



A Study On Alcoholism's Impact On Workforce Stability: Exploring Effects On Productivity, Safety, And Employee Well-Being

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Abstract

Alcoholism is one of the serious issues that affects not only the individuals but also entire workforce that is engaged in some organisation. This adverse impact of alcoholism give rise to challenges that ripple through organizations. This research paper delves deep into how the problem of alcoholism among workforce impacts productivity, workplace safety, and the overall health of an organization. Through this research work the author try to explore the impacts of alcoholism on work performance, safety, and team well-being as stated in various studies and government reports. Through this analysis, authors try to highlight, how alcoholism contributes to lower productivity, frequent absences, and a higher risk of accidents, which, in turn, affect team dynamics and create hidden costs for employers. Beside this, this research work also aims to create awareness of the social and economic costs of alcoholism on both families and communities.

Keywords: Alcoholism, Workforce Stability, Productivity Loss, Workplace Safety, Employee Well-being.

1. Introduction

Alcoholism has long been found as a social evil since historical times. It has always caused harm to individuals, families, and societies throughout the history. If we look at the ancient texts and records from civilizations across the world then we will find that alcoholism has always been documented as a social evil that has disruptive effects on personal health, family structures, and societal stability. From ancient times to modern society, alcoholism has ripple effects that weaken community bonds. Excess drinking erodes individual potential and disrupts social harmony it has been linked to violence, family breakdown, economic hardship, and lost productivity. Excess drinking also limits people's potential and disrupts the harmony of daily life, it has become a shared burden not only for the individual but also for the greater fabric of society.

The workforce, or human resources of any country is its backbone. It is so vital that it powers the progress and improve life for everyone that leads to country's development, driving economic progress and societal well-being. A nation needs fit and healthy people performing different jobs everywhere in society. When people are healthy and productive in their jobs, they not only just contribute to their organizations or employer but also, they support the entire economy. Every person's hard work has a ripple effect in the economy, The income they earn allows them to spend, save, and invest. Through these economic activities workers help in circulating wealth in the economy that supports industries, boosts consumer markets, and generate revenue, which in turns strengthen the markets, and help to fund the public services that benefit the whole population.

Alcoholism has far-reaching consequences for a nation's workforce, Alcoholism among workforce create a chain of negative effects that impact not only the individuals but also the organization where they work, and society as a whole. Employees who are struggling with excessive alcohol drinking problem they also experience a reduction in productivity, which affects their performance, earning potential, and ultimately their career growth.

Lower earnings give rise to reduced savings and reduced investments, thus limiting their personal financial stability. On a broader scale, this lower earnings affects the economy of the nation by reducing overall capital flow. Organizations where alcohol-dependent individuals work they also face many problems like frequent absenteeism, diminished morale among team members, and increased costs associated with accidents and errors. In such situations organizations are forced to allocate additional resources to cover these gaps which in turns reduce their overall productivity and profitability and thus impact the overall organizational goals.

It is also important to understand that drinking alcohol also brings serious health issues to its consumers. Heavy alcohol drinking can cause a person to suffer chronic diseases like liver disorders, cardiovascular issues, mental health problems etc. In such situations where these health complications are being suffered by individuals or their family members, they are forced to pay for higher medical expenses for their treatment, which further put strain on their financial resources. Many times, it happens that workers who are battling alcoholism may even have to borrow money to manage their medical bills and other financial responsibilities. These financial burdens keep pushing them into debt and adding stress to their already precarious situations. This cycle of financial instability and deteriorating health often spills into society, affecting families and communities.

The societal impacts of alcoholism also carry equal concerns. Alcohol-related issues can strain relationships and disrupt family dynamics, moreover it also contributes to social problems such as domestic violence and child neglect. For a nation children in school and college are the future of it. When these children are grown up in families which are affected by alcoholism, their potential is often compromised. Children who are living with alcoholic parents, suffer emotional stress and uncertainty, which can make it hard for them to focus on their studies and build self-confidence. They may experience disruptions in their education, affecting their future opportunities. This impact of alcoholism reaches far beyond the family, as these children represent tomorrow's workforce. When alcoholism disrupts the development of these children, it affects not only their future but it also affects the future strength and prosperity of overall society. In essence, alcoholism among workers doesn't just affect individual lives but it also erodes the workforce's overall potential, hinders

economic growth, and creates societal challenges that impact a nation's health, productivity, and future resilience.

