



IMPACT OF ALCOHOLISM ON INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

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KEYWORDS :

Alcohol use disorders affect an Individual's physical condition; his social and occupational functioning and thereby affects the society on a larger scale. Although DSM uses precise terms such as Alcohol abuse and dependence; both are commonly called Alcoholism. On or average alcoholism is estimated to decrease a person's life span by 10 to 20 yrs.

Alcoholism leads to physical consequences on all bodily organs. It affects the liver leading to fatty liver; hepatitis, cirrhosis, encephalopathy hearing drinking leads to oesophagitis; gastritis; achlorhydria; gastric ulcers pancreatitis and pancreatic insufficiency. It is associated with increased blood pressure dysregulation of lipoproteins; increased risk for myocardial infarction and cerebro vascular diseases. Muscle weakness can also be or effect of alcoholism. Wernicke's encephalopathy and korsakoff syndrome and alcohol induced amnesic disorder are neurological effects.

Alcohol intoxication leads to maladaptive behavioural and psychological changes such as aggressive behaviour; mood lability and impaired judgement. Alcohol withdrawal can present as autonomic hyperactivity, insomnia, tremulousness, nausea, vomiting, hallucination, anxiety, agitation and grand mal seizures.

Alcoholism is co – morbid with psychiatric disorders especially mood disorder, anxiety disorders such as phobias, panic disorder, anti – social personality disorder and suicides are common. Psychotic disorder can also occur due to heavy alcohol use. It usually presents with auditory hallucinations that are unstructured, reproachful or threatening. The hallucinations usually last less than a week. Delusions of persecutory nature are common.

Alcoholism has many social Implications. Driving a motor vehicle while intoxicated can lead to accidents. Persons usually miss work and which further leads to unemployment. They suffer from lack of adequate support system due to arguments or difficulties with family members and friends.

Legal difficulties such as arrest for intoxicated behaviour and traffic accidents under intoxicated state occur. They are isolated by family member and they live alone. This in turn can lead to psychological distress.

Alcoholism by affecting the Individuals has a greater impact on the society. Individuals become non – productive; results in financial difficulties and family members also suffer due to problematic behaviour. Children of alcoholic are vulnerable to behavioural problems, conduct problems and learning difficulty. Spouse suffer from depression, anxiety and various stress related problems. They also create problem in the society by involving in violence, riots and aggressive behaviour. Alcoholism contributes to 50% of homicides and 25% of suicides. Thus alcoholism affects not only the Individual, but also significant others.

Hence, proper treatment of alcoholics and incorporation of family members in that process is important. Proper intervention will improve the Individual as well as the society and the nation .

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