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Alcohol Use in Shillong, Meghalaya: A Study among the Migrant College Students from the Neighboring States of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram

Temsumeren Longkumer
Demographer, Neilsen, Delhi, India

Abstract:

Every year, tens of thousands of students come to Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, from the neighboring states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram to pursue for higher studies since the headquarters of North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) is located in Shillong, those pursuing undergraduate and post-graduate studies found a convenient place to come to. However, a large proportion of the students come from these three states where drinking or consumption of alcohol is a part of their tradition and folklore, but ironically, their states are “dry states” where successive governments, succumbing to the demands from churches and other pressure groups, have prohibited sale of alcohol by law. This apparent “contradiction” has its bearing on them the moment they come to Shillong. Meghalaya is a “wet state” and in Shillong, its capital city, alcohol of any make and price is available in every nook and corner. The study assumes greater significance in the light of the high incidence of HIV/AIDS cases reported from the North East India, especially from Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram where a substantial number of students have been infected by the deadly virus (PRB, 2003). In this connection an attempt has been made to study their alcohol use by various background characteristics. The present study has been conducted among 556 migrant college students in Shillong representing 15 colleges using self-administered questionnaires. Of 556 students, only 32.2 percent were found consuming alcohol where males consumed higher (22.8%) than females (9.3%). Majority of the migrant students in Shillong mostly drank alcohol in bars, inside their hostel premises and in friend's rented house at the time of their celebrations. The frequencies of using alcohol among the migrant students are mostly on an occasional basis. Majority of the students preferred to drink all types of mixed brands, followed by beer, rum and whisky. Males drank mostly hard drinks such as rum and whisky while females mostly drank beer, wine and breezer. Those students who smoke, and who chew betel nut and gutkas were significantly more likely to use alcohol in Shillong which were predicted in the logistic regression model. The appropriate authorities in the fields of both educational and public health need to wake up and help the students who engage in risky behavior. Counseling as well as de-addiction/detoxification centers should be opened up in an educational hub such as in Shillong so that the afflicted students can go and seek remedy for their problems. Students coming from the states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram and also other centers of learning or in mainland India, should be counseled both in their hometown as well as in centers of distance learning, on the need for maintaining a decent non-risky behavior. State government in all the states should open up educational counseling centers, especially for students who are passing out their HSLC/ICSE/CBSE examinations, especially for those who intend to migrate to other cities for higher studies and explain to them the dangers or the consequences which lies ahead of them in big cities like Shillong.

Keywords: Migrant college students, alcohol use, attitudes towards students' alcohol use

1. Introduction

Every year tens of thousands of students come to Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, from the neighboring states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram to pursue for higher studies since the headquarters of North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) is located in Shillong, those pursuing undergraduate and post-graduate studies found a convenient place to come to. Also, a lot of students come to Shillong because of spiralling violence in many adjoining states which have been ravaged by decades of insurgency and political turmoil. Moreover, proximity of Shillong to many neighboring states and its reputation as an educational hub in the region also attracts college students. The city also offers educational facilities at a relatively cheaper price and it is also a preferred destination for students whose ultimate goal is to migrate to bigger cities in the mainland India for higher/further studies.

However, a large proportion of the students come from these three states where drinking or consumption of alcohol is a part of their tradition and folklore, but ironically, their states are “dry states” where successive governments, succumbing to the demands from churches and other pressure groups, have prohibited sale of alcohol by law. This apparent “contradiction” has its bearing on them the moment they come to Shillong. Meghalaya is a “wet state” and in Shillong, its capital city, alcohol of any make and price is available

