

TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT: THE IMPACT OF LIQUOR PROHIBITION ON SOCIO-ECONOMY AND LIVELIHOOD IN BIHAR

Findings

Majority of respondents agree with this liquor prohibition law. It is clear that 80 percent respondents told that they agree with the liquor prohibition law. There is consensus among women beyond caste and class to continue this prohibition. It is a fact that the liquor prohibition was a main demand of struggle for women organizations. They bear the brunt of liquor consumption of their husbands. Even their husbands snatched their own savings and jewellery to consume the liquor. Only 13.8 percent respondents told that they disagree with the existing law. Beyond Caste and class particularly women are against of revoking this ban. They want this law to be executed more properly. At some places, women have more information about drinkers in their Tola or villages. From this point of view women and their organizations have a great role in executing this law successfully also.

❖ *Impact of liquor prohibition on Different Working Groups of Society*

- The overall impact of liquor prohibition is positive on different working groups of the society. There has been the most positive impact on workers of the liquor ban. The income of labouring class and daily wages workers are not sufficient to meet their demands on nutritious foods, child education and other basic needs of the family.
- In this situation, expenditure on liquor consumption compresses their consumption basket on health and education. Even their working condition and health has bad effect due to liquor consumption, Thus saving due to ban on liquor expands their consumption basket on basic needs of the family.
- About **64.5** percent respondents said that workers have benefited the most from the liquor ban.
- **23** percent respondents said the peasants have positive impact of liquor ban while **27** percent think that every section of the society has benefited.

❖ *Increase in monthly income due to liquor ban*

- The respondents opined that Liquor ban has positive impact on saving 34 percent respondents have told that saving of drinker has increased at extent of Rs. 1000, 16.9

percent think that this saving is at extent of Rs. 2000, 36.5 percent respondents told that there is no increase in saving.

- With their constant wages people have to spend more money for their same basic needs of 2-3 years ago due to inflation. So it is also difficult to assume about their saving in present context.
- In last two years Covid has also very bad effect on income of laboring class. In 1st year of Covid almost there was no job for workers. Even there was reverse migration from cities.
- This affected their income badly. But overall it can be said that liquor consumption has a positive impact on their income. Increased saving due to decline in liquor consumption has positive impact on education of their children and nutritious diet.
- **62.4** percent respondents think that increase saving due to liquor consumption is being spent on child education, while about **54** percent respondents think that this saving is being spent on nutritious diet. Thus child education and nutritious diet are two components where saving due to liquor ban is being spent.
- The perception of respondents regarding the impact of prohibition on the capacity of the family to meet the health expenditure. A little more than two third (**67.4** percent) respondents said that the ban on liquor has increased the capacity of the family to meet the health expenditure of family members, i.e. the family has increased the health expenditure.
- The respondents were asked whether the frequency of falling ill of habitual drinkers has decreased after the liquor ban. The careful observation of the data shows that **65 percent** respondents agree to the statement and they said that the health condition of the habitual drinkers has improved as well.
- **13** percent of the respondents said there has not been any change in the health status of drinkers and more than one-fifth (21 percent) unable to give their opinions on the statement.

❖ ***Impact on Education***

- It has been found that the major part of the expenditure of the family, especially poor family goes to the food, health and meeting social obligations and rituals.
- The education of the children of poor families' remains neglected. This is even more valid for the children belonging to the families where liquor consumption is a routine

practice. The impact of liquor prohibition on the education of the children is also reflected in the present study.

- The results reveal that more than two-third (**72 percent**) respondents consider that the part of family income which has been curtailed on the liquor due to its ban in the state are now also goes to the children's education.
- The expenditure on the children's education has increased now after the liquor ban. Some of the respondents (**15.9 percent**) also said that there has not been any change on the expenditure on education.
- There may be two or more reasons on the status quo of the educational expenditure, such as the family has already been either spending sufficient amount of money on the children's education or the second reason may be the expenditure on education remained same in these families even after the liquor ban.
- A good number of respondents were those who are not able to tell anything on it. These are the families where the ban has no role in the education o the children.

❖ ***Spending time with family by Habitual Drinkers***

- That 74.4 percent of the respondents have said that after prohibition of alcohol, the habitual drinkers have started giving more time to their family than before.

❖ ***Impact of Prohibition on Safety***

- Intoxication produces the physical and economic harm of any person as well as his consciousness and sensitivity. Under the influence of intoxication, a person not only loses his self-control, but under its influence he also misbehaves with others. Due to intoxication, the risk of accidents etc. also increases, in which there can be a danger ranging from minor injuries-sprains to life-damage.
- In this context most the respondents have described alcohol prohibition as a better step from the point of view of safety in almost all contexts.
- As far as travel on roads is concerned, 51.4 percent of the respondents said that there has been a steep increase in its chances after prohibition. In its favour, maximum 95.6 percent respondents come from Katihar district, followed by Kishanganj (64.2 percent).

❖ ***Impact on Women***

- The important point is that there has been an increase of women's respect within a household after the liquor ban. 70 percent of respondents supported the view. Around

40 percent of the respondents viewed that there has been an increase for women in the role of family decision making and freedom in doing work outside home.

- The increased role of women after the liquor ban extends to aspects like child education (46.7 percent), child health 29 percent), child diets (36 percent), choice of dress (22.6 percent) and overall domestic management (33.45 percent).
- There has been marked improvement in women's mobility in terms of freely allowed to visit 'hotel and restaurants', 'public amusement places', market', 'attending religious procession' etc. It is estimated that around 80 percent of respondents supported the point that freedom to visit markets alone has increased after the liquor ban.
- It was expected that there would be a decline of atrocities against women due to liquor prohibition. It was expected given the evidence given the evidence of high association between husband's alcoholism and domestic violence. The data also corroborate with the expected view. It is found that as high as around 91 percent of respondents viewed there has been reduction of domestic violence following the liquor ban.
- The improved status of women is also reflected through the increased women's involvement in political activities. It is considered to be an important parameter of women's status/empowerment.
- People view that after the liquor ban women have become more interested in electoral politics, they are now more free to cast their vote, they have become, more conscious in selecting people's representatives.
- It is also found that women are more willing for active participation in taking membership to political parties, becoming candidates for election and participation in political campaigns. 41.5 percent of respondents reported that there has been an increase of women's interest towards election. The percentage for free voting accounts for 53.4 percent.
- The percentage for less pressure from family members to cast their vote accounts for 41.4 percent. And 35 percent of respondents viewed that women have become more conscious in choosing their representative.
- There has also been marginal change for joining any political party (19.5 percent), participation as a candidate in an election (14.7 percent) and campaigning for a

political party (11.45 percent). As for as district-wise variation is concerned katihar remained at the top to show the positive changes.

❖ **Present form of livelihood of engaged people in liquor**

- According to field data it was found that 5.3 percent people are engaged in agriculture, 3.7 percent in animal husbandry, 5.3 percent in labour, 3.9 percent in trade while 3.3 percent are still unemployed in the state.
- In the survey it was found that 25.87 percent respondents said that it will be good initiative by the government to promote Neera in the state; 17.5 percent respondents reported that it will be helpful to make people economically strong, 18.85 percent respondents said that it will create new alternative of employment and 4.8 percent respondents said that it will have a good impact on the people of Bihar.
- Respondents view about attitude of administration towards habitual drinkers. Respondents fill that from the side of administration punishment for the drinker is the main form of prohibition measure. 50% of respondents said that attitude of administration towards drinkers to implement liquor prohibition is punishment. Only 17% respondents have said that administration attitude towards drinker is reformative.

Note :- 80% respondents out of 4,000 household are from the rural background.