

The Association Between Parental Alcoholism and Future Alcohol Abuse of Males and Females

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Introduction

- Alcoholism is a disorder which is present at high rates in the United States. Alcohol related deaths are so evident that alcohol remains to be the fourth leading cause of preventable deaths, with an average death count of 140,000 people (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2022).
- Most research and literature is focused on the effects of parental alcoholism on the family structure and dynamic as well as the direct effect on the enduring child. (Sarah E. Bickelhaupt, Brenda J. Lohman, & Tricia K. Nepp, 2021)
- While the association of parental alcoholism increases the likelihood of generational alcoholism, there is less known about whether the presence of an alcoholic mother or alcoholic father serves as more of a risk factor for males or females. (Karen G. Chartier, Nathaniel S. Thomas, & Kenneth S. Kendler, 2017).

Research Questions

- Does the presence of an alcoholic mother or father increase the odds of alcohol abuse arising?
- Does the association between alcohol abuse and having experienced an alcoholic parent differ between individuals of different genders?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents were drawn from the Wave I and Wave V Adolescent Health Longitudinal Study, a longitudinal nationally representative sample of over 90,000 individuals.
- Wave I was administered to adolescents in grades 7 to 12 from 132 chosen schools across the U.S in 1994-1995.
- Wave V was administered to the same individuals, but surveyed them in their late 30's to early 40's in 2016-2018.

Measures

- Alcoholism of the parent(s) was measured based on the response of the adolescent individuals from Wave I of the Add Health survey and is coded as a binary variable.
- The abuse of alcohol was evaluated based on the individuals' responses to how often they consumed alcohol in the last 30 days on a scale from 0 to 6 from the Add Health Wave V survey.