in every nook and corner. Besides liquor shops, there are innumerable fancy beer bars dotting the Shillong landscape which lure many impressionable migrant students inside its murky and smoke-filled corridors to a life of licentiousness behavior. Coupled with the fact, most of these migrant students stay in hostels, rented houses, lodges or as paying guests, far from the prying eyes of their parents, and have easy access to alcohol. This unrestrained access to alcohol with the absence of parental control is potentially related to the risk taking behaviors often with disastrous consequences. The study assumes greater significance in the light of the high incidence of HIV/AIDS cases reported from the North East India, especially from Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram where a substantial number of students have been infected by the deadly virus (PRB, 2003). The National Aids Control Organization (NACO) has reported that, among those tested; incidences of HIV/AIDS among the students community in the state of Manipur are as high as 32.9 per cent. The figure in Nagaland is 10 %, which is 3rd only to the high risk category after the truck drivers and business persons. The scenario in other northeastern states is not significantly different. These findings should send alarm bells not only among the students' community but also among the health care professionals. The research finding will not only help policy makers and professionals in the health care sector understand the exact levels of threat perception posed by such high risk groups, but also provide them with enough empirical data to formulate necessary corrective measures to inform, educate and curb the growing menace of AIDS.

2. Objectives

1. To examine the demographic and educational background characteristics among the migrant college students.
2. To examine the characteristic of alcohol usage in the place of destinations.
3. To examine the migrant students' attitude towards the use of alcohol among the students in Shillong.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Area

The present study has been conducted among migrant college students in Shillong, capital of Meghalaya. It was the capital of the erstwhile undivided state of Assam, was chosen by the Britishers as an ideal place for education of their children because of its similarity, especially the climate and topography with the British Isles. Infact the early missionaries who came here from England, Wales and Scotland found the similarity so striking that they nicknamed Shillong "Scotland of the east". So from the latter half of the 19th century educational institution run by missionaries, from Britian and Ireland were established which stands like beacon even today after hundreds of years. Probably, except Shillong, no city in the Northeast can claim to have so many schools and colleges where students from other states flock to get admitted each year.

3.2. Sample size

Out of the initial targeted 600 sample size, only 556 migrant students responded belonging to three years integrated bachelor's degree, irrespective of arts, science and commerce streams. So the response rate was very as high as 92.66 percent.

3.3. Sampling

Out of 26 colleges in Shillong and its suburbs affiliated to North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), I had chosen 19 co-educational institutions. All of these 19 colleges impart three years bachelor degree courses in Shillong and are situated within the city limits. A complete listing of all the 1st, 2nd & 3rd year students in these 19 colleges was compiled and 10 colleges having the maximum migrant students was ultimately selected for my sample selection. However, I had extended to include to 5 more colleges as a few students from the 10 colleges were found irregularly attending classes. So overall the total colleges covered were 15 in number. All 15 colleges were listed and questionnaires were distributed among the students after getting permission from the principal. All together 600 copies of questionnaires were distributed among the students from 15 colleges. A student from each stream, each year of graduation and from each college was given the charge for collecting the distributed copies in the class room. Each student's cell phone number, land line number, email addresses, residence or hostel addresses were asked in order to keep track for updating the information and the final questionnaires were collected from the students when it was ready from his/her side. Once the filled questionnaires were received, the same was read thoroughly.

3.4. Data Analysis

For describing the data, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. We had used the uni-variate and bi-variate analysis. And for inferencing, models such as binary logistic regression was used to predict the factors independently associated with each of the outcome.

3.5. Consent of the Students

All the respondents were briefed about the purpose of the research. They were also informed that while replying the questions laid down in the questionnaire, their honesty and frankness would be highly valuable and appreciated. Further, they were told that the information collected would be used only for research purpose and their identity will be kept confidential.

3.6. Data Collection

As stated earlier, both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used for data collection, however, only quantitative data were used in this present paper. Semi-structured self-administered questionnaire was used in order to get the quantitative data and to

supplement the quantitative information thirteen in-depth interviews had been conducted. After taking prior permission from the principal in respective colleges, the researcher took the help from the teachers in the respective colleges and briefed about the questionnaire for 15-20 minutes and finally distributed the same among the students. The field work for the study was carried out over a period of five months (October 2008-February 2009). The first month was spent on locating the colleges, rapport building with the students, seeking consents from the principals, and also with some important key informants and in pre-testing of questionnaire. Subsequent months were spent in collecting the questionnaire and in interviewing the respondents.

