



Original Research Article

Interwoven relation between tattoo, alcohol and psychological components

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ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The primary aim of this study is to examine the relationship between having tattoo and consumption of alcohol along with the anxiety and emotional diagnosis. As the literature supports to a certain extent but not confirmatory.

**Aims:** To find out the use of alcohol and the method of having the tattoo and later removal of these tattoos. Tattoos correlation with having alcohol consumption, anxiety, emotional status, and regrets.

**Methodology:** This study was conducted in the community, those who are visiting to seek the help of professionals for their suggestions regarding having the tattoos. However, they have not been taking any medicine or prescription or procedure from the center where these samples have been collected. The study was conducted between January 2019 to June 2019.

**Results:** The results have significant values concerning the use of alcohol and having the tattoos in terms of its removal and from the source where they got these tattoo done. More to add the relation between anxiety and alcohol consumption concerning having a tattoo is alarming, especially in graduates and those belonging to the age group of 19-21.

**Discussion:** The results of the study are very much convincing with the hypothesis from which the study has been undertaken, concerning highly significant statistical value concerning those having tattoos and showing the anxiety features.

**Conclusion:** Many studies and hypotheses are pointing out the correlation between alcohol consumption and having the tattoo. But few had a clear report in proving the hypothesis whereas the majority were in dilemma to say confidently about the exact relationship. But in our study, it has shown many significant values which may be taken into account and looked for a large number of samples including from different ages, religion, and others to come to a correct conclusion.

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1. Introduction

Most of the tattoos are having meaning in terms of designs, letters, numerical and symbols along with the colour used for having the tattoo. Such meaning tattoos are having high demand both in men and women for their reasoning purpose. The meaning could be in terms of religion, motivational message or even to identify the same group of individuals in unknown or in crowded places. A literature search has been noticed that there is a relationship between

tattoo piercing and alcohol consumption. In earlier days tattoos have been considered as a symbol of affiliation, religious belief, and status of symbol.<sup>1-3</sup>

Getting tattoos is present in a wide variety of cultures around the world. Presently these tattoos have become more popular in all the generations of the as a fashion trend.<sup>2,4</sup> In some parts of the world the tattoos were used to identify the slaves, prostitutes, and criminals. In a study conducted by Forbes<sup>5</sup> shows a very strong association with the consumption of marijuana and alcohol along with lower social compliance. In another study, it has been found that there is a high correlation between getting tattooed

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ad frequent alcohol consumption.<sup>6</sup> A study conducted by swami resulted in the conclusion that women with tattoos were considered to consume more alcohol compared to the ones who do not have tattoos.<sup>7</sup>

The above studies show that tattooed people drink more alcohol, in addition to the prejudice that tattooed people will suffer from low self-esteem. Hence the study has been selected with the following objectives.

## 2. Aims

1. To find out the use of alcohol and the method of having the tattoo and later removal of these tattoos.
2. Tattoos correlation with having alcohol consumption, anxiety, emotional status, and regrets.

## 3. Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in the community, those who are visiting to seek the help of professionals for their suggestions regarding having the tattoos. Institutional ethical committee clearance was obtained. All those individuals who are willing and consenting the studies were included and those who are seeking any sought of medical help or taking medications were excluded. However, they have not been taking any medicine or prescription or procedure from the center where these samples have been collected. The study was conducted between January 2019 to June 2019. The tool used to measure, Use of alcohol and having the tattoo and those who are planning to get rid of the tattoo because of the taboo were categorized. Anxiety level was measured by Generalized Anxiety Disorder- 7 and Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ) screening questionnaire,<sup>8</sup> and emotional features, in general, have been prepared and validated for conducting the study. The alcohol use disorder Identification Test (AUDIT): Self-report version is used to measure alcohol use.<sup>9</sup>

## 4. Discussion

With the help of AUDIT, the alcohol use was measured and categorized from 1 to 7 with the scoring of 0-5 being numbered as 1, 6-10 as 2, 11-15 as 3, 16-20 as 4, 21-25 as 5, 26-30 as 6 and 31 and above are placed in number 7. This categorization was made basically for the statistical purpose only and about only this study. When the study included subjects that were asked about the removal of the tattoo concerning their alcohol use habit has been found statistically significant. This study shows similar results as study conducted by Deschler S<sup>10</sup> where individuals having a tattoo are not having any difference from the individuals having a tattoo and its correlation between alcohol consumption. When alcohol use has been used for the removal of the tattoo, we tried to concentrate on where these individuals have had got done these tattoos. This again

has a statistically significant value. Where the majority of the individuals have got these tattoo from professional centers and few from amateur artists. Similarly, there was a curiosity to continue the study with alcohol use and several tattoos being done by the individuals, which resulted in the majority of the individuals having a single tattoo and not having any statistical significance. Along with this, the educational status of the subject samples was collected and it was a little surprising that the majority of the graduates have got these tattooed done on them.