2. Literature Review

The issue of alcoholism in the workplace has always been considered problematic in the workplace around the world because it deeply affects employee productivity, safety, and overall well-being of organizations. Different researchers have long been studied this issue for its deep impact on employee productivity, safety, and the well-being of the organisation organizations. Research done by Ames and Grube (1999) shows that how an easy access to the alcohol can lead to more drinking among employees, this in turns can results in increased absenteeism and lower productivity in the workplace. This connection of alcoholism and work productivity is further echoed by Bray et al. (2000), who point out that, an early substance by a person use can disrupt his career development, and this could lead to a lack of stability in their professional life. Harwood et al. (1998) in their study emphasized on the economic burden of alcoholism. He highlight that the losses in productivity due to alcohol misuse, weigh heavily on both companies and the national economy.

The health risks associated to the alcoholism further deepen its effects on the workplace stability. Bennett and Lehman (1998) by studying the issue reported that, alcohol use on a regular basis is strongly linked to health issues, which then increase employee absences and medical costs. According to Cunradi et al. (2005) workers sometimes turn to alcohol to deal with their stress from the jobs, only to face worsening health and financial burdens when they require treatment for alcohol-related illnesses. Rehm and Gmel (1999) found that chronic diseases such as liver and heart related are common among people with heavy drinking habits. These health-related problems then disrupt not only the lives of employees but also the operations of their organisation or employer.

When we talk about workplace safety even then the risks are significant owing to alcoholism among the workforce. Frone (1999) opines that, employees who misuse alcohol are more prone to accidents, endangering not only themselves but also their colleagues. Other than this, Mangione et al. (1999) studied that the alcohol affects attention and motor skills of the workforce, which raises the risk of workplace accidents. McFarlin et al. (2001) explore that how alcohol can also lead to workplace aggression because of which conflicts can take place and that can harm team morale and collaboration.

It should be noted that, alcoholism's impact also reaches far beyond the workplace, which affects the family life and communities. Wood and Mahoney (2005) made a study and stated that, the families where member are suffering alcohol-related struggles face emotional stress and financial strain, which sometimes impacting children's education and well-being. Anderson and Baumberg (2006) through their study observed that the communities with high alcohol consumption rates experience greater social and economic challenges, mirroring what the individual workplaces face with productivity losses and frequent absences.

Certain researchers also opines that the organizations must manage the consequences of alcoholism among their employees. Bacharach, Bamberger and Sonnenstuhl (2002) found that sometimes when the managers try to reduce risks, they may accidentally cause workers to turn to alcohol as a way to cope. Hensing et al. (2011)

also supported this idea, noting that many times it happens that stressful work environments leads the individuals to drink more as a way to cope. Roman and Blum (2002) emphasized the role of workplace culture, they observed that the work environments where alcohol drinking is more accepted, they often experience higher rates of alcohol-related issues.

these literatures show that the impact of alcoholism is high enough to undermine the workforce stability, reducing organisational productivity, increasing safety risks of workforce, and harming organizational health. The effects reach far beyond the individual, it impacts the families and communities and also influence society's economic and social well-being. This research emphasizes the need for targeted interventions and supportive workplace policies so that the impact of alcohol misuse on the workforce can be reduced.

3. Research Objectives

1. To find out how alcoholism affects employee productivity
2. To assess how alcoholism impacts safety and creates risks in the workplace
3. To understand the effects of alcoholism on employee well-being and the economic costs for organizations
4. To examine whether existing companies have implemented HR policies aimed at addressing the effects of alcoholism on organizational productivity, safety, and employee well-being.

5. Research Methodology

In order to understand the impact of alcoholism on workforce stability, this study will make use of secondary data and will follow a qualitative approach of research. The researchers in this paper mainly focus on how alcohol affects productivity, safety, and employee well-being. By studying various research papers, government reports, and reliable publications the impact of alcohol use on work environment is being analyzed. The ultimate goal of this research work is to study the existing data to get insights into how alcoholism influences workforce and the stability of workplaces.

This study will make use of thematic analysis in order to review and interpret data that are collected from secondary sources. To accomplish the objectives of the research, thematic analysis will enable the researchers to identifying common themes related to productivity loss, safety issues, health risks, and economic impacts. Under this analysis each theme will be examined in detail to accomplish the research objectives.