4. Results

4.1. Socioeconomic and Educational Characteristics

More than two-fifths of the migrant students were from the state of Nagaland, followed by Manipur state (32%) and about a quarter of the students were from Mizoram state (25%). Majority of the respondents reported their place of residence were from the urban-small towns (76%) and 23 percent were found to have come from the rural settings. Females out-numbered males (i.e., 54 % & 46% respectively) among the migrant college students in Shillong and majority of them fall in the age group of 20-22 with their mean ages at 20.22. An overwhelmingly large majority of the students were belonging to schedule tribes (96%) and of Christians (91%) (Table 1).

As per the educational characteristics, more than half (55%) of the migrant college students were in the second year of their three-years-bachelors integrated degree course who had been staying in Shillong for the last 1-2 years (54%) who were mostly studying arts (76%) opted for general course (71%). Majority (70%) of the migrant college students were found studying at co-educational institutions where one-third (37%) of them studies in the private colleges, followed by govt. colleges (33%) and catholic colleges (30%) who mostly commutes from private hostels (Table 2).

Background characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
State		
Nagaland	234	42.1
Manipur	182	32.7
Mizoram	140	25.2
Town/village		
Town	426	76.6
Village	130	23.4
Tribe		
Naga	318	57.2
Mizo	145	26.1
Kuki	70	12.6
Others	23	4.1
Gender		
Male	256	46.0
Female	300	54.0
Age group		
17-19	213	38.3
20-22	244	43.9
23-29	99	17.8
Caste/tribe		
ST	533	95.9
SC	10	1.8
General	9	1.6
OBC	4	0.7
Religion		
Christian	507	91.2
Hindu	18	3.2
Others	31	5.6
Total	556	100.0

Table 1: Background characteristics of the migrant college students in Shillong

Educational characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Year of graduation		
First year	154	27.7
Second year	305	54.9
Third year	97	17.4
Type of colleges		
Catholic colleges	164	29.5
Govt college	185	33.3
Private college	207	37.2
Type of institutions		
Co-educational institutions	389	70.0
Single-sex institutions	167	30.0
Accommodations		
Hostel	401	72.1
Non -hostel	155	27.9
Stream		
Arts	424	76.3
Science	99	17.8
Commerce	33	5.9

Table 2: Educational characteristics of the migrant college students in Shillong

4.2. Alcohol use in Shillong

Of all the migrant college students i.e., 556, only 179 students (32%) reported to have used alcohol while pursuing their studies in Shillong. A large proportion (68%) of the migrant students did not report any alcohol use. Majority of the students stated alcohol usage were mostly in bars, in friend's house and restaurants (Figure 1) and the occasions were of being partying and celebrations (71%) (Figure 2). It was found that males consumed more alcohol as compared to their counterpart and who are mostly in the age group of 20-22, pursuing in privately-run coeducational colleges, studying arts opted for general subjects and many of them were residing in hostels (Table 3). The consumption of alcohol in Shillong among the migrant college students were on an occasional basis (36%). Only 5 percent of the migrant students stated consuming on a daily basis and about 12 percent of the students consumed alcohol thrice in a week. About a third (33%) and less than a third (31%) of the students drank single hard and light type of drinks respectively, while a significant proportion of the students used both hard and light drinks (23%) (Table 5). The consumption of alcohol among the migrant college students in Shillong were on an occasional basis (36%). Only 5 percent of the migrant students were regular drinkers and about 12 percent of the students consumed alcohol thrice in a week. About 33 percent and less than a third (31%) of the students drank single hard and light type of drinks respectively, while a significant proportion of the students used both hard and light drinks (23%) (Table 5). Majority of the students take mixed types of brands (37%), followed by beer (27%) and rum (16%). If we look at different states by gender break up (Table 6), in all the states Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, majority of both males and females consumed mixed drinks of all brands except females from Manipur, followed by beer which is consumed highly among the females as compared to their counterpart in all the three states. Rum and whisky are not consumed at all by females. Vodkas are mostly drunk by females from the state of Nagaland and Mizoram and males from Mizoram. Light drinks such as breezer and wine are mostly confined among the females from the state of Nagaland (Table 7).

