STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG THE WIVES OF ALCOHOLICS ATTENDING SELECTED DE - ADDICTION CENTRES

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ABSTRACT

Background: Stress is a part of everyday life and no one is spared from it. People experience stress in different ways and for different reasons. From the newborn to the person who breaths his/her last, suffers from different types of stress. Wives of alcoholics go through countless problems in their personal and family life. They are at high risk for low quality of life due to use of maladaptive coping strategies. This study will help to evaluate the level of stress that faced by them and use of coping skills. Thus this will be a guide for planning and teaching effective coping methods to the targeted population. **Aim:** To assess the stress and coping among the wives of alcoholics. **Methods:** A quantitative research approach was used for the present study. The sample consisted of 50 wives of alcoholics, selected using purposive sampling technique. The tools used for the study were modified perceived stress scale and coping with drinking questionnaire. **Results:** The outcome of the study revealed that 98% of the wives of alcoholics had moderate level of stress and 2% of the wives of alcoholics had mild level of stress. It was also found that 96% of them had moderate level of coping and 4% had high level of coping.

Keywords: Stress, Coping, Wives of Alcoholics.

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INTRODUCTION

'First the man takes the drink; Then the drink takes the man'-Japanese proverb

Alcoholism is detrimental to the health of individuals and welfare of the family, community and society at large. It is a social evil and serious family illness which causes incredible impact on those around him. Continuous consumption of alcoholic beverages causes family disorganization and unhappiness. Frequent quarrels and abusive behaviors among spouses after alcohol ingestion may produce delinquent children. The economic life of family also will be suffered a lot due to the alcoholic dependence of the breadwinner. The spouses of alcoholics confront with the problems of verbal abuse, communication difficulties and vague future which affect their behavior and family role. Due to the marital maladjustments, their quality of life is not adequate to them.

Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or responses. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental and emotional responses. Stress can be positive, keeping us vigilant, aggravated and get ready to keep away from threats. Stress becomes negative when a person faces continuous challenges without break or rest flanked by stressful life situations. Stressful life events may act as a ground to flourish many physical and psychological illnesses.

Spouses are more vulnerable to the effects of continuous stress due to the uncontrollable use of alcoholic beverages among their partners. They may have the thoughts of misery, abhorrence, desolation, helplessness, hopelessness, irritability and turn out to be bodily, psychologically and socially distorted. They have to carry more burdens due to the irresponsibility of their spouses.

The wives of alcoholics face different forms of distress such as violence, fear, anxiety, self-esteem disturbances which adversely affect their conduct and personality and finally they present low quality of life. Nuptial maladjustments will disrupt family roles and results in total family disorganization. Through adaptive coping strategies, the spouses can empower one's own conscious attempt to solve stressful environment. Thus they can minimize their personal and interpersonal problems and lead a life with happiness and satisfaction.

NEED FOR THE STUDY***"More men drowned in glass than in sea"- Freedman, Kaplan***

Each individual is the member of the family. Family forms the backbone of our social structure. A good home is the centre for comfort, refuge and place for peace, rest and freedom. It fulfills the basic physical and psychological needs. The atmosphere in a family should provide opportunities for maintaining physiological and psychological equilibrium. It is a close support system in the life of each and every individual. Good families create good citizens in a nation. These are considered as the cradle of social values. Any disturbance in the harmony among family members causes different forms of ill effects. Some of the new trends in modern society bring changes in the organization of families. The effects of modernization make changes in economic, recreational and religious functions of the family.

Substance use disorders are increasing day by day in the contemporary society. In India, alcohol consumption is considered as the major substance use disorder. Many people are drinking alcohol for euphoric experiences, some are abusing to relieve tensions and some are consuming alcohol due to peer pressure. The chronic use of alcoholic beverages causes physical and psychological disturbances in individuals. It also directly affects their family, social and occupational life. Personal disorganization in an alcoholic dependant person may gradually leads to family disorganization.

The neglect of the roles and responsibilities of the husbands due to alcohol abuse causes extra burden for the wives. The wives of alcoholics go through countless problems such as physical and mental torturing from their partners. She feels aloof, helpless and deserted.

Globally, it is proved that 1.4% of total population abuse alcohol beverages and excess use causes 2.8 million deaths in a year. The prevalence is highest in the age group of 25 – 34 years. According to current national survey, around 16 crore Indians in the age group between 10-75 years abuse alcohol beverages (The New Indian Express, 2019). The bars were kept closed due to the outbreak of Covid -19, the alcohol intake of people in Kerala was not declined as such. They ingested Rs. 14,700 Crore worth alcohol beverages. The recent investigations proved that they used alcohol for 10,340 Crore during the period April 2020 – January 2021.

Not only the alcohol dependant client, but also his relatives had to experience the ill effects. The wives of alcoholics are under pressure to deal with the stressful situations. They become physically, mentally and socially pathetic. Special attention should be given to the family members especially to spouses who are vulnerable to risk of physical and psychological disturbances. Here arises the need to determine the level of stress and coping among the spouses of alcoholics at selected De-addiction Centres in Kottayam district, Kerala.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A descriptive study to assess the stress and coping strategies among wives of alcoholics, at selected de-addiction centres in Kottayam District, Kerala".

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the stress among wives of alcoholics
2. To assess the coping strategies among wives of alcoholics
3. To associate the stress and coping strategies among the wives of alcoholics with their Baseline proforma.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Spouses of alcoholics have stress.
2. Spouses of alcoholics use different kinds of mechanisms to come out of their stress.
3. There is a significant relationship between the stress and coping strategies among the wives of alcoholics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pandey, S. & Shreetha, K. (2020) investigated the level of coping in wives of alcoholics in Nepal. Using convenient sampling technique, the participants were selected for the study. The research study revealed that coping among wives of alcoholics was moderate coping 98 percentage and well coping around 2 percentage.

