



# Assessing Self Control and Peer Pressure among Young Alcohol Addicts of Tripura

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**Citation:** Sagarika Debroy, & Dr. Poonam Mukherjee (2024). Assessing Self Control and Peer Pressure among Young Alcohol Addicts of Tripura. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 5986-5993  
Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.3890

## ARTICLE INFO

Received: 26-11-2023

Accepted: 18-04-2024

## ABSTRACT

The key objective of this study is to identify young alcohol addicts in Tripura and determine how much peer pressure and self-control influences their alcohol usage. The study aims to provide light on the dynamics of alcohol addiction among young people in the area by evaluating these aspects. The study immersed 120 college and university students pursuing professional and non professional courses in Tripura. The sample was drawn by using simple random technique through Alcohol Screening Questionnaire (AUDIT). After selecting the sample Peer Pressure Inventory (Brown and Clasen, 1985), Self-Control Scale (Tangney et al., 2004) was administered on them. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean, standard deviation, and t-value, were employed to provide a concise summary of the gathered data. Furthermore, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to assess the potential interaction between peer pressure and self-control in relation to alcohol consumption. The present finding reveals that low self-control and high peer pressure are significant factors contributing to alcohol use among young adults pursuing professional courses in contrast to adults from non-professional courses.

**Keywords:** Alcohol Addicts, Peer Pressure, Self Control, Young Adults

## INTRODUCTION

According to American Psychiatric Association, Addictive behavior is a complex condition, a brain disease that is manifested by compulsive substance use despite harmful consequence. People with addiction (severe substance use disorder) have an intense focus on using a certain substance(s), such as alcohol or drugs, to the point that it takes over their life.

Addiction can have a wide range of consequences, including physical health problems, mental health issues, strained relationships, financial instability, legal troubles, accidents, and a cycle of destructive behavior. The repercussions largely connected to an individual's compulsive use of a substance or engagement in a behavior despite negative outcomes. Substance abuse, particularly alcohol and drugs, can impair the ability to judge and reduce inhibitions, increasing the risk of sexual assault or rape.

According to the National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India funded by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India in collaboration with NDDTC and AIIMS, New Delhi (2019) is reported the prevalence of alcohol consumption in Tripura to be 34.7%, which is the 2nd highest state in India after Chhattisgarh (35.6%). The prevalence of Cannabis and opioid use is reported at a prevalence of 2.10% and 5.01% in Tripura respectively. 11,544 cases of Instances of intravenous drug administration have been documented, which prompts significant inquiries concerning the potential hazard of blood-borne diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C. Injecting narcotics increases the likelihood of transmitting these illnesses due to the sharing of needles. A study executed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Young adults exhibit elevated rates of alcohol and substance abuse. In 2018, more than 35% of adults between the ages of 18 and 25 indulged in binge drinking, which is characterized as consuming 4 or more alcoholic beverages for women and 5 or more for men over a span of 2 hours.

Both surveys indicate a significant prevalence of substance addiction in India, with Tripura getting particularly affected. Additionally, the younger generation is more susceptible to this issue. The current study was restricted to the young alcoholics of Tripura because the work undertaken was a research article. Furthermore, it has been observed that addiction is a leading cause of violence, specifically in the form of ragging, within

educational institution campuses. Substance use has become increasingly prevalent as a major health concern in Indian colleges and universities, despite the belief that attending college has traditionally been seen as a safeguard against the onset of substance use problems. Throughout the process of transitioning from high school to college, students may encounter unfamiliar social circles and peer groups. The influence of classmates on addiction can be substantial, as students may feel compelled to conform or partake in substance use. Developing self-control is crucial in minimizing the impact of peer pressure on drug or alcohol experimentation.

A research conducted by Morrison (2004) in Morocco revealed that 13% of young individuals are exposed to drugs as a result of peer influence. This rate highlights the significant and powerful influence that peers have on one another, particularly when it comes to drug abuse. Peer effects or peer pressure is noted as a major determinant by Kawaguchi (2004), who adds that this is because substance use is thought to be a highly social behavior. Keyzers, A., Lee, S. K., & Dworkin, J. (2020) investigated that the negative peer pressure group was more likely to engage in binge drinking, lifetime alcohol consumption, and lifetime marijuana usage as compared to the group that experienced no social pressure. The positive peer pressure group had a lower lifetime likelihood of using marijuana or alcohol compared to the peer pressure-free group. Numerous research findings have supported the idea that peer pressure can induce people to act in ways they otherwise wouldn't (Muldoon, 2020). Peer socialization and peer selection had an impact on teenagers' use of alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs. This review supported peer selection effects on adolescent alcohol and tobacco use. The bulk of studies have also discussed that peer socialisation affects adolescents' alcohol consumption (Henneberger, A. K., Mushonga, D. R., & Preston, A. M., 2020). Numerous studies have shown that peer influence is a significant predictor of substance abuse among young adults. Peers can exert both positive and negative influences, with the latter often leading to risky behaviors like substance abuse (Borsari & Carey, 2001).