Alcohol use characteristics	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Ever alcohol use in Shillong				
Yes	37.6	23.1	35.0	32.2 (179)
No	62.4	76.9	65.0	67.8 (377)
Total	100.0 (234)	100.0 (182)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (556)
Gender				
Male	61.4	88.1	73.5	70.9 (127)
Female	38.6	11.9	26.5	29.1 (52)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Age group				
17-19	28.4	21.4	36.7	29.1 (52)
20-22	47.7	42.9	46.9	46.4 (83)
23-25	19.3	28.6	10.2	19.0 (34)
26-29	4.5	7.1	6.1	5.6 (10)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Year of graduation				
First year	22.7	38.1	49.0	33.5 (60)
Second year	53.4	45.2	36.7	46.9 (84)
Third year	23.9	16.7	14.3	14.3 (35)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Stream				
Arts	86.4	73.8	85.7	83.2 (149)
Science	5.7	23.8	8.2	10.6 (19)
Commerce	8.0	2.4	6.1	6.1 (11)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Type of colleges				
Catholic college	29.5	21.4	36.7	29.6 (53)
Govt. college	12.5	9.5	24.5	15.1 (27)
Private college	58.0	69.0	38.8	55.3 (99)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Type of accommodation				
Hostel	56.8	45.2	87.8	62.6 (112)
Non-hostel	43.2	54.8	12.2	37.4 (67)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)
Type of subjects				
General	78.4	57.1	67.3	70.4 (126)
Major	21.6	42.9	32.7	29.6 (53)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 3: Alcohol use by selected background characteristics in Shillong

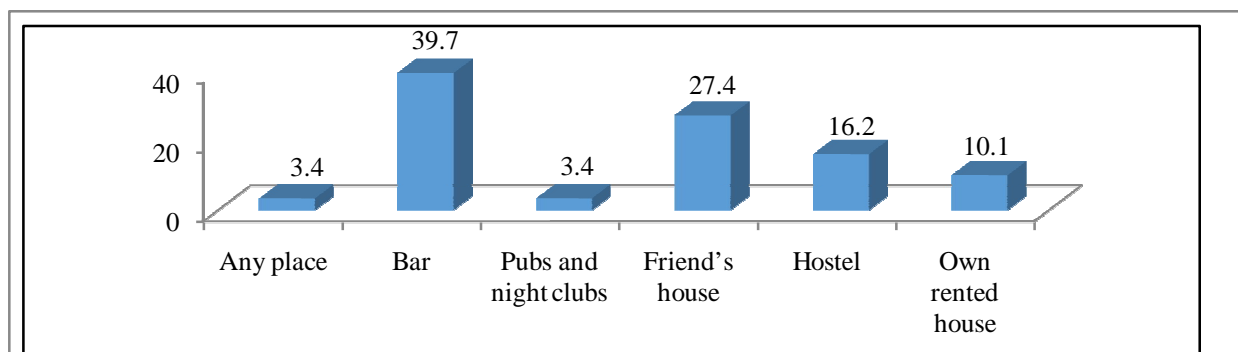


Figure 1: Location of alcohol use among the migrant college students

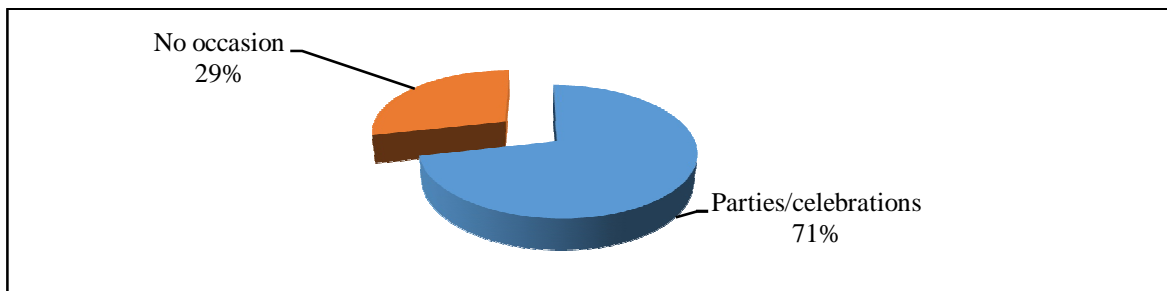


Figure 2: Occasion of alcohol use among migrant college students

Frequency of alcohol use	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Frequency				
Daily	6.8	2.4	4.1	5.0 (9)
Once in a week	11.4	14.3	18.4	14.0 (25)
Twice in a week	0.0	2.4	2.0	1.1 (2)
Thrice in a week	19.3	7.1	4.1	12.3 (22)
Once a month	11.4	14.3	28.6	16.8 (30)
Twice a month	11.4	21.4	6.1	12.3 (22)
Occasional users	36.4	35.7	36.7	36.3 (65)
Not stated	3.4	2.4	0.0	2.2 (4)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 4: Frequency of alcohol use in Shillong

