



THE STUDY OF STRESSFUL LIFE EVENTS IN ALCOHOL DEPENDENT MALES.

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ABSTRACT **BACKGROUND-** Stressful life events are also one of the reasons for the relapse drinking or such stress causes an individual to start drinking in a dependence pattern, basically a negative coping skill which lands individual in dependence pattern of drinking. So the article depicts all the stressful life events we found in our research in alcohol dependent males. **MATERIALS-METHODS:** After Ethical Clearance, the study was conducted as a case control hospital-based study, in Mahatma Gandhi Medical University of Medical Sciences and Technology, 2 groups of 50 subjects each, Group 1- Alcohol dependent males as per ICD-10 criteria and Group 2 – healthy matched controls on age and education. **RESULTS-** 8% of cases faced marital separation, 20% suffered from financial loss, 24% had family conflicts, 22% suffered from marital conflicts, 18% had illness in family members, 10% suffered from job unemployed stress. 8% were having job suspensions, 6% had property damaged stress. The difference between study groups was statistically significant **CONCLUSION-** It was concluded from the present study that number of stressful life events and the types of stressful life events like marital separation, financial loss, family conflicts, marital conflicts, illness in family, job suspension, unemployment were more in alcohol dependent cases as compared to healthy controls.

KEYWORDS: Alcohol, Stressful Life events, Dependence pattern

INTRODUCTION-

Stress of any duration acute or a chronic played a vital role in giving birth to alcohol dependency cases. Men who are working in higher and hectic jobs commonly possessed a high danger or risk to develop substance use disorders generally alcohol¹. Family constraint issue is another factor to initiate the use of alcohol in life². Stress is a phenomenon which mainly constitutes our perception, ability to interpret, responses and adapting to problematic, hazardous or challenging situations. Few studies reflected anxiety a chronic stressful condition having relation with an increased cortisol levels which mediates increased the habit of self- administration of substance in individuals who shows vulnerability to substance abuse³ Someone exposed to sadness affect situations as a whole creates hurdles in maintaining coping responses or skills in the persons to combat alcohol use and he further develops dependency and thus stressful situations may promote in dependency of substance like alcohol⁴.

Aim- Objectives

To study the stressful life events in cases of Alcohol Dependence Syndrome.

Materials- Methods

Inclusion- 20-60 years of age, Written consent, ICD-10 Diagnosis of Alcohol Dependence Syndrome.

Exclusion- Comorbid Medical, Neurological disorder, Delirium, active withdrawal symptoms.

After written consent, patient socio-demographic factors assessed, Presumptive Stressful Life Event scale (Gurmeet Singh) was used to assess stressful life events. Medical comorbidity was ruled out by using Charlson Comorbidity index scale.

Results- Observations

Table 1 Socio-Demographic Details of Subjects

Socio-Demographic	Cases n=50	Controls n =50	Significance p value
Age years (Mean +SD)	36.46 ±8.78	34.86 ±7.48	0.979 (NS)
Religion			0.645 (NS)
Hindu	44 (88%)	46(92%)	
Muslim	6(12%)	4(8%)	
Family type			0.208 (NS)
Nuclear	36(72%)	31(62%)	
Joint	14(28%)	19(38%)	

Family Income (Mean +SD)	12966.00+10469.33	17,750.00+14047.75	0.056 (NS)
Birth Order			0.05 (S)
1	9(18%)	22(44%)	
2	19(38%)	15(30%)	
3/>3	22(44%)	13(26%)	
Marital Status			0.590 (NS)
Married	38(76%)	36(72%)	
Unmarried	12(24%)	14(28%)	
Domicile			0.679 (NS)
Rural	33(66%)	30(60%)	
Urban	17(34%)	20(40%)	

Among the socio demographic parameters, the relationship among study groups is non- significant, except birth order where it is significant, younger ones with higher order are involved in dependence.

Table 2 Distribution of the total cases according to their Severity of Alcohol Dependence Questionnaire

Severity Score	Cases n=50	Mean score + SD
Mild <16	12(24%)	11.17 +2.92
Moderate 17-30	28(56%)	19.75 +2.80
Severe >30	10(20%)	32.80 +1.55

Maximum subjects were having moderate severity score on Severity of Alcohol dependence- questionnaire 56%.

