



## Marital Life Satisfaction Among Alcoholics

### KEYWORDS

Marital life, satisfaction, alcoholics, socio-demographic details, span of alcohol dependency, consumption frequency.

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### ABSTRACT

*The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined alcoholics as excessive drinkers whose dependence on alcohol has attained such a degree that they show noticeable mental disturbance or an interference with their mental and bodily health, their interpersonal relations and their smooth social and economic functioning, or who show the signs of such development. This descriptive study is aimed to assess the marital satisfaction among the alcoholics in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu. The universe of the present study consisted of married alcoholics' under de-addiction and detoxification treatment at SOCSEAD de-addiction center during the month of June 2014. The total number of registered in patient admitted in the socsead during the period of study from June 2014 to July 2014 was 90. All the patients were included in this study by using census method. The tools selected in accordance with the aim and objectives of the study. It consisted of self prepared Socio-demographic interview schedule along with marital satisfaction scale by Funk, J.L. & Rogger, R, D. (2007). The major findings of the study are: A little more than ½ (51.1%) of the respondents had low level of marital satisfaction. Remaining 48.9% of the respondents had high level of marital satisfaction, the respondents' span of alcoholism and alcohol consumption frequency has significant influence on the marital life satisfaction.*

### Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) has define alcoholics as excessive drinkers whose dependence on alcohol has attained such a degree that they show noticeable mental disturbance or an interference with their mental and bodily health, their interpersonal relations and their smooth social and economic functioning, or who show the signs of such development.

### Problems of alcoholism: The Couple and Family Context

Consumption of alcohol is not only affecting the addicts but it also has significant negative impact on their marital life and family life, because it causes the following issues in the families;

- Violence
- Marital conflict
- Infertility
- Jealousy
- Economic insecurity
- Divorce
- Fetal alcohol effect

### Effects of alcohol abuse on marital satisfaction and quality

• **Marital distress.** The feeling of marital distress is more common among the individuals in marriages an alcoholic spouse than married individuals who are not married to alcoholics.

• **Anger.** Heavy alcohol use is associated with more negative and hostile communication, more expressions of anger, and less warmth and unity in the relationship. It affects the couple's satisfaction in their marriage and create greater tension.

• **Everyday family responsibilities.** Alcohol abuse decreases marital satisfaction because it decreases their alcoholic spouses' commitment and responsibility to shoulder the family tasks and duties.

• **Psychological distress.** The effects of alcoholism on families can cause more damage and pain than any other internal or external influence on the family unit

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Alcoholism creates significant mental trauma and physical health problems. Divorce rates among couples where one or both partner's drinks are much higher than average. Due to alcoholism the marriage suffers from:

- Poor spousal communication
- Increased anger and distress
- Reduced intimacy and sexual desire
- Increased marital abuse
- Depleting finances spent on alcohol .

### Review of literature

Murphy, C. M. and O' Farrel, (1.996) discussed initial studies that showed a high proportion of male alcoholics seeking treatment had been violent towards their wives and that identified factors that may help to explain the association. The marital violent alcoholics are also more likely to binge, have more negative styles of communicating with their spouses, and maintain strong beliefs about the negative influences of alcohol on marriage. Initial evidence suggested that cessation of problem drinking after alcoholism treatment involving the spouse is associated with significant and substantial reductions in marital violence.

**Dunn and Nancy, et al, (1 987)** studied the relation between alcohol consumption and marital stability, assessed longitudinally in two groups of male alcoholics: in home (n=4) and out of home (n=4) drinkers. Through the use of univariate and bivariate time series analysis, the study identified a causal relation, between alcohol consumption and marital stability and significant impact of drinking location on obtained relations. Findings suggested in terms of Steinglass's suggestion that alcohol can have adaptive consequences for the marriage and family life of alcoholics.

**Drewery, J. and Rae (1969)** report that the interpersonal relationship between the alcoholic and his wife is characterized by a clear evidence of conflicting dependence- independence

needs. The weight of the evidence favors the interpretation that it is the patient's neurotic difficulties rather than any psychopathology in his wife, which has determined the interpersonal dilemma.