Type of drinks	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Single hard drinks	31.8	28.6	40.8	33.5 (60)
Single light drinks	31.8	35.7	26.5	31.3 (56)
Mixed hard drinks	6.8	7.1	2.0	5.6 (10)
Mixed light drinks	5.7	0.0	2.0	3.4 (6)
Mixed all hard and light drinks	23.9	26.2	20.4	23.5 (42)
Not stated	0.0	2.4	8.2	2.8 (5)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 5: Type of drinks consumed in Shillong

Name of the brands	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Beer	23.9	35.7	26.5	27.4 (49)
Rum	12.5	11.9	26.5	16.2 (29)
Whisky	9.1	7.1	12.2	9.5 (17)
Vodka	3.4	2.4	2.0	2.8 (5)
Breezer	5.7	0.0	0.0	2.8 (5)
Wine	2.3	0.0	0.0	1.1 (2)
Mixed all types	43.2	40.5	24.5	37.4 (67)
Not stated	0.0	2.4	8.2	2.8 (5)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 6: Name of the brands used in Shillong

Name of the brands	Nagaland			Manipur			Mizoram		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Beer	20.4	29.4	23.9 (21)	29.7	80.0	35.7 (15)	11.1	69.2	26.5 (13)
Rum	20.4	0.0	12.5 (11)	13.5	0.0	11.9 (5)	36.1	0.0	26.5 (13)
Whisky	14.8	0.0	9.1 (8)	8.1	0.0	7.1 (3)	16.7	0.0	12.2 (6)
Vodka	0.0	8.8	3.4 (3)	0.0	20.0	2.4 (1)	2.8	0.0	2.0 (1)
Breezer	0.0	14.7	5.7 (5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wine	0.0	5.9	2.3 (2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed all types	44.4	41.2	43.2 (38)	45.9	0.0	40.5 (17)	25.0	23.1	24.5 (12)
Not stated	-	-	-	2.7	0.0	2.4 (1)	8.3	77.7	8.2 (4)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0 (88)	100.0	100.0	100.0 (42)	100.0	100.0	100.0 (49)

Table 7: Name of the brands used by gender in Shillong

4.3. Binging in Last One Year

Binging it means consuming 5 or more drinks at one sitting. Among the migrant students in Shillong, only 3.4 percent reported binging everyday in the last one year. About a quarter (25%) of the students binged in between 6-9 times while 17 percent binged 3-5 times in the last one year. And 32 percent in total of the students binged only once-to-twice in the last one year. About 32 percent never reported binging in the last one year. Among those who binged every day, majority are from the state of Mizoram (6%) followed by Manipur (2%) and Nagaland (2%). Those who binged 6-9 times in the last one year reported more from the state of Manipur (17%) followed by Nagaland (16%) and Mizoram (14%). Again those binged for 3-5 times or more from Manipur and Nagaland reported more binging than students from Mizoram. While in the case of twice binged majority (18%) reported from Nagaland as compared to the other two states. But in the case of binged only once in the last one year majority reported from the state of Manipur, followed by Mizoram and Nagaland. Also a quite a lot of students have not experienced binging in the last one year where students from Nagaland took the lead, followed by Manipur and Mizoram (Table 8).