6. Research Design

In this research work a **descriptive research design** is being adopted to understand the impact of alcoholism on workforce stability. This design is useful to combine the findings from different sources, which will help to make a good understanding of the research topic. This approach will enable the researchers to get a detailed look into the research problem, i.e. how alcohol use affects employee productivity, safety, and well-being. Overall, this approach will enable the researchers to get a deep insight into the effects of alcoholism on employees and workplace stability.

7. Discussions

All the variable that has been studied shows a clear relation between the use of alcohol by employees of the organization and a decline in workplace stability. This study shows that alcoholism, other than creating risks for the employee, it also affects the efficiency and stability of the organization as a whole. Like it has been found that, alcoholism among employees often lead to reduction of work performance in the organization, higher accident rates while working, and increased health risks of the employees. All of these issues together tend to harm the organization health.

7.1. Impact on Productivity

While studying the impact of alcoholism on the productivity it was noticed that alcoholism has a direct impact not only on the employee's productivity, but also on the organization's overall output. In those cases where employees of the organization struggle with alcohol issues, they lack concentration and motivation to work and thus more absenteeism takes place, In turns these problems give rise to incomplete task missed deadlines, and mistakes at work. Those employees who are struggling with alcohol related issues, they tend to miss work and take unplanned leaves very frequently. The irregular attendance caused give rise to delays in work and disruption in teamwork.

It was learnt that; alcoholism reduces focus and energy of the workers during their work hours this give rise to lower productivity and poor-quality work. Especially in that kind of work where more precision or attention is required from the employee, the impact of alcoholism is more noticeable, because in such cases even minor errors can lead to significant problems.

Many times, it also happens that owing to alcoholism of some employee's additional workload and pressure is created on colleagues, they are required to take extra responsibilities to cover for their affected coworkers. Such disruptions in team can create resentment among the team members and disturb the work environment inside the organization as people may feel that they are doing more work than their fair share. Such feelings at workplace can reducing overall morale of the employees. This can drain the enthusiasm of the employees in the organization which could lead to a sense of dissatisfaction. When such feelings of dissatisfactions are developed inside the people in workplace, it affects everyone's work, because their energy and motivation decline, this will in turns impact the overall productivity of the team.

7.2. Workplace Safety and Risk Factors

Safety in work place as another area of concern. We know that under the influence of alcohol a person lacks his attention, concentration, reaction time. Working under the influence of the alcohol increases the likelihood of accidents in workplace which can cause serious injuries these things can particularly happen in the environments where machinery, tools, or physical work are involved. Some accidents can be so fatal that their impact can risk not only the individual who is affected by alcohol, but also their colleagues and the organization as a whole. The findings of the study align with some previous studies, that highlight how the alcoholism compromises workplace safety which in turns increase the insurance and liability costs for organizations. alcohol-related incidents can bring financial burden to the organisation in other ways as well, for instance

expenses on medical treatment, worker compensation claims, and repairs or replacements for damaged equipment.

In industries such as construction, manufacturing, or transportation, safety concerns owing to alcoholism can lead to accidents that have devastating consequences. Other than the risk of serious injury and fatalities, there is also risk of disruption in daily operations and financial loss. For example, several has shown a clear association between alcohol-related incidents and increased insurance and liability costs. In addition to it, alcohol-related incidents can also lead to some direct costs such as medical bills for injured employees or worker compensation claims, as the affected employees may need some time to recover.

Beyond these direct costs and safety related issues, alcohol-related accidents can also damage costly equipment owned by the organisation. If a part of machinery or tools that are used in production process are break down due to careless handling under the influence of alcohol, the repair or replacement costs of the machinery will add up to the cost, and productivity also will suffers because work slows down or stops entirely for some time. This could also impact customer satisfaction as delay projects affects them. This concerns overall affects the organisations bottom line.

To tackle with these risks, organisations can make clear policies on alcohol use, regular safety training, and resources like counselling services. By focussing on such policies an organisation can only protect their employees, but also it can minimize the potential financial loss owing to alcohol misuse.

