

Psychosocial Problems Of The Wives Of Alcoholics



Sociology

KEYWORDS : The alcoholics, Quality of life, adjustmental problems, self-esteem and psycho-education

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken with a view to understand the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and to study about their self-esteem, quality of life and family adjustment. The present study was conducted in slum areas of Tiruchirappalli District at Tamilnadu such as Khaja patti, Khaja Nagar, Bells Ground Ananagar, MGR Nagar and sathiya moorthy Nagar. For this study the researchers selected 22 respondents from each slum areas (n=110) through snow ball sampling method. The data on the subject were collected with the help of structured interview schedule prepared by researchers. The study was descriptive in nature. The study has revealed that majority (51.8 percent) of the respondents have had high level of self esteem, 43.6 percent of the respondents have had low level of quality of life and a sizeable (81.8 percent) of the respondents have had high level of self adjustment, family adjustment, adjustment with husband and children. The wide range of intervention techniques both supportive and reflective in nature such as catharsis, insight development and psycho-education could be used by social workers for motivating, enabling them to deal with denial, enhancing their self esteem, improving the quality of life and reducing their adjustmental problems with family members.

INTRODUCTION

Alcoholism is a wide and increasing social and physical problem in the world. The Number of the wives of Alcoholic is getting increased in the population of India. Alcoholism is often termed the family illness, referring to the tremendous impact an active alcoholic has on those around him (Fox, 1968). The alcoholism is an economic drain on family resources, threatens job security, interrupts normal family tasks, causes conflicts, demands adjectives and adaptive responses from family members who do not know how to respond appropriately. This situation will increase tension and stress, which may make the family members, especially wives and children desperate, angry, frustrated, nervous, afraid and guilty. In many ways they start behaving like the addict (Rao, 2004). The interaction patterns in alcoholic's families are also very strained. As a result marital disruptions, disrupted family rituals, poor cohesion, expressiveness and recreational orientation, difficulties in communication and effective involvement and lack of clean hierarchical boundaries are common in alcoholics' families. The adverse effect of alcoholism on wives and children reveals its evil effects. The wives develop disturbed personality structure or maladaptive behaviours. They will become neurotic, psychologically maladjusted, sadistic, hostile, frustrated, quarrelsome, and agitated (Subadra, 1999). The wives of Alcoholics are having low quality of life and also interested in family counseling not only stress, the wives of Alcoholics faces the problem of verbal abuse, communication difficulties, low-self esteem which affects the behaviour and personality of the wives of Alcoholics. Due to lower marital adjustments their quality of life is not satisfaction to them (Bhatt, et al, 2003). This study helps to understand better about the quality of Life, self-esteem and level of family adjustment among the wives of alcoholics.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The present study was conducted in slum areas of Tiruchirappalli District such as Khaja patti, Khaja Nagar, Bells Ground Ananagar, MGR Nagar and sathiya moorthy Nagar. This study was undertaken with a view to understand the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and to study about their self-esteem, quality of life and family adjustment. For this study the researchers selected 22 respondents from each slum areas (n=110) through snow ball sampling method. The data on the subject were collected with the help of structured interview schedule prepared by researchers. The study was descriptive in nature. The researcher has been used the following standardized scales for data collection such as Self-esteem inventory was developed by Battle, J.S. (1981), Adjustment Inventory was developed by Dr. Penny Jain (1972) and The Quality of Life Scale (POQL) developed by Bech, P (1996).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table No. 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of Self Esteem

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents (n :110)	Percentage
1	Overall level of Self-esteem	57	51.8
	Low	53	48.2
	High		

The table 1 shows that half (51.8 percent) of the respondents have had high level of self esteem and rest (48.2 percent) of the respondents have had low level of self esteem. Early studies of the wives of alcoholics in a family-agency setting described them as often equally as sick as their husbands with a need to dominate, to suffer, to punish, or to belittle their mates. Such a wife and frequently the daughter of an alcoholic father may also suffer from feelings of basic anxiety and inadequacy which can be denied or assuaged by feeling superior to her husband (Fox, 1968). Another study argued that the wives of alcoholics had lower level of self esteem and were high on neuroticism and pessimism. Further, they manifested lower marital adjustment and showed greater communication apprehension towards their spouse and experienced greater marital conflict. Thus the findings of this study lend support to the stress and psychological perspective of wives of alcoholics (Stanley, 2012).