Kaur, R. & Bajwa, A.K. (2019) conducted a study on stress and coping strategies in wives of alcohol abusers. By adopting convenient sampling method, 60 wives were chosen for the study. The outcome of the investigation showed that 78.3% of participants were suffering from moderate stress whereas, 21.7% were with mild stress. The coping strategies in wives presented with 80% of them sometimes used coping strategies and 20% often used coping strategies.

Sumathi, G.S.(2018) conducted a comparative study to evaluate depression among spouses of alcohol abusers and non-abusers. Using purposive sampling technique, 60 samples were selected in each group. The level of depression was evaluated using BDI. The results showed 55% of participants were suffering from severe depression and 33.7% & 63.7% of subjects had mild and moderate depression.

Ravindran, O. S. & Joseph, S. A. (2017) investigated a research on coping resources and emotional distress in fifty wives of alcoholics. The study results showed that alcohol abuse was connected with great mental anguish in wives and it was also proven that they have used both adaptive and maladaptive coping.

Kaur, S. (2016) performed a study to identify the evidence of depression in spouses of alcohol dependants in Punjab. The depression was evaluated by modified Zung self-rating depression scale. The result showed that majority (32.1%) of the participants was suffering from depression.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A Quantitative research approach and descriptive design was used in this study. The study was conducted in ATMATA KENDRAM, De-addiction centre, Changanacherry, MOCHANA De-addiction centre, Kanjirappally. The Population was all the wives of alcoholics attending at the selected De-addiction centres. The wives of alcoholics who fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected as sample by purposive sampling technique, The sample size was 50.

Selection criteria:➤ **Inclusion criteria**

- Wives of alcoholics attending selected De-addiction centers.
- Wives age between 21 to 60 years
- Wives who will be able to speak, read, and write Malayalam.

➤ **Exclusion criteria**

- Wives whose husbands have substance abuse other than alcohol.
- Wives who are suffering from chronic physical and mental problems.
- Wives of alcoholics who are not living with their husbands.

Tool:

1. Baseline proforma
2. Modified Percieved Stress Scale to evaluate the level of stress among wives of alcoholics
3. Coping with drinking questionnaire to determine the coping level in wives of alcoholics

RESULTS:

TABLE 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects according to Baseline proforma

Sl no	Baseline proforma	F	%	Sl no	Baseline proforma	F	%
		n =50				n = 50	
1.	Age in years			6.	Duration of marriage		
	➤ 20-35	12	24		➤ <10 Years	6	12
	➤ 36-50	20	40		➤ 10-20 Years	10	20
	➤ >50	18	36		➤ 21-30 Years	18	36
					➤ >30 Years	16	32
2.	Religion			7.	Type of family		
	➤ Christian	29	58		➤ Nuclear family	44	88
	➤ Hindu	21	42		➤ Joint family	6	12
	➤ Muslim	0	0				
3.	Education			8.	Number of children		
	➤ No formal education	1	2		➤ 1-2	42	84
	➤ Secondary	16	32		➤ >2	8	16
	➤ higher secondary & Degree	27	54				
	➤ PG & above	6	12				
4.	Occupation			9.	Duration of drinking		
	➤ Housewife	29	58		➤ <10 years	7	14
	➤ Coolie /daily wages	15	30		➤ 10-25 years	13	26
	➤ Self employee	4	8		➤ >25 years	30	60
	➤ Govt/Pvt employee	2	4				
5.	Family income						
	➤ <15,000	35	70				
	➤ 15,000-30,000	13	26				
	➤ >30,000	2	4				

TABLE 2: Frequency distribution of samples according to level of stress

Stress level scores	Grade	Frequency	Percentage
<20	Mild	1	2%
20-40	Moderate	49	98%
>40	Severe	-	-

Maximum score: 56

TABLE 3: Frequency distribution of samples according to level of coping

Coping level scores	Grades	Frequency	Percentage
<10	Low level	-	-
10-20	Moderate	48	96%
>20	High level	2	4%

Maximum score: 30

TABLE 4: Mean, Standard Deviation of Age, Family Income, Stress Score and Coping Score

n=50

Demographic Variables	Mean	Standard deviation
Age in years	44.3400	9.89044
Family income	14240.0000	5262.72995
Stress score	27.9200	3.94782
Coping Score	16.5800	2.33072

TABLE 5: Association of stress and coping with Baseline proforma

n=50

Sl. No	Variables	Stress			Coping		
		Chi square	df	t value (P<0.05)	Chi square	df	t value (P<0.05)
1.	Age in years	1.531	2	5.99	6.597	2	5.99
2.	Religion	1.409	1	3.84	.055	1	3.84
3.	Education	.869	3	7.82	.509	3	7.82
4.	Occupation	2.381	3	7.82	1.509	3	7.82
5.	Family income	2.904	2	5.99	.893	2	5.99
6.	Duration of marriage	4.082	3	7.82	4.861	3	7.82
7.	Type of family	.139	1	3.84	.284	1	3.84
8.	Number of children	.194	1	3.84	.397	1	3.84
9.	Duration of drinking	6.268	2	5.99	6.597	2	5.99

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that there is moderate level of stress (98%) among spouses of alcoholics and they adopt moderate coping strategies (96%). It was also found that there is statistically significant association between stress and duration of drinking and between coping and age and duration of drinking. They need more care and attention to cope up with their life situations. Then only they can maintain a harmony in their daily life and improve their quality of personal, family and social life.

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