Research suggests that the relationship between peer influence and substance abuse can be moderated by an individual's level of self-control. Young adults with high self-control may be less susceptible to the negative impact of peer pressure on substance use (Wills et al., 2001). Bandura (1991) and Baumeister (2018) propose that self-control refers to the deliberate regulation of one's thoughts, emotions, motives, impulses, and desires. Individuals with low levels of self-control are more inclined to engage in substance abuse, such as drug and alcohol use, in comparison to their counterparts with high levels of self-control. This is due to their diminished ability to resist temptation and their increased susceptibility to impulsive behaviour, as indicated by Friese and Hofmann (2009). Multiple researches have shown evidence for the association between self-control and drug usage. A study conducted by Vaughn, Beaver, DeLisi, Perron, and Schelbe (2009) discovered a positive correlation between low self-control and drug use in teenagers. A study conducted in the UK found a correlation between low self-control and increased drug use, as well as an earlier onset of drug use (Packer, Best, Day, & Wood, 2009).

To the knowledge of the authors, no studies have examined self-control as a predictor of drug use in Tripura. The objective of this study was to investigate potential variations in self-control levels among young individuals who consume alcohol. While prior studies have looked at the individual effects of peer influence and restraint (self control) on substance abuse, their combined impact of alcohol consumption on individuals in the young adult age group especially in Tripura have received very less attention. So, due to the scarcity of empirical evidences the researcher aims to close this gap by examining the role that particular peer influence and self-control play in young people's alcohol use.

### **Significance of the study:**

The significance of this study can be outlined as follows:

1. By concentrating on the interplay of peer influence, self-control, and young adult substance abuse in Tripura, this study fills a significant research vacuum.
2. The study's findings can offer distinctive perspectives on how these contextual factors determine how peer influence and self-control influence substance addiction among young adults. These findings are crucial for developing successful preventative programmes that are adapted to the local environment.
3. The study's findings are applicable to build evidence-based policies and interventions aimed at reducing substance addiction among young adults in Tripura. Policymakers can build more specific and impactful program that resonates with the realities of the region if they grasp the role of peer influence and the moderating influence of self-control.
4. The results of the analysis can help to shape public health activities that especially meet the needs of young adults in Tripura, ultimately contributing to better overall well-being.
5. The study can help to create educational programs and community initiatives that empower young adults to make better choices by identifying characteristics that influence substance abuse behaviors.
6. The study adds to broader discussions regarding societal impacts on behavior and the necessity of building a culture of responsible decision-making by putting light on the role of peers and self-control in influencing substance usage.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Objectives:**

1. To investigate the influence of peer pressure on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.
2. To assess the impact of self control on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.
3. To reveal the interactional effect of peer influence and self control on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

#### Null Hypotheses:

1. There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to their peer pressure.
2. There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non- professional (B.A and B.Sc.) courses in relation to their peer pressure.
3. There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to one's self control.
4. There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non- professional (B.A and B.Sc.) courses in relation to one's self control.
5. There exists no significant effect of peer pressure and self control on alcohol use among young addicts of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

#### Sample

The sample constitutes 120 young adult students pursuing professional and non-professional courses in different colleges and universities of Tripura, age ranging between 19-25 years. The sample was further sub-divided into 4 groups according to their courses, i.e. professional (Medical and Engineering) and non-professional (B.A. and B.Sc.).

| Category         | Courses             | Sample size |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Professional     | Medical             | 27          |
|                  | Engineering         | 33          |
| Non professional | Bachelor of Arts    | 25          |
|                  | Bachelor of Science | 35          |

**Sampling Technique:** Simple random sampling has been adopted to select sample for the present study.

#### Inclusion Criteria:

- Age range: 19 to 25 years
- Educational Level: College and University Students
- Capable of understanding English test materials
- The individual's primary languages are Bengali and Kokborok.
- Monthly family income : minimum 5000 per head

#### Exclusion Criteria:

- Students who did not provide their consent were omitted from the study.
- Married students
- Presently diagnosed externalizing, internalizing disorders, and clinical pathology among young adults.
- History of suffering from any form of psychiatric illness/ disability/ presence of organic factors (head injury, seizures)

#### Tools Used

##### 1. Basic Information Schedule.

**2. Alcohol Screening Questionnaire (AUDIT):** The Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) developed by World Health Organization (WHO), is a 10-item screening tool, to evaluate alcohol intake, drinking habits, and alcohol-related problems. The internal consistency reliability of this scale was 0.98.

