



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE DEGREE OF MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG SPOUSES OF ALCOHOL DEPENDENT PATIENTS

Psychiatry

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Alcoholism causes harm to the well-being and health of the person and also the family. Spouses are mostly affected because of the intimate nature of the relationship. **Methodology:** Study included 150 wives of alcohol dependence syndrome patients. Severity of alcohol dependence was calculated using severity of alcohol dependence questionnaire (SADQ). The study aimed to assess the degree of marital satisfaction among spouses of patients with alcohol dependence syndrome using COUPLE SATISFACTION INDEX (CSI). **Results:** As per Severity (SADQ) score, severe addiction was seen in 32.7%, mild to moderate addiction was seen in 34% and 33.3% respectively. On couple satisfaction index, 58% were observed as not satisfied. There was significant association between presence of couple dissatisfaction and the level of severity of dependence on alcohol ($p < 0.05$) with prevalence of dissatisfaction among mild, moderate cases and severe alcoholism cases as 27.5%, 48% and 100% respectively. **Conclusion:** The findings of the present study indicates that mental health and marital satisfaction of spouses is considerably poor and warrant attention.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Liquor / alcohol, as it's known as, is a drug, that can cause acute as well as chronic effects in almost every organ system in the body. Excessive use of alcohol is a major problem in many countries which results in untold misery to the individual by affecting physical, psychological and social disabilities. As per the world health organization (WHO), worldwide disease burden contributed by alcohol usage is about 1.4%, contributing 1.8 million deaths which is about 3.2%, 4% i.e. 58.3 million people adjusted to the disability suffered due to being dependent on alcohol^[1]. About 33% Indian population consumes alcohol (second largest in the world) and 20% of the people, due to alcohol, have poor health status and marked nutritional deficiencies^[2,3]. This leads to a pattern, where there is prolonged, repeated consumption of alcohol by the self which leads to development of tolerance, features of withdrawal and regular and habitual drug consuming actions^[4,5,6].

There were studies which showed correlation with long standing use of spirits and presence of mental illnesses among spouses, like suicidal tendency and depressive symptoms^[7]. The suicidal tendency among spouses were due to domestic violence, lack of money for daily requirements and the suspicious character of the husband towards their spouse which finally resulted in depression leading to withdrawal from the society^[8,9,10]. There have been studies to show the relationship of alcoholism with excellence of marriage^[11,12,13] which is inversely linked to the psychological distress. There are poor patterns of reinforcement, role, communication and support among the relatives of alcoholics,^[14] and alcoholic husbands engage in domestic violence which is a chief stressor for the women, followed by poverty in those families^[15].

Burden of care' is noted as, occurrence of difficulties, complications or adverse effects which affects the household members of psychiatric patients^[16,17]. Alcoholism affects the family physically, socially, emotionally and financially leading to distress, dysfunction and burden to the family which in turn has impact on other's lives too. All these factors affect the woman's role as a homemaker, sister and mother leading to poor skills in coping & deprived social support leading to disharmony^[18,19]. Hence studying the effect of alcoholism on their spouse's psychiatric morbidity will help in improving their life quality, treatment outcome and reducing burden. This was the reason for us to study the degree of marital satisfaction among the wives of patients with alcohol dependence syndrome.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Methodology

The study was conducted in the psychiatry department of a tier 2 medical college in Southern Maharashtra. 150 patients between 21-60 years who were diagnosed as having Alcohol Dependence Syndrome as per International Classification of Diseases (ICD 10) criteria^[20] were included. These patients did not have any other psychiatric disorder

and were under treatment as outpatient or in-patient for alcoholism. Spouses of such patients with age > 19 years, staying together for atleast 2 years without any history of substance abuse other than tobacco or not having any major medical disorder were taken up for the study. All the subjects who were included in the study underwent following:

1. Explanation of the protocol
2. Consent, taken after detailed information
3. Detailed history, taken along with demographic data and details regarding alcohol consumption.
4. Their socio-economic status, calculated through Modified Kuppuswamy Socioeconomic Scale^[21].
5. The severity of alcohol dependence, calculated using Severity of Alcohol Dependence Questionnaire (SADQ)^[22].
8. Degree of marital satisfaction among spouses of patients with alcohol dependence syndrome was assessed using COUPLE SATISFACTION INDEX (CSI).^[23]

Analysis of results with statistics:

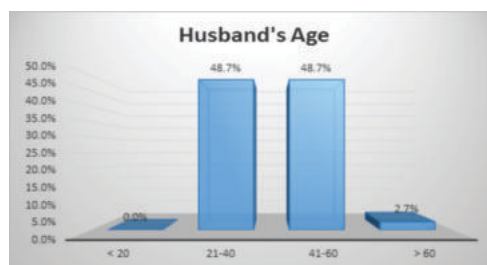
Our data that was collected was statistically described using appropriate terminologies. Calculations in statistics were done using the SPSS version 21 and graphical representation in excel document using the software Microsoft Excel 2007 (Microsoft Corporation, NY, USA).

