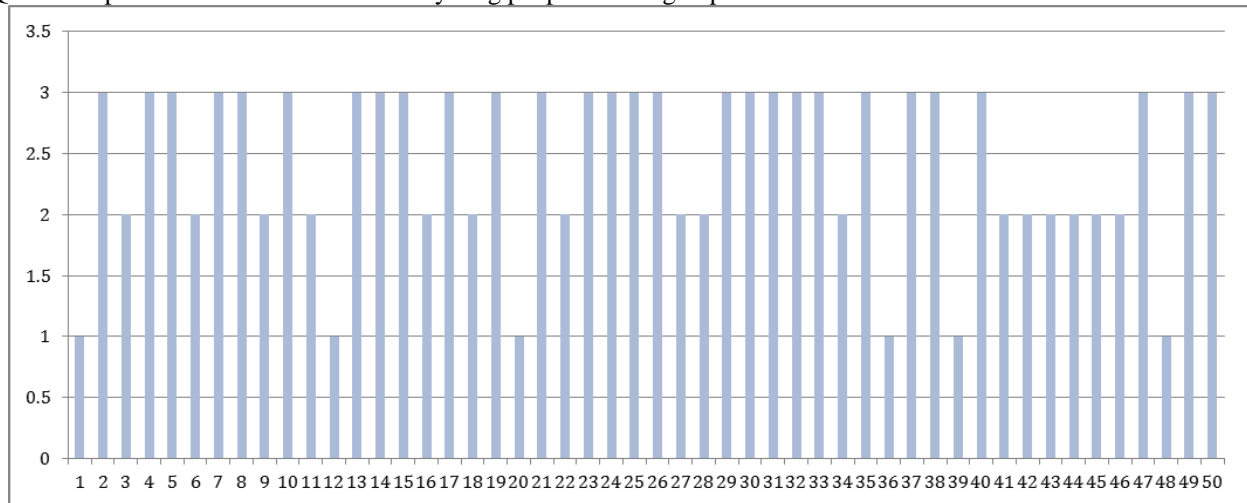


Q. What is the lowest legal age to drink alcohol with a meal in a pub/restaurant accompanied by an adult in India?



1= 16, 2=25, 3=21

Q. can the police confiscate alcohol from young people drinking in public?



1= Yes, 2=No, 3= don't know

DISCUSSION

According to the study performed, the effects of drinking were unclear to a few and so were the effects of withdrawing alcohol consumption for a while. While in a study performed by Warburg MM et al in hospitals associated with Harvard Medical School there was a significant positive relationship between clinical experience in dealing with alcoholism and treatment of patients.^[4]

CONCLUSION

According to the study performed, very few medical post graduate students had knowledge about the laws regarding alcohol consumption and sale, almost none of them were aware about the legal complications that may ensue sale of alcohol to under 25 year olds.

A lot many post graduate students were unaware about the alcohol content in various common beverages, also

most of them did not know the correct amount of alcohol present in a unit of a beverage.

The effects of drinking were fuzzy to a few and so were the effects of withdrawing alcohol consumption for a while.

Most of the postgraduate students did practice what they preach and abstained from alcohol consumption.

Conclusively, a need for better information is required to educate our caregivers in the effects and repercussions of alcohol consumption and also how to deal with patients who come in with such problems.

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