

The Rise of Illicit Liquor Production and Challenges to Human Security in Post-COVID- 19 Societal Structures: An Anthropological Study Based on the Vakarai Region – 2024

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Abstract

We can observe that various socio-economic changes have taken place in the social structure in the post-COVID-19 period. In modern society, human needs have expanded, and to meet these needs, individuals have become increasingly interdependent. Society has evolved, and the world is gradually transforming into a single global community. As a result, since the end of the COVID- 19 pandemic, there has been a noticeable increase in the production of various substances, including drugs, among the people living in the Vakarai region of the Batticaloa district. This study aims to closely examine this phenomenon by identifying the rise in drug production and the resulting challenges to human security. It seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the evolving social structure in this context. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several critical factors such as lockdown measures, limited access to public services, the suspension of commercial activities, rising prices of goods, and restrictions on human mobility created significant challenges to the economic livelihood of individuals and communities. In the Vakarai region, the local population continues to face multiple hardships, many of which pose direct threats to human security, as highlighted in this study. Drugs are consumed by people for intoxication and entertainment. They affect the body, mental, social behaviour among the individuals and community. When drug addicts are identified as illegal, they are arrested by the police and then sent to rehabilitation centers at the request of the family and released after the treatment. Additionally, data indicates a sharp rise in the use of narcotic substances such as cannabis, heroin, methamphetamine, and crystal meth (commonly referred to as “ice”) among school-aged children and young adults in both urban and rural areas. Consequently, there has been a rapid increase in the number of drug users, leading to a range of negative health and social impacts. This qualitative research uses primary and secondary data through descriptive analysis. The statistical data were gathered from Vakarai Divisional Secretariat and other materials related this topic were gathered from books, research papers, articles and websites.

Keywords: Post-COVID-19, social structure, illicit liquor production, human security, income