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USING HEALTH PROMOTION APPROACH TO REDUCE ALCOHOL RELATED VIOLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction

Health Promotion, the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health includes the addressing of determinants of health and wellbeing through collective processes. Alcohol is a major determinant of health and wellbeing in communities and alcohol related problems are known to be difficult to address. This study is based on an component intervention of a joint health promotion project implemented by Plan Sri Lanka in collaboration with Ministry of Health, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and Foundation for Health Promotion.

General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of a settings based health promotion intervention to reduce alcohol consumption and alcohol related violence in a rural setting in Sri Lanka

Specific Objectives

To plan and implement a settings based health promotion intervention to reduce alcohol consumption;

To plan and implement a settings based health promotion intervention to reduce alcohol related violence;

To evaluate the effectiveness of a settings based health promotion intervention to reduce alcohol consumption and alcohol related violence; in a rural setting in Sri Lanka

Methods

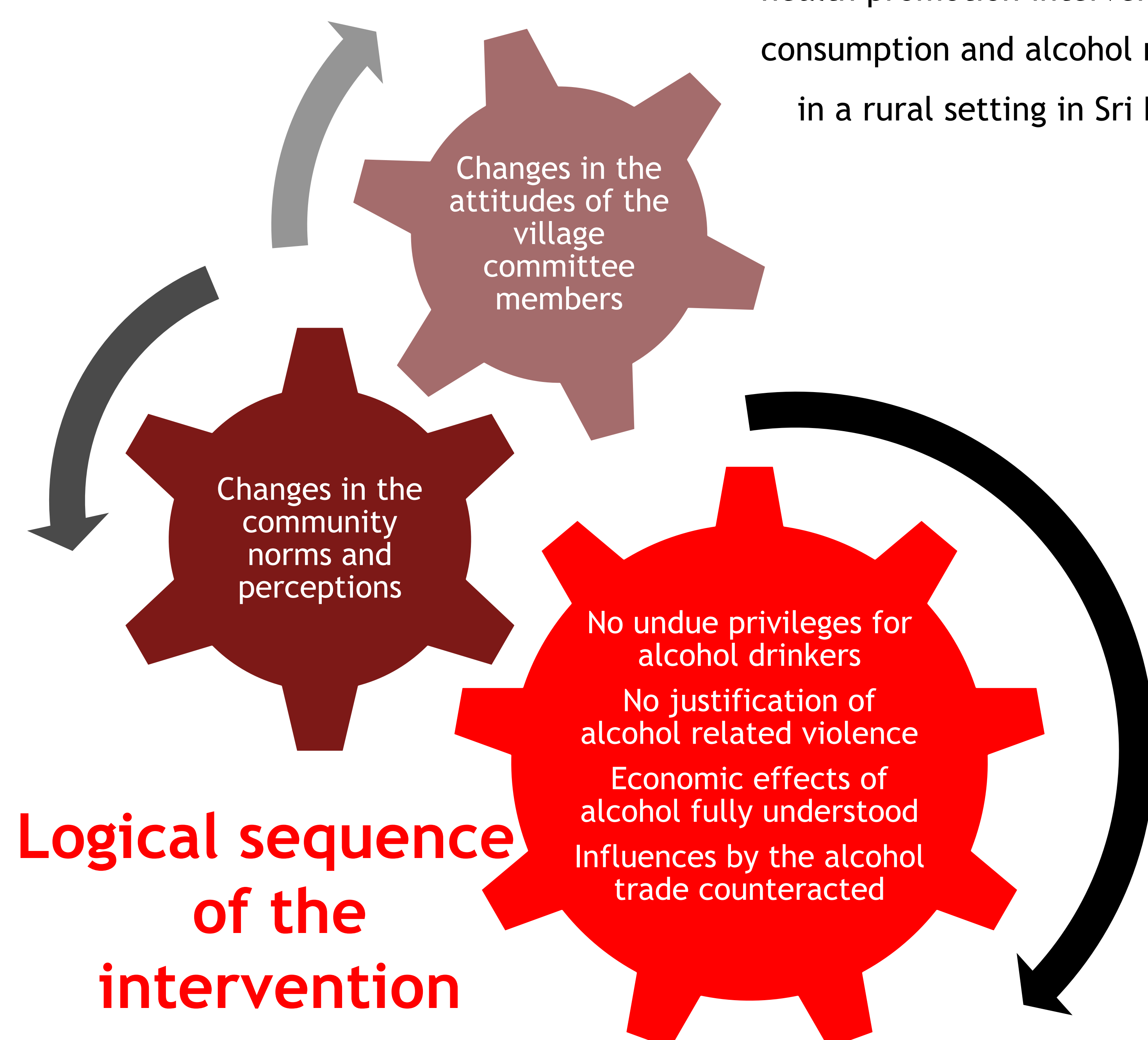
Study Design - A community based Quasi Experimental study

Study Setting - The village 'Suva Sahana Committee' of Andiyagala - a village in Palagala MOH area in Anuradhapura district - Number of households = 71

Study Period - 1 year from May 2010.

