

International Women's Day 2025

Survey on How Alcohol Violates Women's Rights

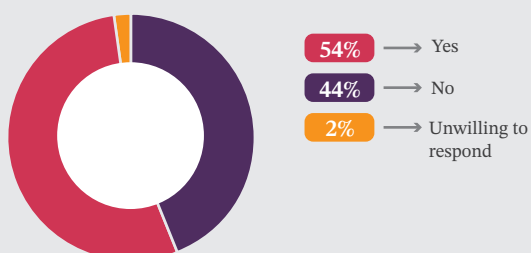


As a nation, Sri Lanka faces significant economic, health and social issues arising from the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Women are especially affected by alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in numerous ways. The rate of alcohol consumption and smoking among women in our country remains extremely low. Therefore, alcohol and tobacco companies are utilizing different strategies to convert women into consumers and normalize alcohol and tobacco products among them. Such interferences are being carried out in most countries around the world as well. With the aim of uncovering alcohol industry strategies and investigating problems faced by women due to other's alcohol consumption, the Alcohol and Drug Information Centre (ADIC) conducted a survey in commemoration of International Women's Day 2025. **The survey was conducted by collecting data from 1000 women above 15 years of age from 25 districts in Sri Lanka.** This survey was conducted to investigate the problems women face due to others' alcohol consumption and how alcohol violates women's rights.

- 54% of women have faced problems due to others' alcohol use
- 43% of women face mental and psychological challenges due to others' alcohol consumption
- 69% women have experienced discomfort in public places due to alcohol
- 37% of women were not aware that alcohol company strategies attract women to use alcohol by linking it to women's rights
- 64% of women report that women's rights are being violated when alcohol companies use women to promote their products

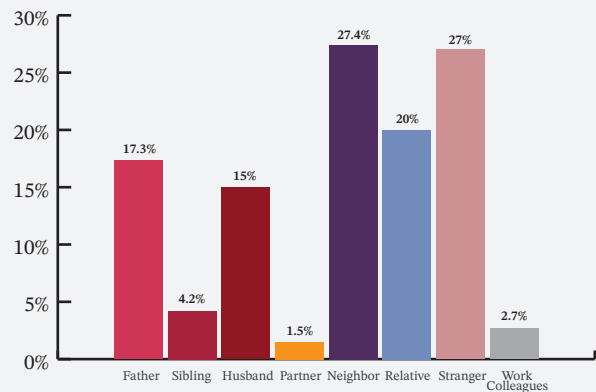
The study found that 54% of women have faced problems in some way due to other's alcohol use.

Have you ever faced problems due to someone else's alcohol use?



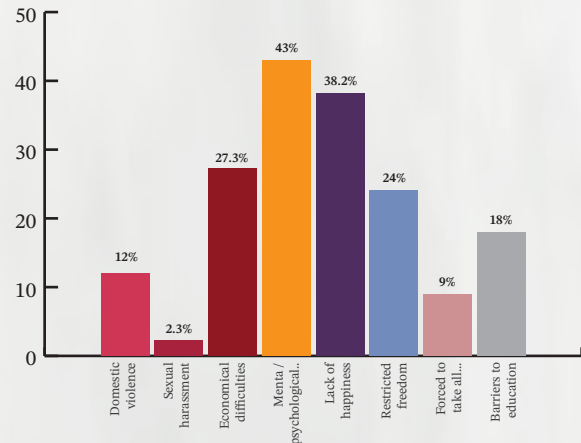
It was found that 27.4%, 27% and 20% of women primarily faced problems due to the alcohol consumption of neighbors, strangers, and relatives living at home, respectively.

Due to whose alcohol use have you experienced such issues?



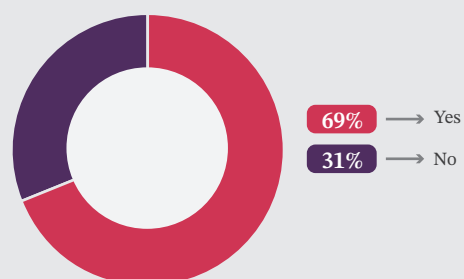
The study found that 43% of women face challenges to their mental and psychological well-being due to others' alcohol consumption. Furthermore, the results indicate that alcohol disrupts the happiness of 38.2% of women, causes economic difficulties for 27.3%, restricts the freedom of 24%, hinders the education of 18%, and leads to domestic violence against 12% of women.

What are the problems that you have faced?

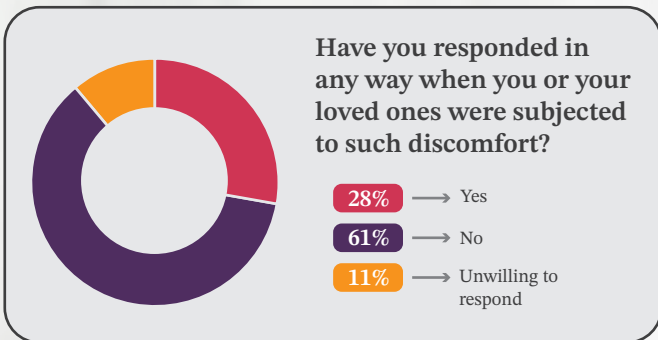


69% women reported that both they and their friends have experienced discomfort in public places due to others' alcohol consumption.

