

HARMS FROM THE DRINKING OF RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND OTHERS: INITIAL FINDINGS FROM A 9-COUNTRY STUDY

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Introduction and aims: Harm from others' drinking are an important part of the global burden of alcohol. This study compares such harms in household population surveys in seven low- and middle-income countries and in Australia and New Zealand.

Design and Methods: Comparable surveys were carried out under WHO auspices in Chile, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam, and analysed together with previous surveys in Australia and New Zealand. Datasets were coded into comparable form for multivariate analyses.

Results: Harm rates varied substantially between countries. Those reporting harms from any other's drinking varied from 39-40% in Nigeria and Laos to 68-69% in Thailand and India, with Australia, Chile, Vietnam and New Zealand also at the higher end (66-60%). Reported rates were higher in India and Vietnam than elsewhere for harms from household members or relatives, from friends in Chile, and from strangers (for tangible harms) in Australia and NZ. Rates of reported harm did not vary greatly within country by gender, and tended to be greater for younger adults, though not in Nigeria, India and Vietnam.

Discussion and Conclusions: Variations in rates of reported harm from drinking were not clearly related to the country's per-capita consumption or drinking patterns, nor to the country's income level. To have the greatest effect, programs to reduce harms from others' drinking may need to be tailored to the particular cultural situation.

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