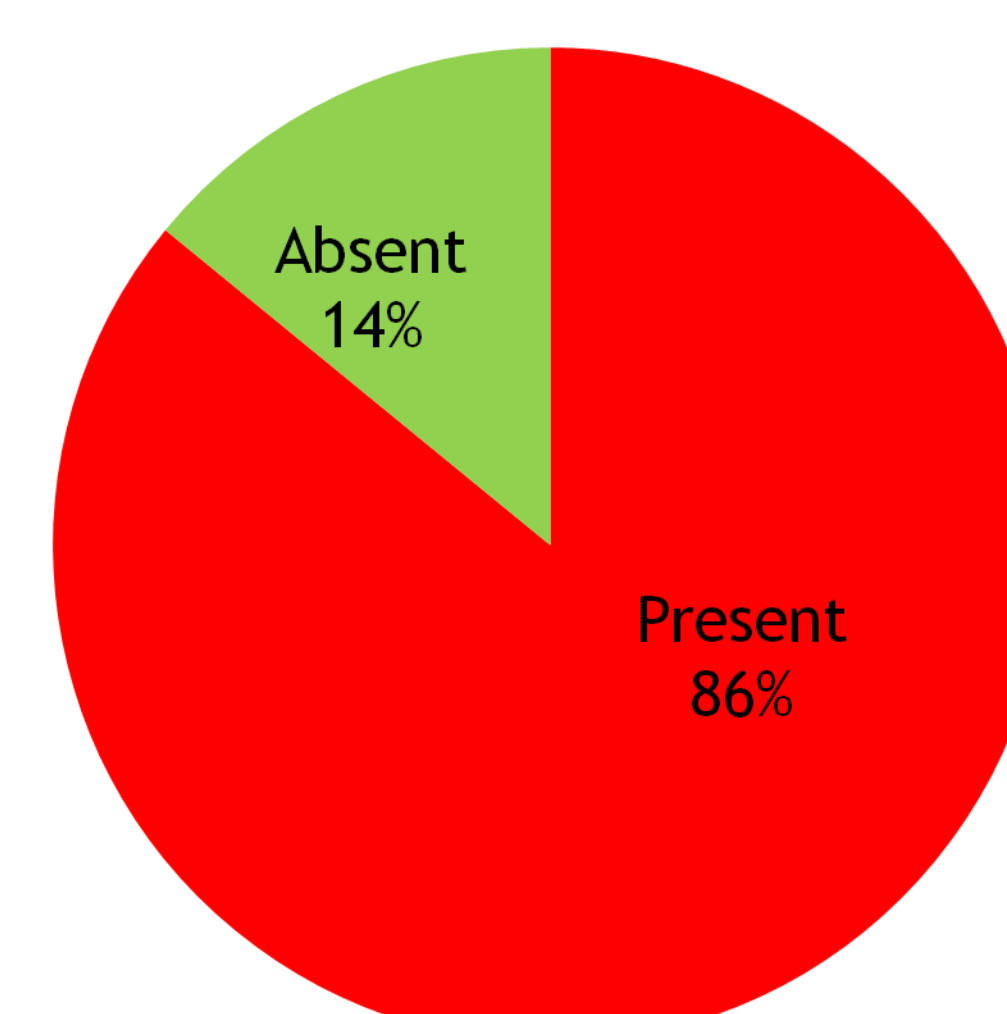
Intervention - Interactive lecture discussions and focus group discussions with the village committee members were used to change their attitudes towards alcohol consumption and related violence. The empowered participants spread the process to address the factors such as undue privileges for alcohol drinkers, economic effects, alcohol related violence and influences by the alcohol trade.