Table 3 Distribution of the total subjects according to the number of Presumptive Stressful Life Events

No. of Presumptive Stressful life events	Cases (N=50)		Controls (N=50)	
	No.	%	No	%
0	19	38%	34	68%
1	06	12%	03	06%
2	18	36%	11	22%
3	05	10%	02	04%
4	02	04%	00	00%

Chi-square = 10.221 with 4 degrees of freedom; p value= 0.037 (S)

Table 3 showed that 38% of cases had no stressful life events as compared to 68% of controls. 12% of cases faced 1 life event, 36% faced 2 life

events, 10% faced 3 life events and 4% cases faced 4 life events.

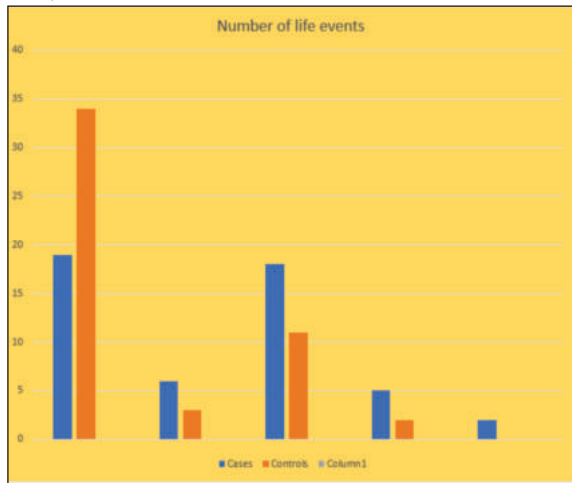


Table 4 Distribution of the total Subjects according to the Impact scores of different Stressful Life Events

Stressful life Events	Cases (N=50)	Controls (N=50)
Marital separation	308	077
Financial loss	540	221
Family conflicts	564	235
Death in family	396	264
Illness in family	468	156
Property damage	183	122
Job suspension	304	76
Sexual problems	102	102
Unemployed	204	102

Table 4 shows that the cases had higher impact scores of stressful life events when compared to the control group. The difference between study group was statistically significant.

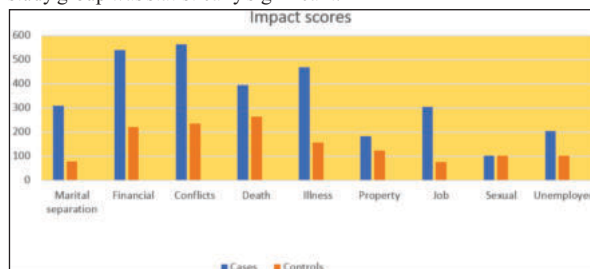


Table 5 The mean impact scores of stressful life events in both study groups

Groups	Mean value	P value
Cases	377.45	0.05 Significant
Controls	179.10	

showed that the mean impact score in cases was 377.45 and in controls it was 179.10 and cases had higher scores. There was statistically significant difference between study groups.



DISCUSSION

In present study number of stressful life events are comparatively more in alcohol dependent cases. We observed that 38% of cases had no stressful life events as compared to 68% of controls. 12% of cases faced 1 life event, 36 % faced 2 life events, 10% faced 3 life events and 4% cases faced 4 life events, its higher in comparison to control groups. Our results are similar to the conclusions made by Seeman et al. ⁶(1992) and Peirce at al.⁷ (1994) also gave association of stressful life events with alcohol dependency (Table-3). In the present study it was observed that types of stressful life events like marital separation (8%), financial losses (20%), conflicts (24%), marital conflicts (22%), death in family (12%), illness in family (18%), property damage (6%), job loss (8%), unemployment (10%) was more in alcohol dependent cases as compared to healthy controls and the difference between study groups was statistically significant. Similar results were reported in past by Greeley et al. ⁸(1999). Some study by Kennedy et al⁹ and Green et al ¹⁰ depicted that the child stressors and adversities in the family, conflict full environment leads to other substance abuse habits in an individual leading to future dependence pattern of drinking. Eiden et al¹¹ showed that the paternal drinking influences the individual habits of drinking as well, our studies showed positive family use of drinking is a risk for individual for high chances of dependence of alcohol. The result shown by Leonard et al. ¹²(1996) also similar to our findings that the marital issues and conflicts are risk factors for the dependency of alcohol and other substances. (Table-5).

CONCLUSION

It was concluded from the present study that number of stressful life events and the types of stressful life events like marital separation, financial loss, family conflicts, marital conflicts, illness in family, job suspension, unemployment were more in alcohol dependent cases as compared to healthy controls. Thus, it was concluded that, the alcohol dependency was related with the stressful life events faced in life.

Limitations

1. The size of sample was small, so the findings cannot be generalised.
2. The study was conducted at a tertiary care hospital, which may not be representative of the general population.

Conflicts of Interests – Nil

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