Binging alcohol in the last 1 year	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
None	35.2	31.0	26.5	31.8 (57)
Once	10.2	23.8	18.4	15.6 (28)
Twice	18.2	11.9	16.3	16.2 (29)
3-5 times	18.2	14.3	18.4	17.3 (31)
6-9 times	15.9	16.7	14.3	25.6 (28)
Almost everyday	2.3	2.4	6.1	3.4 (6)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 8: Binging alcohol in the last 1 year among the migrant college students

4.4. Alcohol Use in the Past 30 Days

From the 179 students who reported consumed alcohol, subsequently they were asked if they had used alcohol in all the past 30 days. And it was found that only 5 percent of the migrant college students stated they had used or consumed alcohol in all the last 30 days preceding the survey. About 8 percent reported having used alcohol in between 10-19 days while 12 percent reported consuming alcohol 6-9 days. Majority (29%) had used alcohol only for 1-2 days in the last one month. More than a one-third (36%) had not consumed alcohol in the last one month prior to the survey. In the differentials of state wise in consuming alcohol in the last one month, students who consumed alcohol in all the 30 days were from the states of Manipur (7%) and Nagaland (6%). In the case of consuming alcohol for 10-19 days, 6-9 days and 3-5 days, students from Mizoram dominates the scenario followed by Manipur and Nagaland. But in the case of drinking 1-2 days in the last 30 days, majority (38%) reported from Manipur followed by Nagaland (29%) and Mizoram (20%). Also a lot of student from all the three states (36%) have not consumed alcohol in the last 30 days preceding the survey. (Table 9).

Alcohol use last 30 days	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
0 days	31.8	40.5	40.8	36.3 (65)
1-2 days	29.5	38.1	20.4	29.1 (52)
3-5 days	13.6	2.4	20.4	12.8 (23)
6-9 days	6.8	9.5	12.2	8.9 (16)
10-19 days	11.4	2.4	6.1	7.8 (14)
All 30 days	6.8	7.1	0.0	5.0 (9)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 9: Alcohol use last 30 days among the migrant college students

4.5. Binging in the Last Two Weeks

Only 2 percent of the migrant college students reported, bringing in the last two weeks. About 4 percent stated they had binged 6-9 times and 6 percent binged 3-5 times while 30 percent binged once to twice in the last 14 days prior to the survey. More than half (57%) of those who ever consumes alcohol in Shillong did not binged in the last two weeks at the time of the survey. From the three states, only from the state of Nagaland reported binged alcohol more than 10 times and above in the last 14 days preceding the survey. But in the case of binging 6-9 times almost all the three states reported equally while binging for twice and in between for 3-5 times students from Nagaland takes the lead followed by Manipur. Among those who binged once in the last 14 days, Mizoram reported highest, followed by Manipur and Nagaland. While more than a half (55%) did not binged in the last two weeks prior to the survey (Table 10).

Binging in the last two weeks	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
None	47.7	59.5	65.3	55.3 (99)
Once	14.8	19.0	22.4	17.9 (32)
Twice	15.9	9.5	8.2	12.3 (22)
3-5 times	10.2	4.8	0.0	6.1 (11)
6-9 times	4.5	4.8	4.1	4.5 (8)
10 or more times	4.5	0.0	0.0	2.2 (4)
Not stated	2.3	2.4	0.0	1.7 (93)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 10: Binging in the last two- weeks among the migrant college students

4.6. Attitude towards Alcohol use in Shillong among the Migrant College Students

This section examines migrant college students' attitudes towards alcohol use among the migrant students who have come to Shillong for pursuing studies. In table 11, majority of the migrant students (62%) stated that students in Shillong from the three states, namely, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, uses alcohol because of the easy availability and to some extent in every nook and corner in Shillong. Around one-third (33%) of the migrant students are not aware if the students consumes alcohol is due to easy availability. About slight more than a half (51%) of the migrant college students who reported consuming alcohol in Shillong because, they had been influenced by the liberal attitude of the people in Shillong (Table 12). Again, it can also be seen and evident from table 13 that the use of alcohol among the students is because it is plentifully and cheaply available. More than a quarter of the migrant students stated that students use alcohol as there is a lack of parental control in the place of destinations and about 27 percent of the migrants students stated, migrant students consumes alcohol by copying of western life styles (Table 13). More than half of the migrant students gave their opinion that students in Shillong from the three states are increasingly indulging in alcohol abuse (Table 14) which results in damaging their health and physically (Table 15).