Evaluation - Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, household survey

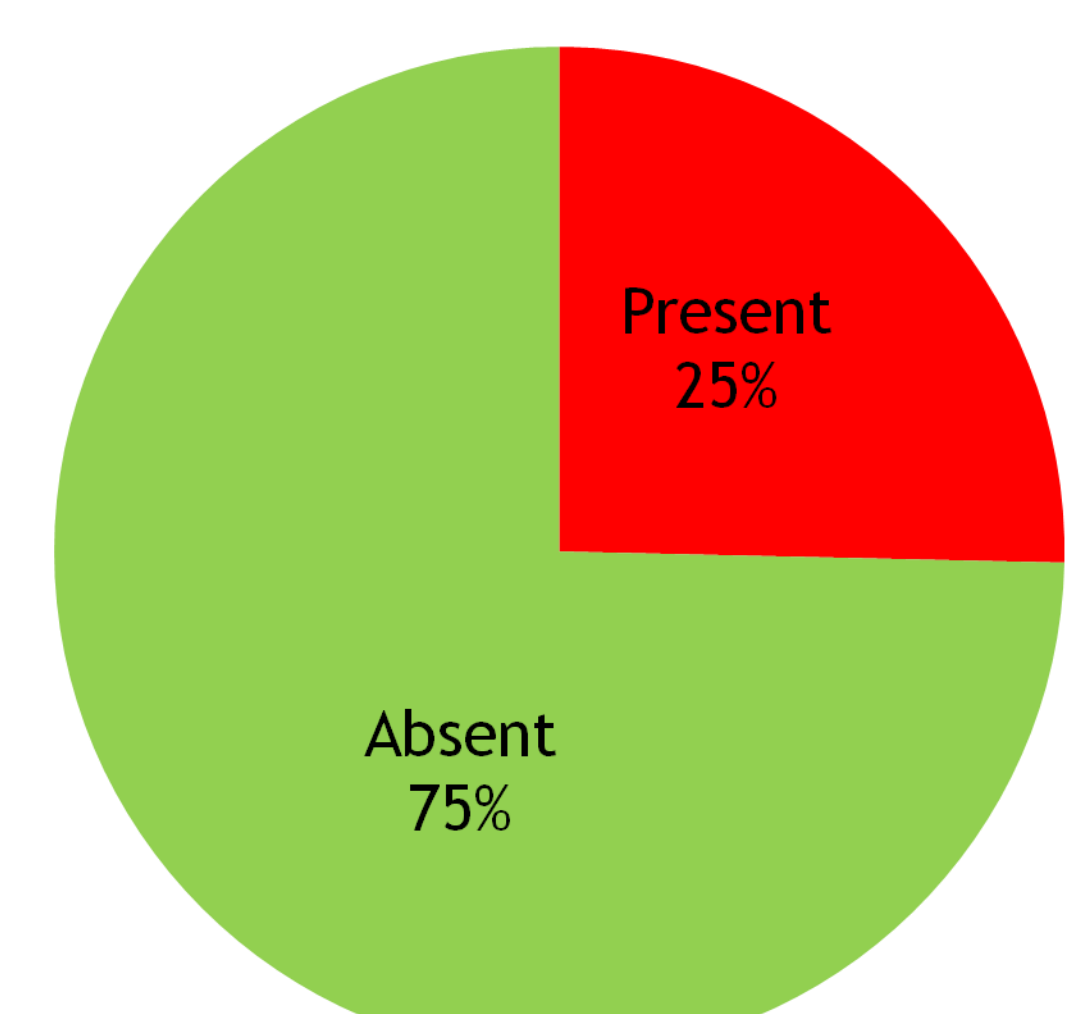


Results

Households with a regular drinker before intervention



Households with a regular drinker after intervention



“That day at Suva Sahana Committee meeting, we learnt health includes lives without stress and good social relationships. We also learnt that there is a wide variety of factors that determine our status of wellbeing. We identified alcohol as the main impediment to our ‘village wellbeing’.

We wanted first to find out the magnitude of our problem. So we walked from house to house, surveying for alcohol users. Of 71 houses, 61 had at least one person who regularly consumed alcohol. When we talked to the family members to get the details, we also tried to enlighten them about the identified issue. Finally our community understood that the reason given for violent behavior as alcohol use is just an alibi and should not really frighten us. The biggest myth we had - that alcohol only affects the drinker - was also changed. We realized that the money wasted on alcohol deprived our families of a better living standard and destroyed the dreams of our children. After so many years of suffering, we refused to be frightened.”

Conclusions

A ‘settings-based’ health promotion approach can be effective in reducing alcohol related violence.

Recommendations

Empower existing village committees, community based organizations to address alcohol related problems at village level by using health promotion approach

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