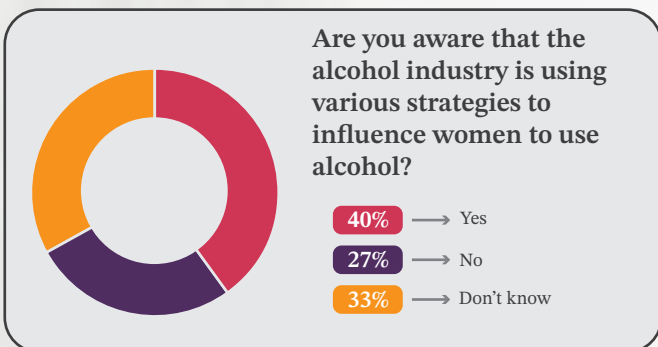
Have you or your friends faced any discomfort in public places due to others' alcohol usage?



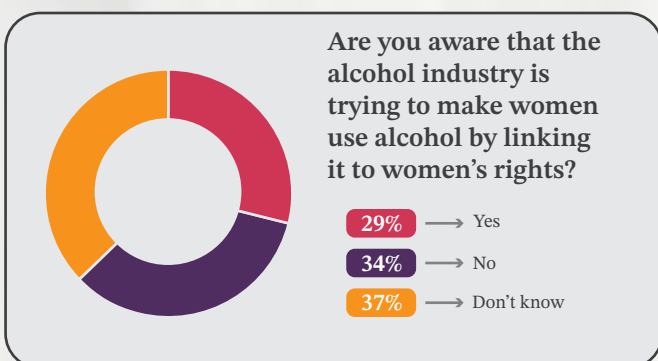
A majority of the women who have experienced discomfort in public places due to alcohol consumption reported that they have not responded to it. 61% of women stated that they did not respond even when they felt uncomfortable in public places during such instances. It is noteworthy that 11% of women expressed their unwillingness to respond to this question.



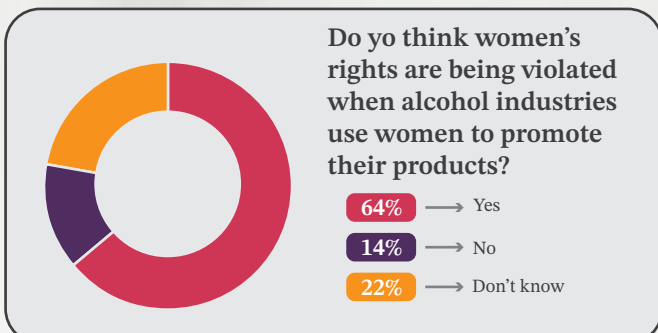
40% of women reported that alcohol companies use different tactics to attract women to consume alcohol.



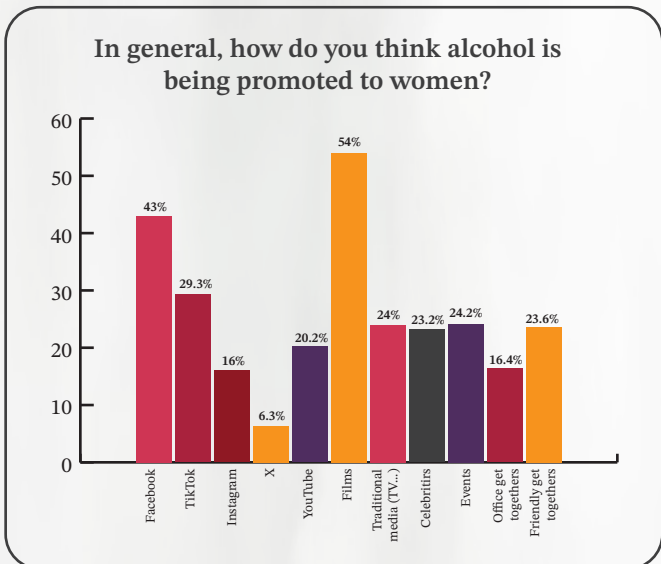
Although subtle alcohol industry strategies are widespread, 37% of women were not aware that alcohol company strategies attract women to use alcohol by linking it to women's rights. Only 29% of respondents were aware regarding this.



64% of women reported that women's rights are being violated when alcohol companies use women to promote their products.



When considering how alcohol promotions are targeting women, 54% stated that such promotions occur in movies, 43% stated that promotions are seen in Facebook, 29.3% in Tiktok, 20.2% in YouTube, and 16% in Instagram. 24% stated that promotions occur in traditional media, 24.2% stated that promotions happen during events, and 23.6% stated that alcohol promotions targeting women are happening during social gatherings.



It is essential to take measures to protect women from the harmful cycle of alcohol that has already ensnared many men. The Alcohol and Drug Information Centre presents the following recommendations to address the challenges women face due to alcohol and protect women from alcohol industry interferences:

- The chemical effect of alcohol is that it is a depressant. However, societal perception is influenced by alcohol industry-led narratives to view alcohol as a stimulant. A national level action plan should be introduced to prevent and combat the spread of such industry narratives and create awareness regarding the real chemical effect of alcohol within children from childhood.
- Take action to provide awareness and education for women, youth and children regarding the myths and false narratives surrounding alcohol use.
- According to the National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol (NATA) Act, alcohol and tobacco advertisements targeting all sections of society, including women and youth, are prohibited. However, such advertisements and promotions are still being carried out in various ways. Therefore, the proposed amendments to strengthen the NATA Act should be implemented.
- Women should be empowered to respond to harassments done under the guise of alcohol consumption.
- The “mother figure” holds a deep cultural value and significance within the Sri Lankan society. Mothers and women in general have had a prominent role in preventing and reducing alcohol consumption in our nation. However, alcohol companies are actively attempting to distort these cultural values by linking alcohol consumption to women's rights, to ensnare women in the trap of alcohol. Therefore, everyone must take a stand to expose alcohol company tactics, resist being deceived, and work toward controlling their influence.