The results of the study are very much convincing with the hypothesis from which the study has been undertaken, concerning highly significant statistical value concerning those having tattoos and showing the anxiety features. However, this might have been in better form, if the anxiety levels were assessed before and after getting the tattoo. This statement is basically because of the next level of study as we had asked for the regrets of getting the tattoo done. Here the statistical significance was not noted. But in continuation with the emotional diagnosis again it was convincing with the hypothesis of the study in terms of showing significant value. And very much interesting and the bell ringing point here is concerning the age of the individual group in the study was the majority in 19-21 years of the age group which is again statistically significant. Though there was no gender bias in this as both are equal in number in our study. And it was noted that Hindus were more in the study significantly, this may be verified in future studies in different parts of the country as the study was done in a Hindu predominant population. Married individuals numbered the unmarried group of individuals.

In the later stage we have tried to look into the alcohol dependency concerning the removal of the tattoo and from the source where they got these tattoos done was having notable values. Alcohol dependency was also checked with the nature of having tattoo either in terms of permanent one or a temporary one. Also, alcohol dependency was more in the graduates and having statistical significance. The outcome of this study is being supported by the study done by Koch and co-worker.<sup>11</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

In the present era getting the tattoo is a fashion wave and it's really difficult to make out the proper analysis in terms of psychological health. These tattoos are also being considered to give an attractive look and also express their personality. With the conflicts of having tattoo and alcohol consumption and its dependency is still hazy when compared to the available literature. Many studies and hypotheses are pointing out the correlation between alcohol consumption and having the tattoo. But few had a clear report in proving the hypothesis whereas the majority were in dilemma to say confidently about the exact relationship. But in our study, it has shown many significant values

**Table 1:** Showing relation with alcohol use and method of removal

Method of removal	Alcohol Use						Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5	7		
Not answered	17	3	5	1	0	0	26	<0.01*
No	1	1	0	0	1	1	4	
Yes	28	3	0	1	0	0	32	
Total	46	7	5	2	1	1	62	

The Alcohol use scoring is as follows; 1= 0-5; 2=6-10; 3=11-15; 4=16-20; 5=21-25; 6=26-30; 7= >31

**Table 2:** Showing relation with alcohol use and "tattoo done at

The tattoo was done at	Alcohol Use						Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5	7		
Professional centre	38	5	5	0	1	1	50	<0.01*
Amateur artists	8	2	0	1	0	0	11	
Self	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
Total	46	7	5	2	1	1	62	

The Alcohol use scoring is as follows; 1= 0-5; 2=6-10; 3=11-15; 4=16-20; 5=21-25; 6=26-30; 7= >31

**Table 3:** Showing relation with alcohol use and no. of tattoo

No. of tattoo	Alcohol Use						Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5	7		
1	30	4	4	0	0	0	38	0.020
2	9	1	0	1	0	1	12	
3	4	2	1	0	1	0	8	
4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
5	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
8	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
61	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Total	46	7	5	2	1	1	62	

The Alcohol use scoring is as follows; 1= 0-5; 2=6-10; 3=11-15; 4=16-20; 5=21-25; 6=26-30; 7= >31

**Table 4:** Showing relation with alcohol use and education

Education	Alcohol use						Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5	7		
Illiterate	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.018
Literate	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	
Primary/ secondary/SSLC	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	
PUC	16	2	3	1	0	1	23	
Graduate	20	4	1	0	0	0	25	
PG/PhD	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	
Not answered	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	
Total	46	7	5	2	1	1	62	

The Alcohol use scoring is as follows; 1= 0-5; 2=6-10; 3=11-15; 4=16-20; 5=21-25; 6=26-30; 7= >31

\*Highly significant at  $\alpha=0.01$  (99% Confidence interval).

**Table 5:** Showing relation with alcohol dependency and religion

Religion	Alcohol dependency					Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5		
Hindu	42	3	7	0	3	55	<0.01*
Muslim	1	0	0	1	0	2	
Christian	0	0	1	0	0	1	
Jain	1	1	0	0	0	2	
Not answered	2	0	0	0	0	2	
Total	46	4	8	1	3	62	

**Table 6:** Showing relation with alcohol dependency and education

Education	Alcohol dependency					Total	SIG
	1	2	3	4	5		
Illiterate	1	0	0	1	0	2	<b>0.005*</b>
Literate	1	0	1	0	0	2	
Primary/ secondary/SSLC	2	0	0	0	1	3	
PUC	16	2	3	0	2	23	
Graduate	20	2	3	0	0	25	
PG/PhD	5	0	0	0	0	5	
Not answered	1	0	1	0	0	2	
Total	46	4	8	1	3	62	

The alcohol dependency scoring are as follows; 1=0-5; 2= 6-10; 3= 11-15; 4= 16-20; 5= >21

\*Highly significant at  $\alpha=0.01$  (99% confidence interval).

which may be taken into account and looked for a large number of samples including from different ages, religion, and others to come to a correct conclusion. However, this is the alarming signal for any of the health professional to consider that the individual having a tattoo and approaching for the medical help should be considering the alcohol use.

## 6. Source of Funding

None.

## 7. Conflict of Interest

None.

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