

Coping the Psychosomatic Indicators of stress among wives of alcoholic addicted husbands in sub-urban parts of Chennai

A Kasthuri^{1*}, Keshav Singh², K Mohana Krishnanh³, A K Rajendran⁴

{^{1,2}Associate Professor, ⁴Professor and HOD, Department of Community Medicine} {³Professor, Department of Microbiology}
Sri Muthukumaran Medical College and Research Institute, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, INDIA.

Email: kasthumohan@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Alcoholic addiction is a major social pathology. Because of increasing evidence of social drinking and change in cultural pattern, alcoholic addiction is widely prevalent among men in the rural areas. Also the domestic violence against women is increased after consuming alcohol. **Aim and objectives:** 1) To study the prevalence of psychosomatic indicators of stress among wives of alcoholic addicted husbands. 2) To study the association of coping strategies of stress with educational status and 3) To recommend coping strategies for the wives and children.

Key Words: Alcoholic addiction, psychosomatic stress indicators, social privileges, divorce.

*Address for Correspondence:

Dr. A Kasthuri, ELM A41, City Light Apartments, Chennai 95, Tamil Nadu, INDIA.

Email: kasthumohan@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Alcoholic addiction is a major social pathology. Because of increasing evidence of social drinking and change in cultural pattern, alcoholic addiction is widely prevalent among men in the rural areas. Also the domestic violence against women is increased after consuming alcohol. Wives of alcoholic husbands face increasing stress and also report psychosomatic symptoms attributed to the stress. Family harmony is lost and children of the family face stress. The spouse may have feelings of hatred, self-pity, avoidance of social contacts, may suffer exhaustion and become physically or mentally ill. Very often the mother has to perform the roles of her husband too. Family responsibilities of father fall on the mother. As a result, the wife may be inconsistent, demanding and often

neglect the children. Financial difficulty is another issue that families of alcoholics have to deal with. The family may have to give up social privileges because of alcoholism. Huge amount of money is spent on alcohol. Joblessness is a major social problem, attributed to alcoholism. Alcoholism is one of the major reasons for divorce.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive cross-sectional study. All the participants are informed about the study and their informed consent obtained. A random sampling of 46 women is considered for the study. Married women of reproductive age whose husbands have the habit of alcoholic addiction is given a questionnaire regarding the psychosomatic indicators of stress, at the time of facing alcohol consumed husband and their coping behaviour in sub-urban part of Chennai and analysed.

RESULTS

80% women faced domestic violence after the husbands' returns home taking alcohol. 100% women exhibited psychosomatic symptoms related to stress at the time of facing the alcohol consumed husband. 90 % had increased Gastro Intestinal mobility and gastritis. 75% exhibited migraine, headaches, irritability. All women

experienced anxiety and 60% had sleep disturbances. 60% exhibited dysmenorrhoea. 2% exhibited suicidal tendencies. Projection is the common defence mechanism observed. 98% of the wives do not know the coping strategies of stress and 76% have no knowledge about de-addiction clinics. 10% had knowledge about de-addiction only from visual media. 96% of wives expressed their willingness to learn about the coping strategies. It is found in the study that 95% of these women act as an enabling parent, which encourages the husband to be an alcoholic addict.

Table 1: Percentage of Psychosomatic indicators of stress among the wives of alcoholic addicted husbands

Sr.no	Psychosomatic indicators of stress	Percentage	P value
1	Increased G.I motility and	90%	<0.001 **
2	gastritis	75%	
3	Migraine and headache	60%	
4	Sleep disturbances	60%	
5	Dysmenorrhea	2%	
	Suicidal tendencies		

** Highly significant

Table 2: Association of educational status of women and the coping stress

Sr.no	Educational status	Problem based coping	Emotion based coping	P value
1	Illiterate	1	7	<0.001 **
2	Primary	1	11	
3	High school	2	17	
4	Higher sec	1	4	
5	Diploma, degree	1	1	

DISCUSSION

In a Japanese study, 13.9% of the subjects had such diseases, in contrast to 1.1% of the controls. 2. The second health problem of the subjects which significantly exceeded that of the controls was cardiovascular disease (9.0% vs. 1.1%). 3. The rate of current illness of the subjects was 28.2% compared with 19.3% for the controls. 4. The rate of CMI Category IV (indicates "neurotic") of the subjects was 5.0% compared with 0.0% for the controls. 6. As a whole, our results were more moderate than those of previous studies, but wives of alcoholics had more current and past illness, and were more neurotic than the controls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prohibition in the state for the sale of alcoholic beverages. Proper education and ensuring moral values right from childhood should be made mandatory. De-addiction clinics may be established by government in every possible centre. Coping strategies of emotional distress should be taught to the wives. Forming women health clubs, she could be taught to not act as an enabling parent. Men who consume alcohol should be health educated about the health hazards of stress their wives face during domestic violence. Child clubs for children from these family and psychological reassurance and proper educational guidance should be provided.

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