Easy availability of alcohol as a factor	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Yes	28.2	23.1	42.1	30.0 (167)
To some extent	37.6	31.3	23.6	32.0 (178)
No	9.8	15.4	13.6	12.6 (70)
Can't say	17.5	22.5	17.1	19.1 (106)
Not responded	6.8	7.7	3.6	6.3 (35)
Total	100.0 (234)	100.0 (182)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (556)

Table 11: Attitude towards easy availability of alcohol in Shillong as a factor for consumption of alcohol

Liberal attitude in Shillong influenced	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Yes	10.2	26.2	20.4	16.8 (30)
To some extent	29.5	28.6	49.0	34.6 (62)
No	40.9	31.0	18.4	32.4 (58)
Can't say	15.9	11.9	12.2	14.0 (25)
Not responded	3.4	2.4	0.0	2.2 (4)
Total	100.0 (88)	100.0 (42)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (179)

Table 12: Has the liberal attitude of people in Shillong influenced you to consume alcohol?

Reasons towards alcohol use	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Plentifully and cheaply available	35.5	23.1	40.0	32.6 (181)
Lack of parental control	25.6	29.1	33.6	28.8 (160)
Copying of western life styles	17.5	22.5	10.0	17.3 (96)
All of the three mentioned above	6.4	7.1	7.1	6.8 (38)
Culture and tradition	3.8	2.2	2.1	2.9 (16)
Others	2.1	6.0	3.6	3.8 (21)
Not responded	9.0	9.9	3.6	7.9 (44)
Total	100.0 (234)	100.0 (182)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (556)

Table 13: Attitude of the migrant college students towards the reasons for alcohol use in Shillong

Increasingly indulging in alcohol abuse	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Agree	56.4	58.2	56.4	57.0 (317)
Disagree	4.3	6.6	7.1	5.8 (32)
Can't say	32.1	26.9	32.1	30.4 (169)
Not responded	7.3	8.2	4.3	6.8 (38)
Total	100.0 (234)	100.0 (182)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (556)

Table 14: Migrant college students' views towards increasingly indulging in alcohol abuse

Alcohol damaging physically	Nagaland	Manipur	Mizoram	Total
Yes	88.0	83.5	78.6	84.2 (468)
No	3.0	7.1	16.4	7.7 (43)
Don't know	2.6	1.6	0.7	1.8 (10)
Not responded	6.4	7.7	4.3	6.3 (35)
Total	100.0 (234)	100.0 (182)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (556)

Table 15: Attitude of the migrant college students towards alcohol use damaging physically

5. Logistic Regression Explaining Alcohol Use among Migrant College Student in Shillong

A logistic model was built to determine the factors independently associated with each of the outcome variables of interest. For alcohol use we defined as 1 and never consumed alcohol defined as 0. The predictors in the analysis included the respondent's demographic characteristics, educational level and the students and parental substance use. Females were significantly less likely to consume alcohol as compared to males as expected. Also students studying in a government institution were significantly less likely to indulge in consuming alcohol as compared to students studying in catholic. Parental alcohol use did not emerge as a significant predictor where as students substance use was an especially strong predictor. Those who chew betel nut were 5.8 times more likely to consume alcohol as well as smokers were 4.6 times more likely and chewing gutkha were 2.3 times more likely to indulge in consumption of alcohol. Age, tribe, state and some educational characteristics did not appear as significant predictors (Table 16).

6. Summary and Conclusion

As no thorough study has been conducted on the alcohol use among the migrant college students. It is pertinent that such a study should be undertaken especially in the light of the fact that a substantial number of migrant students come from states such as Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram where drinking or consumption of alcohol is a part of their tradition and folklore, but ironically their states are "dry states" where successive governments, succumbing to the demands from churches and other pressure groups, have prohibited sale of alcohol by law. This apparent "contradiction" has its bearing on them the moment they come to Shillong. Meghalaya is a "wet state" and in Shillong, its capital city, alcohol of any make and price is available in every nook and corner. Thus, it can surmised that the migrant college students who seemingly 'adapt' to their hosts' culture by blindly imitating a more permissive despite coming from relatively orthodox societies and cultures have a high propensity to indulge in alcohol use. Not only thus alcohol abuse impairs their physical and mental well being, but it also greatly affects their academic performance thereby jeopardizing their future career prospects. A study done in the United States among the college going students found that about 25 percent of the students reported bad academic performance due to their drinking habits which included missing classes, falling behind, doing poorly on exam papers, and receiving lower grades. Boynton Health Service (Helms M. 2005) has shown a correlation between risky behavior and drop in grade point average (GPA).