7.3. Effect on Employee Health and Well-being

Owing to alcoholism, another area of concern is related to the health of the employees. We know that over consumption of alcohol exposes the individuals to serious health issues. Such health issues also impact the mental ability of the individual. Put differently, Alcoholism has severe consequences for both the physical and mental health of employees. It has also been found by various scholars that alcohol consumed by individuals not only affect them, but it also affects their colleagues and the organization as a whole. numerous health issues such as liver disease, cardiovascular problems, and weakened immune function are caused due to regular alcohol issue, over the time, these health complications can lead reduced work capacity. Employees suffering from these serious health issues often take more sick leave, which in turns break the workflow and can also reduce the overall productivity in the organisation. These serious health issues of the workforce can make the organization to face higher healthcare costs and insurance premiums. Other than physical health, mental health is also significantly impacted by alcoholism. Employees who are addicted to alcohol drinking are more prone to deal with issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress. As a result of these serious problems, they suffer reduced motivation, lost focus and reduced ability to handle work responsibilities effectively. Studies also support the view that these mental health problems can create conflicts between colleagues, harm their interpersonal relationships, and contribute to a negative work environment. Such outcomes of mental illness cause due to alcoholism, in turn, affect team dynamics and reduce overall morale within the organization.

On a personal level, employees facing health issues are also compelled to incur medical expenses for their treatment which creates financial stress on them. In some cases, individuals may also need to borrow money

from their friends and relatives which in turns add a financial burden on them that can further increase stress levels and perpetuate the cycle of alcohol dependency.

If we talk about the impact of alcoholism on wellbeing of employee, it is pertinent to note that the impact of alcoholism goes beyond just physical and mental health issues, in fact, it touches every part of an employee's life. Due to over consumption of alcohol, employees can strain family relationships, spoil their social relations, and lower their overall quality of life. Individuals those who are going through this challenging phase of life, they usually experience high levels of stress, both at work and at home, this makes it difficult for them to maintain a balance in professional and personal life. Things may get even worsens when employees get burdened themselves under borrowed money, this further disturbs their dependency cycle. If we look from organizations point of view, then we find that alcoholism may not just impact one individual but it can create a less positive work environment which in turns could lead to reduced morale among team members, and, ultimately, decreased productivity. Thus it is clear that addressing alcoholism in workplace is very important in order to improve the employee well-being.

7.4. Economic and Social Implications

Other than above mentioned consequences, alcoholism has deep and far-reaching economic and social consequences as well. We have seen earlier that alcoholism impacts organizations directly by reducing labour productivity, increasing workforce absenteeism, and creating high turnover rates, several other studies also support this view. Because of alcohol abuse practiced by employees, they miss work deadlines so the overall productivity is negatively impacted. In such situation employers are and forced to spend extra on temporary staff or overtime to fill the gaps. As alcohol-related health issues to the employees increases it also put a strain on employer financial resources, as they need to allocate more funds toward medical expenses, insurance premiums etc. all these together add another financial burden to businesses. Healthcare costs also rise as alcohol-related health issues put a strain on employer health plans, pushing companies to allocate more funds toward medical expenses. These rising costs can even drive-up insurance premiums, adding another financial burden to businesses.

In social spheres as well, alcoholism has impacts that are detrimental to families and communities. Individuals who are struggling with alcoholism dependency often cause their family to face emotional and financial strain which in turns leads to conflicts, instability, and a toll on mental well-being. This give rise to a cycle of hardship, as a result of which families might experience ongoing financial stress and sometimes fall into poverty. Ultimately, the vicious impact of alcoholism reach beyond workplaces and families, affecting the entire communities and even the economy as a whole.

7.5. Existing HR Policies and Organizational Support for Alcohol-Related Issues

In order to fulfil the fourth objective of this study it's important to look at the kind of support systems that currently exist in the organisations. It is right to say that many organisations around the globe are aware that the alcohol misuse by the employees can disrupt the work environment and impact the team dynamics. Yet a

gap exists in having a formal policy as a part of HR policy of the organisation that specifically target alcohol-related issues. This could be because it is very complex and sensitive to deal with the alcoholism of the workers, and having such policies could infringe the personal privacy of employees and reinforce the stigma attached to alcohol addiction. For these reasons organisations address these issues of alcoholism among workforce in an informal way or on a case-by-case basis, which may not provide a consistent support to the employees that are actually needed.