Table No. 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of Quality Of Life

S. No	Various dimensions of quality of life	No. Of Respondents (n :110)	Percentage
1	Physical problems	24	21.8
	Low	86	78.2
	High		
2	Cognitive problems	51	46.4
	Low	59	53.6
	High		
3	Affective problems	50	45.5
	Low	60	54.5
	High		
4	Social dysfunction	42	38.2
	Low	68	61.8
	High		
5	Economic problems	39	35.5
	Low	71	64.5
	High		
6	Ego problem	28	25.5
	Low	82	74.5
	High		
7	Overall	48	43.6
	Low	62	56.4
	High		

The table 2 explicit that more than half of the respondents have had higher level of quality of life with regard to dimensions such as physical problems (78.2 percent), cognitive problems (53.6

percent), affective problems (54.5 percent), social dysfunction (61.8 percent), economic problems, (64.5 percent) and ego problem (74.5 percent). However, more than half (56.4 percent) of the respondents have had high level of overall level of quality of life. These finding were corroborated with the studies of Bhatt, 2003, and Rao, 2004, they were observed that alcoholism has been considered a family disease. An individual's alcohol indulgence makes the family go through intense psychological suffering. The incidence of family violence was significantly higher in families who used alcohol and the risk of spousal abuse increased significantly when the husband was an alcoholic. The commonest stressors faced day to day by the wife's of alcoholics such as financial problems, physical abuse of self and children and, social stigma (Shantala et al, 2000).

Table No. 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of Family Adjustment

S No	Various dimension of family adjustment	No. Respondents (n :110)	Of Percentage
1	Self Adjustment	Low	34
		High	76
2	Family Adjustment	Low	50
		High	60
3	Adjustment With Children	Low	22
		High	88
4	Adjustment With Husband	Low	40
		High	70
5	Adjustment with Elders and Relations	Low	44
		High	66
6	Overall	Low	20
		High	90
			18.2
			81.8

The table 3 explains that more than half of the respondents have had high level of family adjustment with regard to various dimensions such as Self Adjustment (69.1 percent), Family Adjustment (54.5 percent), Adjustment with Children (80 percent), Adjustment with husband (63.6 percent) and Adjustment with Elders and Relations (60 percent). However, a sizeable (81.8 percent) of the respondents have had higher level of overall family adjustments. These findings were correlated with studies of Block, (1965). Anderson, and Henderson, (1983), they were observed that Psychological disturbances in wives of alcoholics give rise to two main problems; first, the interpersonal problems of the wives adversely affect her emotional well-being and secondly it affects the smooth functioning of the home as well

as the individual. These two problems together will deteriorate the family relations resulting in the incapacity to function as a partner or parent. These two problems reduces the wives' positive thinking which leads her to feel inferior to others in all aspects of life like, personal, social, familial and economical areas. The emotional and behavioural problems in wives of alcoholics may result in divorce, separation or even suicide. Thus problem deserves social attention, needs help from grass root workers in social services, medical and psychiatric personnel. The another study agued that even though acute states of alcohol intoxication can lead to death or hospitalization of self or other family problems, domestic violence due to alcohol is a slow killer. The wives of alcoholics have been faced Various dimensions of domestic violence like physical violence (hitting, kicking, shoving, etc.), sexual abuse, family adjustment and emotional abuse are frequently associated with alcohol consumption (Rao, 2004).

SUGGESTIONS

- 1) The social workers should provide the professional helps to wives of alcoholics for improving their level of Self Esteem and quality of life.
- 2) The social workers should provide counseling to both husband and wife in a various forms such as individual counseling, family counselling, and group counselling.
- 3) The social workers can be adopting social methods such as individual intervention, group intervention and community intervention to wives of alcoholics for relieving them from psychological distress.
- 4) The social workers can provide family therapy to wives of alcoholics which will improve the interaction among the family members.
- 5) The Wives of alcoholics are suggested to undergo relaxation therapies such as yoga, meditation which can reduce the psychological distress and improve their level of adjustment with family members.
- 6) There is a need for specific spouse directed therapy to enable her to overcome her personality deficits and psychological problems and for better de-addiction outcome, it is imperative for family therapists to take into account the appreciations manifested in the couples marital functioning and to work towards the resolution. Thus the need is to provide a holistic intervention package involving both spouses.

CONCLUSION

It was observed from the present study that the social consequences of alcoholism at the individual level significantly impacts on personal life, work-related areas and family relationships. A higher incidence of negative social consequences ranging from poor self-esteem, low status, disturbed family relations, social and recreational problems have been reported among the wives of alcoholic. It is important task of the social workers to use social work intervention techniques and methods for improving their self-esteem, quality of life and family adjustmental problems.

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