

ALCOHOLIC DEPENDENCE OF WOMEN IN JAPANESE RURAL AREA

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Introduction

The drinking patterns of Japanese women have varied with their position in history. As Japanese wine was made from our staple food rice, it was regarded as precious and sacred. In ancient time, it was served to God, so it was called "wine for God" in Japanese term. It was served in order to console violent God, who would cause catastrophe, people believed.

They had festival "Matsuri" in Japanese term very often, when they drank and danced cheerfully for the purpose of reconciling with God. There was no discrimination of drinking between women and men, who attended the festival. As the history went on, the rice wine was used to strengthen mutual union or to unite the relation between rulers and servants. The wine was taken only by men, and women's drinking was blamed. Instead, the women took the part of serving wine to men, and professional women appeared to serve wine to men.

After the World War 2nd, the new Constitution in our country recognized equal right of women and men. Many women began to drink.

Women who seek free way of living being apart from the traditional standard, increased. There are varied view points of evaluation regarding the way of living of women, which is reflected in the drinking attitudes of women. While the above mentioned tendency is proceeding all over our country, there still remain old tradition and custom in Japanese rural areas. I would like to report Toyama prefecture, representative rural area in our country.

Results and Discussion

Toyama prefecture is located at the central part of Japan Islands, facing at the Japan Sea. (Fig. 1) The Japan Alps run from north to south in the middle of Japan Islands. At the opposite side of them, Tokyo is located. North wind which comes from Siberia over the Japan Sea collides against the Japan Alps, and gives abundant rain to the areas facing to the Japan Sea, where are rice producing areas. In Toyama prefecture, about 90% of acreage under cultivation is rice field. The drinking reality of the women there are as follows.

Regarding the first drinking age of the women, it increases abruptly between 18 to 19 years old, just before adult ceremony which is held at 20 years old in our country. (Table 1) Celebration and traditional events, derived from the "Matsuri" mentioned before, are held very

often in Japan. Drinking by minority has been overlooked then, although the law of our country prohibits drinking by minority. The sudden increase of the first drinking experience by women between 18 to 19 years old is observed in these celebrational occasions.

Now, the real state of drinking in Japanese women is that every day drinkers are 3.0%, 4-6 times per week drinkers 3.2%, 1-3 times per week drinkers 16.0%, seldom drinkers 53.7%, abstainers 2.2% and non drinkers 21.9%. (Table 2)

Regarding the amount of drinking, 83.2% of the women drink less than 28ml of pure alcohol, 11.5% does 28 to 56ml, 4.4% does 56 to 84ml and 0.9% does 84 to 112ml. (Table 3) The reasons of drinking are social drinking the first (42.3%), pleasure the second (20.6%) and freshening up the third (10.5%). (Table 4) The first ranking of the social drinking is related to Japanese custom, in which it was a virtue of Japanese woman to make herself agreeable to anybody suppressing her own want.

I investigated drinking reality of women in pregnancy in the same district. The results are as follows: There are 94.8% of non drinkers and 5.2% of drinkers. (Table 5) Drinking rate of the pregnant is about 1/13 of the women drinkers in the same district. It is suggested that the pregnant suppress their drinking. The relation between drinking rate and pregnancy period shows that 4.6% of the pregnant drinks during the whole pregnant period, 24.8% of them does till 6th month and 30.6% of them does till 3rd month. (Table 6) The tendency of decreasing of drinking is observed near their delivery.

The drinking frequencies of the pregnant are 2.5% every day drinkers, 2.5% 4-6 times per week drinkers, 22.3% 1-3 times per week drinkers and 72.7% 1-3 times per month drinkers. (Table 7) The drinking frequencies of the pregnant are observed less than the women reported before.

Drinking opportunities of the pregnant are 39.4% evening drinking, 31.1% celebration and social events, 15.1% social drinking and 7.6% freshening-up. (Table 8) Evening drinking which is popular Japanese drinking style of men, is top grade in the pregnant too, although social drinking (42.3%) was at the top in the women reported before. It is suggested that those who drank personally before pregnancy are drinking continuously in pregnancy. Regarding drinking volumes of the pregnant, 91.8% drinks under 28ml of pure alcohol, 7.4% does 29-83ml and 0.8% does over 84ml. (Table 9) The amounts of the pregnant are less than women in the same district.