**3. Peer Pressure Inventory (Brown and Clasen, 1985):** This scale was developed by B. Bradford Brown Donna Rae Clasen (1985) based on 5 dimensions: (1) peer conformity (2) family involvement (3) peer involvement (4) school involvement (5) misconduct. The scale consists of 53 items that measures the level of peer pressure in different areas.

**4. Self-Control Scale (Tangney et. al., 2004):** This scale was developed by Tangney, J.P., Baumeister, R.F., Boone, A.L. in 2004. This scale consists of 10 items with 5 options: Not at all like me, A little like me, Somewhat like me, Mostly like me, Very much like me. The test-retest reliability was found to be .89 with higher validity. High Self-Control predicts good adjustment, less pathology, better grades, and interpersonal success less binge eating and alcohol abuse.

#### Procedure

At the onset, permission from college/university authority was sought. Consent from the participants was taken and proper instruction regarding the nature of the study was imparted. Data were collected randomly from the young adults pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) and non-professional (B.A & B.Sc.) courses from various colleges and universities of Tripura. A total of 200 young adults were approached for the present study. After administering the screening test, 45 were excluded as they were non-alcoholics; 16 did not turn up in the next session; 12 did not complete the questionnaire and 7 did not meet the criteria designed for the present study. Hence, the final study was carried out on 120 young alcohol addicts pursuing professional and non professional courses from colleges and universities of Tripura.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Objective 1:** To investigate the influence of peer pressure on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

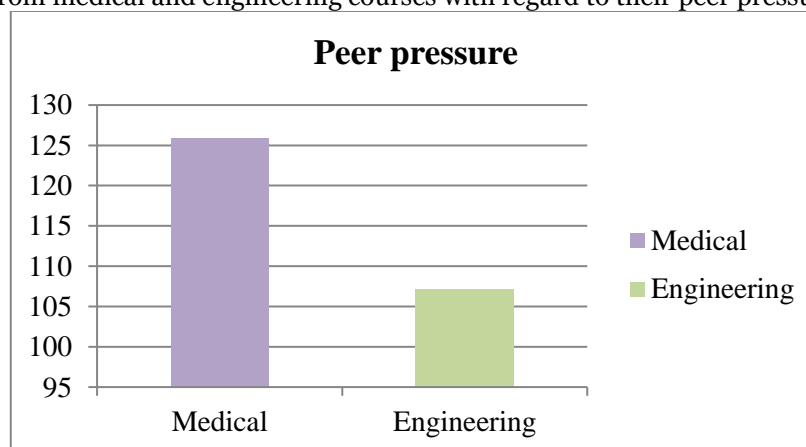
**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to their peer pressure.

**Table -1** showing the Mean, SD & t-value of Medical and Engineering students consumes alcohol with regard to their Peer Pressure.

| Variable      | Stream      | Mean   | SD    | t-value |
|---------------|-------------|--------|-------|---------|
| Peer Pressure | Medical     | 125.85 | 13.04 | 4.675** |
|               | Engineering | 107.15 | 17.10 |         |

\*\*P>.01

**Fig 1:** Graphical representations of the data showing mean differences between students consume alcohol belongs from medical and engineering courses with regard to their peer pressure.



In the context of the study, Table 1 and figure 1 represents statistical data that reveals a significant difference in alcohol consumption behaviour among students who are pursuing medical and engineering courses when subjected to peer pressure. This difference is considered statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to their peer pressure is rejected.

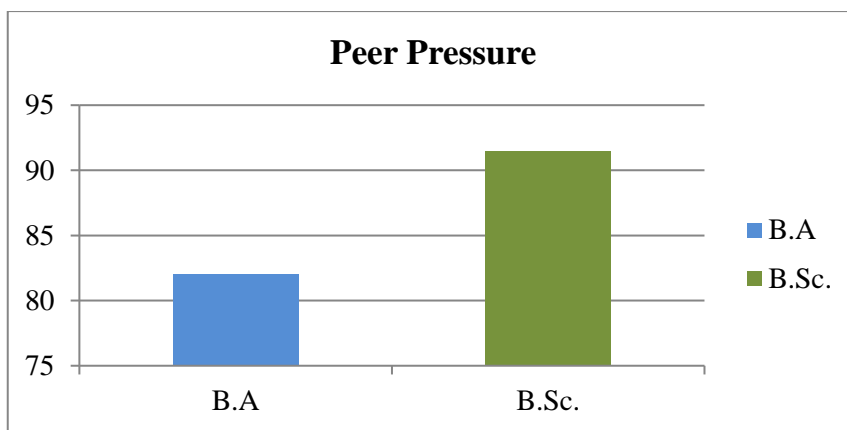
**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non- professional (B.A and B.Sc.) courses in relation to their peer pressure.