HR policies that could be designed to address alcoholism at the workplace may often include Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). This offer counselling and resources to the employees who are struggling with problem of alcoholism. EAPs can proved to be effective support system, because it can provide confidential help that can be effectively prevent alcohol-related issues from worsening. But it should be also noted that, the availability of EAPs often depends on factors like company size and budget, smaller organisations may not have that much of resources to offer these programs.

Other than EAPs, few organizations conduct employee wellness programs so that healthy habits among the employees can be encouraged. These programs can include fitness challenges, mindfulness sessions, and nutrition workshops that could be proved to be helpful to reduce stress and encourage good habits. While the idea behind these programs supports the general well-being in the organization, but sometime it may fall short when it is required to address specific struggle of the employee which require more focus.

To fill this gap, some organisation train their managers and the members of HR teams to recognize early signs of alcohol-related issues that are developed among the employees of the organization. This training may helps them respond to the struggling employees with more understanding and empathy, which can be proved to be helpful especially to those employees who hesitate to seek help. This initiatives can reduce the stigma attached to alcohol addiction and make it easier for struggling employees to come forward and help himself.

8. Comparing Findings with Existing Literature

This section explores how the findings of this study aligns with or differ from, the previously existing research on alcoholism and its effects on workforce stability, productivity, safety, and employee well-being. It was found that nearly all the earlier studies that were reviewed in this paper, have widely accepted that alcohol misuse among employees is a growing concern for organizations. In this study as well, it is pointed how impaired productivity is a common outcome of alcohol misuse, which affect not only the individual alcohol consumer worker but also organizational efficiency.

9. Findings

9.1. Impact on Productivity: being an employee of an organisation, over alcohol consumption when practiced by people it tend to reduce their overall productivity. This impacts both the individual performance and the output of teams, this in turns ultimately impacts the company's bottom line.

- 9.2. **Workplace Safety Risks:** Employees when addicted to alcohol they suffer hangover during working hours as well, owing to this fact there is higher likelihood of causing accidents, especially in works and roles where machinery or hazardous tools are involved.
- 9.3. **Increased Health Issues:** Alcohol misuse and its addiction often deteriorate the physical and mental health of the employee. In this study we have also seen how health issues bring the employee and organisation under financial stress.
- 9.4. **Financial Burden on the Organizations:** due to alcohol addiction of employees, it happens that many times organisation is compelled to incur extra expenses such as medical claims, insurance premiums, and liability costs. Together these all costs cause a financial burden to the organizations, which pushes up the expenses and reduce their profitability.
- 9.5. **Strain on Team Dynamics:** other than affecting the consumer of alcohol , it also impacts their colleagues. Alcohol-related issues cause resentment among colleagues because they are required to take on extra responsibilities to cover for affected alcoholic employees, this in turns disturb the team dynamics and lower the overall group morale.
- 9.6. **Lack of Targeted HR Policies:** While studying the initiatives taken by companies to tackle with the issue of alcoholism, it was noticed that there remains a absence of any specific HR policies focused on addressing alcohol misuse, which could better address and mitigate these issues.
- 9.7. **Influence on Employee Well-being:** Alcoholism impacts its consumer in many ways. It has a direct impact on the well-being of the individual as well. It was found that alcoholism impacts not just the physical health but also mental stability, which can lead to long-term personal and professional challenges.

10. Conclusion

It is evident in the study that the effects of alcoholism practised by employee goes beyond just the individual employee, it impacts coworkers, the organization, and even the wider community. The findings of the study suggests that the impact to alcoholism also reaches up till the organisational health. In order to address the problem of alcoholism in the organisation, a thoughtful approach is needed that can combine support, prevention, and policy. Dealing with the problem drinking is particularly important in physically demanding sectors where alcohol related negative outcomes can have devastating impacts. Other than this developing clear and supportive HR policies to curb the practise of alcohol abuse by employees can offer the structured assistance employees need. Ultimately, dealing with alcoholism in the workplace will benefits not only the individuals involved but it also give strength to the organization as a whole. It also helping to build a resilient, supportive work culture where everyone has a fair chance to thrive. This research work attempts to bring the much-needed attention of the society to the issue of alcoholism practiced by employees so that organizations and policymakers could be encouraged to take corrective steps which are practical. By understanding the real

impacts of alcohol misuse on the productivity, safety, and employee well-being, we can work toward creating healthier and more supportive organisational work environments for everyone.

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