I ask the pregnant drinkers fetal damage. 53.7% of them replies "yes", 13.2% does "no" and 33.1% does "I don't know". (Table 10) The data show that half of them drinks in spite of fearing fetal damage.

As for the kind of alcohol, drinking of Japanese rice wine and whisky are decreased in pregnant period. (Table 11) The pregnant have tendency of drinking low concentrated alcohol instead of high concentrated one.

All the alcoholics who are being treated in mental hospitals in Toyama prefecture, are surveyed. 308 alcoholics (297 male and 11 female) are observed in 1,000,000 population. The 11 female alcoholics are as follows: ages of patients are found to be from the 30's to the 70's.

Among them, the 40's occupy 45.5% and are the most. Their occupations at the beginning of the illness are 36.4% house wives, 18.2% self employed, 18.2% no occupation, 9.1% employee and other. Among them, women who were or have been working in drinking houses or restaurants make up 72.7% which is remarkably high. Familiar economic conditions are 9.1% high class, 63.6% middle class and 27.3% low class. The middle class is the majority. As for educational career, lower education is dominant. 90.9% of them has only compulsory education. (Table 12)

The 11 cases are followed up. The follow-up period is 3.5 years. 2 cases (13.2%) are abstainers, 3(45.5%) are patients in hospitals and 4(36.4%) have returned to drinking because of bad circumstances.

Conclusion

Since the end of World War 2nd(1945), women drinkers have been increasing in our country. Recently, alcoholic problems of women have occurred.

Drinking rate of women in the rural area is 75.9%, and that of the pregnant is 5.2%. The pregnant are observed to suppress their drinking. Although 53.7% of the pregnant drinkers are fearing fetal damage of alcohol, they don't stop to drink. I think it is necessary to educate them about fetal alcoholic syndrome.

11 female alcoholics per 1,000,000 population in the same area are observed. The rate of alcoholism is 0.71% in female adults. The female alcoholics are suggested to have worse prognosis than the male. The female alcoholics are thought to increase more in future, so it is necessary to have policies for preventing it. 10 health centers which are scattered in T prefecture have roles of educating mother and infant problems. And one mental health center in the same prefecture has a role of prohibiting female alcoholism.

Fig. 1



Table 1 First Drinking Age

Age	Women (%)	Men (%)
—15	4.1	10.4
16—17	4.1	10.7
18—19	35.7	31.2
20—21	37.8	36.8
22—23	4.7	3.7
24—25	6.1	5.2
26—27	0.7	0.5
28—	6.8	1.5

Table 2 Drinking Frequency

Frequency	Women (%)	Men (%)
Every day	3.0	41.6
4-6 times a week	3.2	14.4
1-3 times a week	16.0	22.2
Seldom	53.7	17.3
Abstainer	2.2	1.5
Non-Drinker	21.9	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 3 Drinking Volume

Vol. (ml)	Women (%)	Men (%)
<28	83.2	32.1
28—56	11.5	48.5
56—84	4.4	16.0
84—112	0.9	2.9
112—140	0.0	0.4
140<	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 4 Reasons of Drinking

Reasons	Women (%)	Men (%)
Social drinking	42.3	21.5
Pleasure	20.6	27.7
Freshing up	10.5	33.3
Sound sleep	4.9	7.1
Increasing appetite	1.5	3.1
Encouragement	1.0	3.9
Decreasing pain	0.8	1.4

Cf.) pure alcohol

28 ml is Japanese unit ("Go").

Table 5 Drinking in Pregnancy Period

	yes	no	total
cases	121	2186	2307
%	5.2	94.8	100.0

Table 6 Drinking Period of the Pregnants

	0-3 M	0-6 M	0-10 M	total
cases	37	30	54	121
%	30.6	24.8	44.6	100.0

Table 7 Drinking Freq. of the Pregnants

	every day	4-6 times per week	1-3 times per week	1-3 times per month	total
cases	3	3	27	88	121
%	2.5	2.5	22.3	72.7	100.0

Table 8 Drinking Opportunity of the Pregnants

	Evening drinking	Celebration	Social drink	Fresh up	Others	total
cases	52	41	20	10	9	132
%	39.4	31.1	15.1	7.6	6.8	100.0