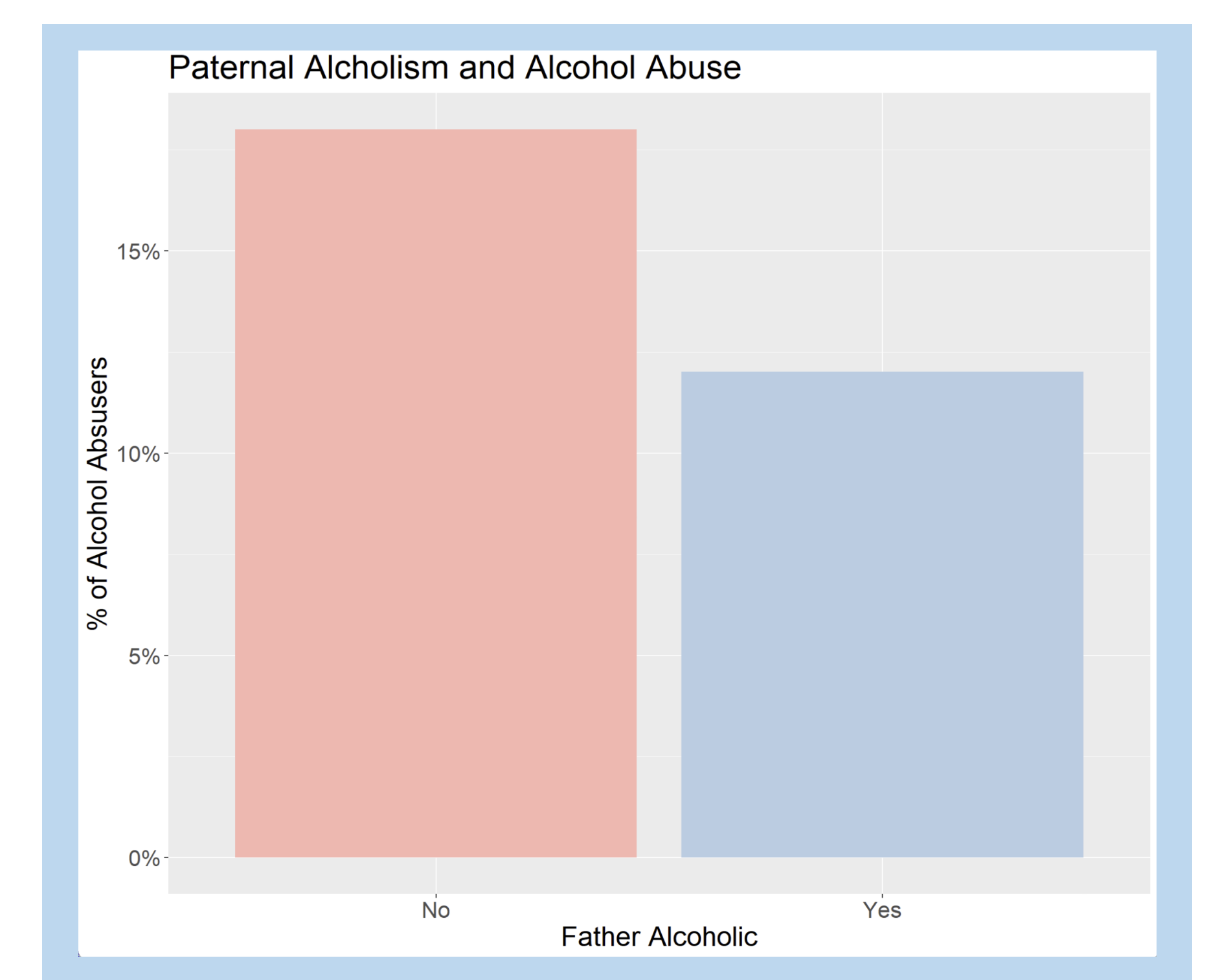
Results

Univariate

- 17.44% of respondents met the determined criteria for alcohol abuse.
- 9.45% of respondents experienced the presence of an alcoholic father and 1.663% experienced the presence of an alcoholic mother.