Families with alcoholic member are characterized by a variety of structural dysfunction, including chaotic or rigid patterns of adaptability (Steinglass, 1975) ,Anderson and Henderson, 1983") and disturbed interactional boundaries (Anderson and Henderson, 1983, Seixas and Youcha, 1 985), Marital interaction is one of the crucial areas, which helps in delineating Psychopathology underlying various psychiatric illnesses. A number of marital relationships have been studied like interpersonal communication, understanding, well being emotionality and love, problem solving and supportiveness, personal growth activities and structured arrangements.

Montgomery and Johnson (1992) reported that historically wives of alcoholics have been described as having disturbed pathological personalities that were instrumental in causing and maintaining their husband's drinking. More recently researches have tended to support the view that the behavior of these women reflects their stressful circumstances. The women in the study reported interpersonal, extra-personal and intrapersonal stressors. The most frequently reported and highest ranked stressor was their relationships with their husbands. Sobriety does not necessarily mean that stressors disappear

A study on alcoholic's housewives and role satisfaction by Farid, et al , ( 1 989) revealed a strong relationship between dissatisfaction with the role of housewife and severity of alcoholism. On a range of sexual satisfaction variables the alcoholic and marital- conflict couples & d not differ with both groups of couples reporting less sexual satisfaction than non-marital conflict couples (O ' Farrel, Choquette and Birchler, 1991).

Knibbe and Abbenhuis (1991) studied the following: husband-wife social relations at the beginning of marriage, the effect of alcoholism on social relations outside the nuclear family, the effect of chronic alcoholism on the de's social position, and the help offered by lay people and professionals.

## Materials and methods

### Aim of the study:

The aim of this study is to know about the marital satisfaction of the alcoholics.

### Objectives of the study:

- To study the social demographic details of the respondents.
- To know about the marital satisfaction of the respondents.

### Research Hypotheses:

1. There is significant difference between the alcohol consumption frequencies of the respondents with regard to their marital adjustment.
2. Higher the span of alcohol dependency and lower will be the marital adjustment.

### Research design:

Designing a study helps researchers to plan and implement the study in way that will help them obtain the intended results thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation. In the present study researcher has used the Descriptive Research design.

### Universe:

The universe of the present study consisted of married alcoholics' under alcoholic treatment at socsead de-addiction center during the month of June 2014. The universe of this

study in infinite because the universe is not consistent in nature.

### Sampling Techniques:

The total number of registered in patient admitted in the socsead during the period of study from June 2014 to July 2014 was 90. All the patients were included in this study by using census method.

### Inclusive criteria:

All the respondents came for de-addiction at Socsead during the month of June.

### Exclusive criteria:

#### Patients with Psychiatric illness.

Tools for the data collection:

The tools selected in accordance with the aim and objectives of the study. It consisted of self prepared Socio-demographic interview schedule along with marital satisfaction scale by Funk, J.L. & Rogge, R, D. (2007).

## Analysis and discussion

### Findings related to socio –demographic variable:

It was revealed from the analysis that, nearly 1/2 (44.4 percentage) of the respondents were belonged to the age group of 31- 40 years. More than 2/4th (47.8 percent) of the respondent's educational qualification were up to 12th standard. A little more than 3/5th (61.1 percentage) of the respondents were Hindus. More than 1/4th (33.3 percent) of the respondents were in private job. 32.2 percent of the respondents were self-employed. A little less than 3/4th (71.1 percent) of the respondents get 0-10000 income per month. More than 3/5th (68.9 percent) of the respondents have 0-2 children. More than ½ (58.9 percent) of the respondents belonged to nuclear family. More than 3/5th (66.7 percent) of the respondents came from urban area. Nearly ½ (45.6 percent) of the respondents have 0-5 years of drinking habit. More than 3/5th (64.4 percent) of respondent's family size was 0-5 in numbers.