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Table 1. Age distribution of study subjects for alcoholic husbands

Husband's Age (years)	N	%
< 20	0	0.0%
21-40	73	48.7%
41-60	73	48.7%
> 60	4	2.7%
Total	150	100.0%
Mean age - 41.5 +/- 8.5 years		

Mean age of the study cases was 41.5 years with 48.7% cases in 21-40 years and 41-60 years age group respectively.

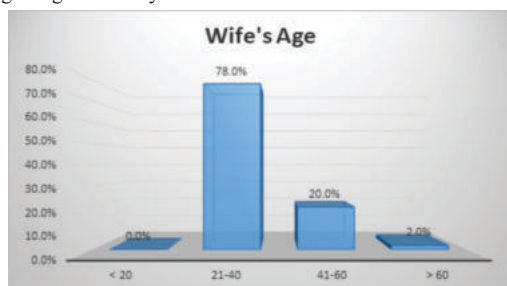


Graph 1: Age distribution of study subjects for alcoholic husbands

Table 2. Age distribution of study subjects for alcoholic husband's wife

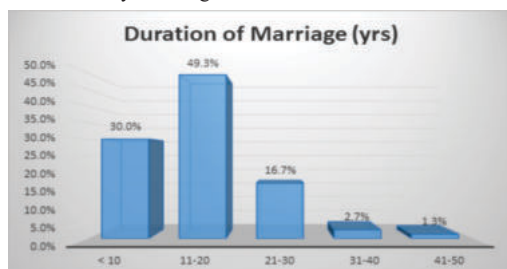
Wife's Age (years)	N	%
< 20	0	0.0%
21-40	117	78.0%
41-60	30	20.0%
> 60	3	2.0%
Total	150	100.0%
Mean age - 37.2 +/- 8.4 years		

Mean age of the wives of alcoholics was 37.2 years with 78% were in the age range of 21-40 years.

**Graph 2. Age distribution of study subjects for alcoholic husband's wife****Table 3. Distribution of study subjects as per duration of marriage**

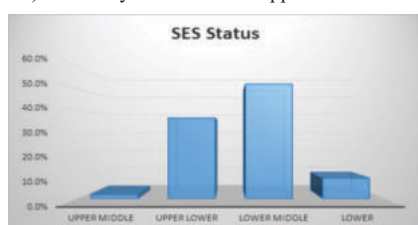
Duration of Marriage (years)	N	%
< 10	45	30.0%
11-20	74	49.3%
21-30	25	16.7%
31-40	4	2.7%
41-50	2	1.3%
Total	150	100.0%
Mean age - 16.12 +/- 8.3 years		

Mean duration of marriage was 16.12 years with over two third of the cases were over 10 years of age.

**Graph 3. Distribution of study subjects as per duration of marriage****Table 4. Distribution of study subjects as per socio-economic status**

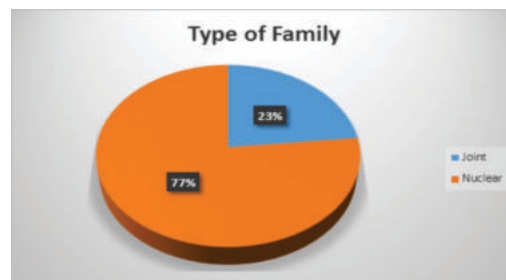
SES Status	N	%
Upper Middle	3	2.0%
Upper Lower	55	36.7%
Lower Middle	78	52.0%
Lower	14	9.3%
Total	150	100.0%

As per Modified Kuppuswamy Classification (2017 revision), most of the cases were from Upper Lower and Lower Middle socio-economic status (61.3%) while only 2% were from Upper Middle strata.

**Graph 4. Distribution of study subjects as per socio-economic status****Table 5. Distribution of study subjects as per type of family**

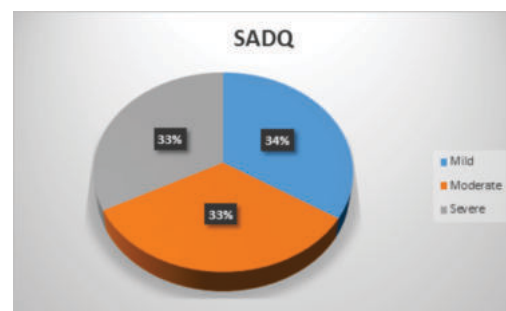
Type of Family	N	%
Joint	35	23.3%
Nuclear	115	76.7%
Total	150	100.0%

Most of the cases were from nuclear family (76.7%).

**Graph 5. Distribution of study subjects as per type of family****Table 6. Distribution of study subjects as per severity of alcoholism (SADQ Score)**

Severity of Alcoholism (SADQ Score)	N	%
Mild	51	34.0%
Moderate	50	33.3%
Severe	49	32.7%
Total	150	100.0%

As per Severity of Alcohol Dependence Questionnaire (SADQ) score, severe alcohol addiction was seen in 32.7% of the cases while mild to moderate addiction was seen in 34% and 33.3% cases respectively.