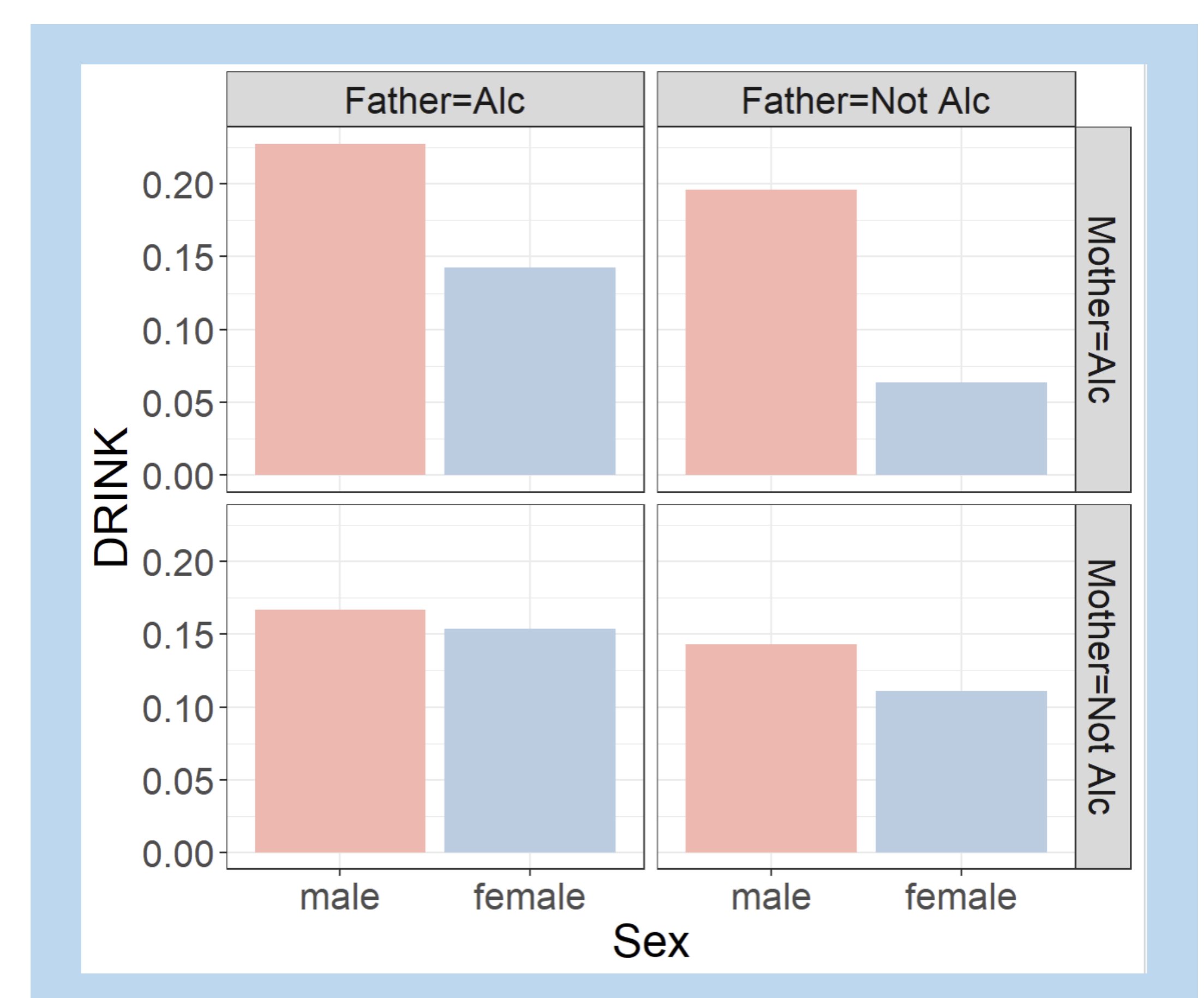
Bivariate

- A Chi-Square analysis showed that adolescents who experienced the presence of an alcoholic father were significantly and negatively associated to meet the determined criteria for abuse of alcohol. (X-squared = 4.85 p=0.025)
- Paternal alcoholism is significantly associated with the development of individuals' alcoholism. Those with an alcoholic father are 38% less likely to become an alcoholic themselves.



Multivariate

- Sex is a moderator in the association between paternal alcoholism and the abuse of alcohol.
- After controlling for sex, paternal alcoholism is still significantly and negatively associated with the abuse of alcohol. (p=0.025)
- After controlling for paternal alcoholism, sex is significantly associated with the abuse of alcohol. (p<0.001) If the individual is female, the odds they are 46% less likely to abuse alcohol.



Discussion

- Experiencing living with an alcoholic mother may not affect an individual's future abuse of alcohol.
- The sample for maternal alcoholism was significantly low, preventing the development of significant results.
- Regardless of the gender, the presence of an alcoholic father will decrease the likelihood of alcohol abuse in adulthood.
- Regardless of the presence of an alcoholic parent, males are more likely to abuse alcohol than females.
- Further research is needed to determine if this finding is consistent amongst individuals of different races and in different financial situations.
- Counselors, psychiatrists, and alcoholic advisors might use this information to aid in influencing and emphasizing the importance of appropriate drinking habits in adults, seeking to avoid an increase in the rate of alcohol related deaths.

References:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (n.d.) *Alcohol Facts and Statistics*. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.
Chartier, K. G., Thomas, N. S., & Kendler, K. S. (2017). Interrelationship between family history of alcoholism and generational status in the prediction of alcohol dependence in Us Hispanics. *Psychological medicine*, 47(1), 137-147.
Bickelhaupt, S. E., Lohman, B. J., & Nepp, T.K. (2021). The Influence of Parental Alcoholism on Parent-Adolescent Relationships From Adolescence Into Emerging Adulthood: A Qualitative Inquiry. *Emerging Adulthood* Thousand Oaks, CA), 9(2), 117-131.