### Findings related to alcoholism related problems:

Nearly ½ (47.8 percent) of the respondents consume alcohol due to their hard work. A little more than ½ (51.1 percent) of the respondent's factors influences to consume alcohol is their peer group. Exactly 3/5th (60.0 percent) of the respondents drink daily. Exactly ½ (50.0 percent) of the respondents have presence of physical ailments. 14.5 percentages of the respondents have liver problem. A little more than 3/4th (76.7 percent) of the respondents know about ill health effects of alcohol. More than ½ (54.4 percent) of the respondents lost some their properties due to alcoholism. Majority (85.6 percent) of the respondents wanted to have de-addiction. A little less than 3/4th (70.0 percent) of the respondents were involving in domestic violence. More than ¼ (31.1 percent) of the respondents did not involve in any type of domestic violence. More than 3/5th (67.8 percent) had the experience of frequently changing the job. A little more than ½ (55.6 percent) of the respondents met accidents due to alcoholism.

Marital satisfaction		No. of respondents	Percent
	Low	46	51.1
	High	44	48.9
	Total	90	100.0

**Table-1**  
Distribution of the respondents by their Marital satisfaction

Alcohol consumption frequency	Mean	S S	D f	Mean Square	F
Marital satisfaction	Between Groups G1=114.8333 G2=97.7143 G3=91.3333 G4=97.2593 G5=89.0000	2208.172	5	441.634	F=0.564 P>0.05 Not significant
Within Groups		65726.950	84	782.464	

G1=Special occasion G2=Once in a month G3=Once in a week G4=Daily G5= Frequently

Table-2

**Analysis of variance between alcohol consumption frequencies of the respondents with regard to their marital satisfaction**

**Research Hypothesis 1: There is significant difference between the alcohol consumption frequencies of the respondents with regard to their marital adjustment.**

The above table shows that there is no significant variance between alcohol consumption frequencies of the respondents with regard to their marital satisfaction. While analyzing the mean scores it is revealed that the respondents who consume alcohol frequently that is consuming alcohol 2-3times every day perceived very low level of marital satisfaction comparing to other categories. Hence the research hypothesis is rejected.

S. No	Variables	Correlation value	Inference
1	Age and marital satisfaction	.028	P>0.05 Not significant
2	Income and marital satisfaction	-.009	P>0.05 Not significant
3	No. of children and marital satisfaction	-.076	P>0.05 Not significant
4	Span of alcoholism and marital satisfaction	-.237(*)	P<0.05 Significant
5	Family size and marital satisfaction	-.110	P>0.05 Not significant

Table-3

**Karl Pearson co-efficient of correlation between independent variables and marital satisfaction**

**Research Hypothesis 2: Higher the span of alcohol dependency and lower will be the marital adjustment.**

From this table it is revealed that there is no significant relationship between the respondents age, income, number of children and family size with regard to their marital adjustment. Yet there is a significant relationship between the respondents' span alcohol consumption with regard to their marital adjustment. That too negative relationship between the variables. Hence it is proved that the longer the alcoholism span lower will be the marital satisfaction and the research hypothesis is accepted.

### Suggestions

As span of alcoholism and alcohol consumption frequency has significant influence on the marital life satisfaction of the respondents, early interventions are of greater use. As soon as the realization of the respondents' habit of consuming alcoholism, the family members of them should take initiative for de-addiction and detoxification.

The spouses of alcoholics have a significant role to play in the respondents' de-addiction, instead of shouldering the responsibilities of their alcoholic spouses and blaming them. That is instead of being in a problem side they should move towards the solution.

With the consent of the respondents and sometimes without consent of the respondents the therapeutic interventions have to be started, because putting an end to this addiction through both the above said ways will be beneficial the respondents and their family as well.

People especially those who are from rural areas with poor academic background must be given enough awareness about de-addiction and detoxification process and its treatment interventions. It will surely make the use of these services in a better way.

### Conclusion

Marital satisfaction among the alcoholics was studied and it was proved that there is significant relationship between the respondents' span of alcoholism and their marital satisfaction. Hence it is advised that the span can be reduced through early interventions.

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