**Table -2** showing the Mean, SD & t-value of B.A and B.Sc. students consumes alcohol with regard to their Peer Pressure.

| Variable      | Stream              | Mean  | SD    | t-value |
|---------------|---------------------|-------|-------|---------|
| Peer Pressure | Bachelor of Arts    | 82.04 | 12.59 | -3.079* |
|               | Bachelor of Science | 91.48 | 11.06 |         |

P>.05

**Fig 2:** Graphical representations of the data showing mean differences between students consume alcohol belongs from Bachelor of Arts (B.A) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) courses with regard to their peer pressure.



In the context of the study, Table 2 and Figure 2 represents statistical data that reveals a significant difference in alcohol consumption behaviour among students who are pursuing B.A. and B.Sc. courses when subjected to peer pressure. This difference is considered statistically significant at the 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non professional (B.A. & B.Sc.) courses in relation to their peer pressure, is rejected.

From Table 1 and Table 2 it is clear that all the students pursuing professional and non professional courses have peer pressure for consuming alcohol. But In comparison to non professional courses of students, students pursuing professional courses they have more peer pressure. Professional degrees like those in medicine, law, or engineering may have rigorous course requirements. Alcohol use among students in these disciplines may be a coping mechanism for stress or burnout, which peer pressure can make worse. Stress and anxiety might result from professional programmes' competitive nature. Some students may use alcohol as a stress reliever, and peer pressure from their peers who use alcohol recreationally can make it more difficult to resist. In a 2020 study, Keyzers, Lee, and Dworkin found that those who encountered negative peer pressure were more likely to engage in binge drinking, lifetime alcohol intake, and lifetime marijuana use than those who did not.

**Objective 2:** To assess the impact of self control on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

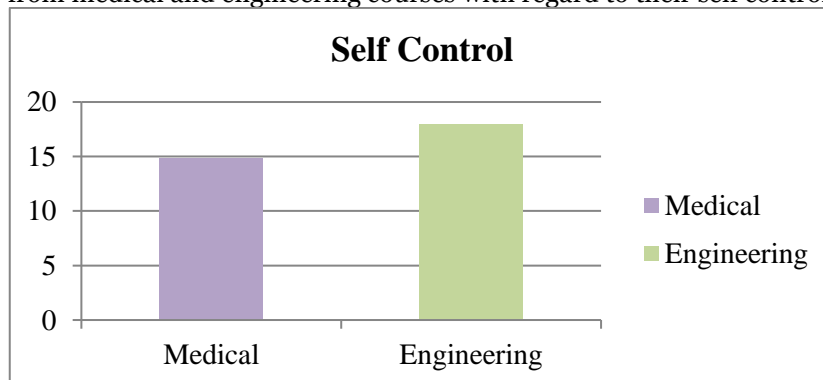
**H<sub>0</sub>3:** There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to one's self control.

**Table -3** showing the Mean, SD & t-value of Medical and Engineering students consumes alcohol with regard to their Self Control.

| Variable     | Stream      | Mean  | SD   | t-value |
|--------------|-------------|-------|------|---------|
| Self Control | Medical     | 14.81 | 3.56 | -2.583* |
|              | Engineering | 17.97 | 5.46 |         |

**P>.05**

**Fig 3:** Graphical representations of the data showing mean differences between students consume alcohol belongs from medical and engineering courses with regard to their self control.



In the context of the study, Table 3 and figure 3 represents statistical data that reveals no significant difference in alcohol consumption behaviour among students who are pursuing medical and engineering courses with regard to the level of their self control. So the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing professional (Medical & Engineering) courses in relation to their self control, is hereby accepted.