Table 9 Drinking Volume of the Pregnants

	<1 Go	1-2 Go	3 Go <	total
cases	111	9	1	121
%	91.8	7.4	0.8	100.0

1 Go = 28 ml of pure alcohol

Table 10 Do you think Fetal Damage by Drinking in Pregnancy ?

	yes	no	don't know	total
cases	65	16	40	121
%	53.7	13.2	33.1	100.0

Table 11 Kind of Alcohol

	Sake	Beer	Whisky	Wine	others	total
all cases	168 * (17.1)	313 ** (49.4)	180 ** (28.4)	68 (10.7)	15 (2.4)	684 (100.0)
drinkers in pregnan.	22 * (15.0)	95 ** (64.6)	21 ** (14.3)	9 (6.1)	0 (0.0)	147 (100.0)

Cf.) $p < .01$ ** (%)

Sake: Japanese rice wine $p < .05$ *

Table 12 Female Alcoholics

Age	Kind of occupation	Economic class	Medical expense (Health insurance)	Family	Schooling
A 77	self-management (a drinking house former geisha)	middle	Welfare medicaid	—	elementary
B 64	a worker at Japanese-restaurant	lower	//	—	//
C 55	a concubine (former worker at drinking house)	lower	//	—	//
D 50	self-management (a drinking house)	middle	//	+	//
E 46	a house-wife (former worker at drinking house)	lower	//	—	junior high
F 46	a salaried worker (often changing)	middle	Employee health insurance	+	//
G 44	a house-wife (former self-management a drinking house)	middle	National health insurance	+	//
H 47	a house-wife (former worker at drinking house)	middle	//	+	//
I 48	a part-timer (former worker at drinking house)	middle	//	+	//
J 34	a house-wife	middle	//	+	//
K 31	jobless	upper	//	+	withdrawal from high school

日本の農村地帯における女性のアルコール依存について

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日本の農村地帯の代表として、富山県の調査を紹介する。

ここでは、女性の飲酒の初体験は、成人式直前の18才—19才で突然増加する。わが国には未成年者の飲酒を禁止する法律があるにもかかわらずにである。それは、わが国では冠婚葬祭が盛んで、その際未成年者の飲酒が大目にみられるからである。女性の大部分の初体験はこのときに行われる。

成人女性の飲酒頻度は、毎日のむ3.0%、週4—6回のむ3.2%、週1—3回のむ16.0%、ほとんどのまない53.7%、やめた2.2%、のまない21.9%である。飲酒量については、1合以下が83.2%、1—2合11.5%、2—3合0.9%、3—4合0.9%であった。飲酒理由は、つきあい42.3%、楽しむ20.6%、気晴らし10.5%の順である。

同じ地域の妊娠中の女性の飲酒実態を調査した。5.2%が飲酒し、94.8%が飲酒していなかった。その飲酒率は、先の一般女性の約1/13であった。飲酒と妊娠期間との関係は、全期間のんでいたものが、4.6%、6カ月までが24.8%、3カ月までが30.6%であった。分娩が近づくにつれて、飲酒率が減少する傾向がみられた。その飲酒頻度は、毎日2.5%、週4—6回2.5%、週1—3回22.3%、月1—3回

72.7%であったので、一般女性より低い。飲酒機会は、晩酌39.4%、お祝・行事31.1%、つきあい15.1%、気晴らし7.6%であった。飲酒量は、1合以下91.8%、2—3合7.4%、3合以上0.8%で、妊娠の飲酒量は同地域の一般女性より少ないといえる。「妊娠中の飲酒が胎児に影響を与えると思うか」との問いに、「はい」と答えたものは53.7%で、「いいえ」が13.2%、「わからない」が33.1%であった。これは、飲酒者の半分強の人が胎児への影響があると思いつつも飲んでいることになる。しかし、飲用するアルコールの種類についてみると、清酒やウイスキーが減り、ビールが増えて、低濃度のアルコールに切り換えてのむ傾向がみられた。

富山県下の精神科で医療中の全アルコール依存症者は、100万人の人口あたり、308人(男297、女11)である。その11人の女性ア症についてみると、30才から70才代までに分布しているが、40才代が45.5%でもっとも多かった。発病時の職業は、主婦36.4%、自営業18.2%、無職18.2%、勤務者9.1%などであった。学歴については、低学歴者が多く、その90.9%が義務教育であった。女性ア症は今後増加することが考えられるので、その予防対策が望まれる。