**Graph 6. Distribution of study subjects as per severity of alcoholism (SADQ Score)****Table 7. Distribution of study subjects Marital Satisfaction As Per Couple Satisfaction Index Scale.**

Couple Satisfaction Index	N	%
Not Satisfied	87	58.0%
Satisfied	63	42.0%
Total	150	100.0%

The degree of marital satisfaction among wives was assessed using Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI). On CSI, 58% were observed as not satisfied.

**Graph 7. Distribution Of Study Subjects Marital Satisfaction As Per Couple Satisfaction Index Scale**

DISCUSSION

Our present hospital-based study planned to assess the relationship among severity of alcohol dependence in male patients and psychiatric morbidity, marital-satisfaction and care giver burden in companions of patients with alcohol dependence syndrome. Study included 150 patients and their wives who were admitted in the psychiatry and medicine wards of our hospital.

The severity of alcohol dependence was calculated using severity of alcohol dependence questionnaire (SADQ). Care giver burden we used FAMILY BURDEN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (FBIS).

Demography:

In our study we observed that wives of alcohol dependent patients, had a mean age of 37.2 years with 78% having range of 21-40 years while the husband had a mean age of 41.5 years.

In a study by Kishore et al.^[24] wife's mean age was 32.4 years. In another similar study conducted by Shah et al.^[25], mean age was observed as 40.68 years. Indu V et al.^[26] observed the mean age of wives as 37.9 years. Mean age of alcohol-dependent spouses in the study by Dandu et al.^[27] was 35.04 years and by Kishore et al.^[24] was 37.6 years. Demographic pattern as seen in other similar studies in India is in sync with our study suggesting a significant lowering of age at initiation of drinking^[25-27]. As per Modified Kuppuswamy Classification (2017 revision), majority cases in present study were from upper lower or lower middle socio-economic status (61.3%), while only 2% were from upper middle strata.

Other studies also confirmed the above result, in which there was nearly twice [OR=1.95] the risk in an individual of lower economic background to consume alcohol, than an individual of higher status^[28,29]. However, in some papers there has been no relationship with the economic background of the patient and alcohol dependence^[30,31].

Severity Of Alcoholism:

A twenty items questionnaire, the Severity of Alcohol Dependence Questionnaire (SADQ), was formulated by Gross and Edwards^[32]. In present study, as per SADQ, severe alcohol addiction was present in 32.7% of the cases while mild to moderate addiction was observed in 34% and 33.3% cases respectively.

In a similar study by Kishore M et al.^[24], same numbers were observed among subjects with moderate & higher dependence. Similar results were also seen in studies by Kumar S et al.^[33] and Naga et al.^[33] where almost 1/3rd of the cases had severe levels of alcohol dependence.

Couple Satisfaction

Satisfaction in marriage among partners was evaluated using couple satisfaction index (CSI). 58% were observed as not satisfied. There was significant association between presence of couple dissatisfaction and the level of severity of dependence on alcohol ($p < 0.05$) with prevalence of dissatisfaction among mild, moderate cases and severe alcoholism cases as 27.5%, 48% and 100% respectively.

A study by Kahler et al.^[34] observed similar results showing that more severe the alcohol dependence, the more scores of marital dissatisfactions were seen in scales. Similarly Marshal et al.^[35] in his study showed dissatisfaction in marriage and negative influence on marriage among subjects who were dependent on alcohol. In another study 592 couples using separate self-administered questionnaire and this clearly indicated there was significant association when comparing the severity of alcohol use and the satisfaction in marriage.

Begam TS et al.^[36] observed that the satisfaction in marriage between partners of alcohol dependent patients was significantly high. In another study by Koustubh et al.^[37], they had similar findings in their study, and showed the presence of psychiatric morbidities in spouses of alcohol dependent patients.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes mental health, wellness and satisfaction in marriage in partners and spouses of patients and this needs adequate attention. There is no adequate weightage, given in our country, to partners of alcohol dependent patients, suffering from mental illness. Many times, it is skipped and ignored. There was significant association between presence of couple dissatisfaction and the level of severity of dependence on alcohol ($p < 0.05$) with prevalence of dissatisfaction among mild, moderate cases and severe alcoholism

cases as 27.5%, 48% and 100% respectively. This study proposes few major recommendations as below:

This study highlights the need for further studies that focuses on all these aspects as a part of rehabilitation of such alcoholic patients in a treatment and recovery program.

To reduce the risks that affect mental wellbeing of spouses, and to also improve treatment outcome in alcoholics, all these problems will need to be looked at and taken care of when planning a program.

Hence the treatment regimen should also be included to check for mood features, anxiety, disorders if any, in partners /wives /spouses of patient's dependent on alcohol. This will enhance treatment outcomes.

Further longitudinal studies with larger sample size and wider demographic variation is the need of the hour for better generalization of the results.

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