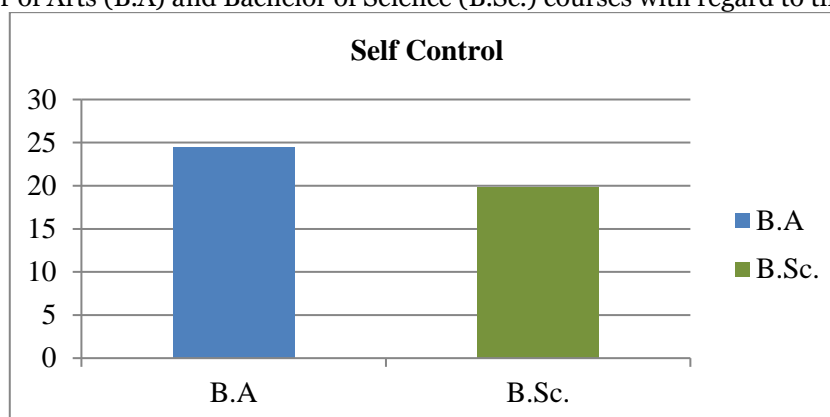
**H<sub>04</sub>:** There exists no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non- professional (B.A and B.Sc.) courses in relation to one's self control.

**Table -4** showing the Mean, SD & t-value of B.A and B.Sc. students consumes alcohol with regard to their Peer Pressure.

| Variable     | Stream              | Mean  | SD   | t-value |
|--------------|---------------------|-------|------|---------|
| Self Control | Bachelor of Arts    | 24.40 | 7.44 | 2.532   |
|              | Bachelor of Science | 19.77 | 6.64 |         |

**P>.05**

**Fig 4:** Graphical representations of the data showing mean differences between students consume alcohol belongs from Bachelor of Arts (B.A) and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) courses with regard to their self control.



In the context of the study, Table 4 and figure 4 presents statistical data that reveals a significant difference in alcohol consumption behaviour among students who are pursuing B.A. and B.Sc. courses with regards to their self control. This difference is considered statistically significant at the 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among young alcohol addicts of Tripura pursuing non professional (B.A. & B.Sc.) courses in relation to their self control, is rejected.

In this present study Tables 3 and Table 4 clearly demonstrate that students of professional courses exhibit lower self-control than those taking non professional courses. This could be as a result of the long hours required by professional disciplines, which can leave students psychologically and physically exhausted. Fatigue can make it harder to maintain self-control and cause impulsive behaviour, which can include drinking too much alcohol. The current finding is supported by the earlier study conducted by Frieese & Hofmann in 2009, they revealed that young people with low levels of self-control are more likely to use drugs and alcohol compared to those with high levels of self-control because they are less able to resist temptation and are more likely to let impulses rule their behaviour.

**Objective 3:** To reveal the interactional effect of peer influence and self-control on alcohol use among young adults of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

**H<sub>05</sub>:** There exists no significant effect of peer pressure and self-control on alcohol use among young addicts of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

**Table 5:** Show the F value of peer pressure and self control on alcohol use among young adults

| Source of Variation      | Sum of Squares (SS) | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Mean Squares (MS) | F-Value |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Peer Pressure (Factor A) | 16.722              | 54                      | .310              | 3.079** |
| Self Control (Factor B)  | 4.349               | 23                      | .189              | 1.891** |
| Interaction Effect       | 3.259               | 33                      | .107              | 1.287*  |
| Within (Error)           | .500                | 5                       | .100              |         |
| Total                    | 300.000             | 120                     |                   |         |

\*\*p < .001; \*p < .005

The F ratio in respect of peer pressure (Factor A) has been found to be 3.079 which is Significant at 0.01 level. In case of self control (factor B) F value has been found to be 1.891 which is also significant at 0.01 level. Furthermore, the F value of interactional effect of peer pressure and self control has been found to be 1.287 which is significant at 0.05 level. So the null hypotheses which states that, There exists no significant effect of

peer pressure and self control on alcohol use among young addicts of Tripura pursuing professional and non-professional courses, is hereby rejected.

It indicates that peer pressure and self control has a direct impact on alcohol use among young adults. This may be due to the fact that young adults who receives greater number of drinking offers from their friends and shown little resistance and self-control towards these offers were more prone to engaging in excessive drinking behaviours. This present finding is also supported by the earlier finding done by Borsari & Carey in 2003 which revealed that Peer pressure can exert a significant impact on individuals with low self-control, who are more susceptible to conforming to their peers' behaviours.

### Conclusion

Low self-control and high peer pressure are significant factors contributing to alcohol use among young adults pursuing professional courses in contrast to adults from non-professional courses. However, the unique stressors, peer dynamics, and potential career consequences in professional courses may magnify the impact of these factors. Understanding these distinctions is vital for tailoring preventive measures and interventions to address the specific needs of students in professional and non-professional courses and mitigate alcohol-related issues in both groups.

### Conflict of interests

The authors declare that no competing interests exist.

### Author's contributions

Both the authors contributed equally to the theoretical development, analysis, interpretation and writing of the manuscript.

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