The overall prevalence of ever alcohol use in Shillong in this present study among the migrant college students from the three states namely, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram was 32.2 percent, where males consumed higher (22.8%) than females (9.3%). This finding is broadly similar to a study done among the college students in Ludhiana, Punjab, India (Khosla et al. 2008), found that the overall prevalence of ever alcohol use was 31.9 percent among males and 5.2 percent among female students. It can also be confirmed from the logistic model displayed in table 16, that females are significantly less likely to consume alcohol as compared to males. Majority of the migrant students in Shillong mostly drank alcohol in bars, inside their hostel premises and in friend's rented house at the time of their celebrations and also about 16 percent of the users stated their reasons to consume alcohol is because they have been influenced by the liberal attitude of the people in Shillong. The frequencies of using alcohol among the migrant students are mostly on an occasional basis. Among the users, majority preferred single hard drinks followed by single light drinks respectively, and also about a quarter of the students drank mixed which consists of both hard and light drinks. However, majority of the students preferred to drink all types of mixed brands, followed by beer, rum and whisky. Males drank mostly hard drinks such as rum and whisky while females mostly drank beer, wine and breezer. It can also be justified from the analyses that many of migrant students used mixed brands because of an easy availability in every nook and corner at a much cheaper prices and also more than half of the migrants students reported that student in Shillong are increasingly indulging in alcohol abuse which in turn damage their physically. Even though the alcohol uses in Shillong are mostly because of plentifully and cheaply available and for the liberal environment, it can be taken into considerations that some of the independent variables appeared to be an important predictors. Students who chews bettle-nut, who smokes and who chews gutkas were appeared to be the major predictors for indulging in alcohol use in Shillong. This study underscores the importance of controlling the consumption among the migrant college students in Shillong. The results of this study suggest that student who smokes chews bettle-nut and gutkas must be targeted for an intervention strategy. Priority attention needs to be given to those who drinks daily hard and light brands since they are at higher risks. Implementation of alcohol related public policies such as increasing the minimum drinking age and stricter enforcement of alcohol related policies are likely to result in significant reduction of alcohol consumption among the migrant college students and related risky behaviours.

The appropriate authorities in the fields of both educational and public health need to wake up and help the students who engage in risky behavior. Counseling as well as de-addiction/detoxification centers should be opened up in an educational hub such as in Shillong so that the afflicted students can go and seek remedy for their problems. Students coming from the states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram and also other centers of learning or in mainland India, should be counseled both in their hometown as well as, in centers of distance learning, on the need for maintaining a decent non-risky behavior. State government in all the states should opened up educational counseling centers especially for students who are passing out their HSLC/ICSE/CBSE examinations,

especially for those who intent to migrate to other cities for higher studies and explain to them the dangers or the consequences which lies ahead of them in big cities like Shillong.

Back ground characteristics	Alcohol use Exp(B)
Gender Male@ Female	0.452**
Age 15-20@ 21-29	1.106
Tribe Naga@ Mizo Kuki Others	0.793 0.197* 0.665
State Nagaland@ Manipur Mizoram	.906 0.356
Stream Arts@ Science Commerce	1.249 0.701
Types of institution Catholic @ Govt. Private	0.292*** 0.731
Year of graduation First Year@ Second Year Third Year	0.580* 0.545
Smoking No@ Yes	4.653***
Beetle nut No@ Yes	5.804***
Gutka No@ Yes	2.367**
Duration of stay 1-2 years@ >3 years	1.055
Parental alcohol use No@ Yes	1.301
Living arrangement Hostel@ Non-Hostel	0.976
Adjustment Adjusted@ Not-Adjusted	1.138

Table 16: Logistics regression explaining alcohol use among migrant students in Shillong
***: Significance at 1% level; **: significance at 5% level; *: Significance level at 10%

7. References

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