



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Nursing**

**PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESSORS AMONG SUBSTANCE ABUSERS**

**KEY WORDS:** Psychosocial stressor, substance abusers

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**ABSTRACT**

Psychosocial stress is the prime cause for the substance abuse. Social support may act as a protective factor to prevent the eruption of various behavior disorders. **Aim:** the aim of the study is to assess psychosocial stress among substance abusers attending OPDs of selected de-addiction centres of Tarn Taran. **Methods:** Quantitative (descriptive) Research approach with cross-sectional survey design was used to assess psychosocial stress among substance abusers attending OPDs of selected de-addiction centers of Tarn Taran. Psychosocial stress was assessed by using Presumptive Stressful Life Events scale. **Results:** The mean age of study subjects was 26 years. Peer pressure was a major psychosocial stressors among substance abusers. **Conclusion:** The study concluded that peer pressure was a prime factor for initiation of substance abuse.

**INTRODUCTION**

Substance abuse is a maladaptive pattern of drug use leading to significant impairment in the judgment, perception, attention and physical control that have deleterious effect on individual. The existence of fermented beverages dates back to 1000 B.C. wine appeared as a finished product in Egyptian Pictographs in around 400 B.C. in India alcoholic beverages in the Indus valley civilization appeared in Chalcolithic era i.e. 3000 B.C. to 2000 B.C. now use of alcohol is present everywhere in India. WHO study reveals the facts that per capita consumption of alcohol is 0.82 liter and is 1.7 litter per year among Indians who are more than 15 years of age.<sup>1</sup>

For the last three decades India has become a transit hub as well as destination for heroin and hashish produced in the 'Golden Triangle' and the 'Golden Crescent'. In addition, various psychotropic and pharmaceutical preparations and precursor chemicals produced domestically as well as in various parts of the world are also trafficked through Indian territory.<sup>2</sup>

Prevalence of substance abuse is spiking due to peer pressure, going on pleasure trip, family conflict, death of spouse, stress and hidden conflicts. Psychosocial stress is one of the utmost important factor for initiation of substance abuse. Most theories of addiction postulates that acute and chronic stress play an important role in the motivation to abuse addictive substance.<sup>3</sup>

Substance abuse has various physical, psychological as well as social effects on substance abusers that can lead to impairment in individual's social functioning. Furthermore, stress may affect health by producing changes in behavior and there is evidence of high level of stress, health threatening behavior such as consumption of nicotine, alcohol. Research on the mechanism underlying drug disorders has shown that stress is one of the strongest predictors of drug use and coping mechanism is an important factors in modulating the development and expression of addictive behavior but also is a major cause of relapse following period of abstinence.<sup>4,5</sup>

Therefore, it is paramount to determine psychosocial stress among substance abusers to curb the menace of substance abuse. Lack of cognizance about psychosocial stress can act as devastating factor for substance use disorder and poor treatment compliance as well. This ignite the mind of researcher to plot an action plan and find out psychosocial stress among substance abusers.

**METHOD AND MATERIALS**

Quantitative, descriptive cross sectional survey was used to assess psychosocial stress among 100 conveniently selected substance abusers attending OPDs of selected de-addiction centers of Tarn Taran. Following two tools was used in the study which is as follows:

Sociodemographic data sheet: It was self structured questionnaire which was used in study to collect sociodemographic profile of study subjects. It was consist of 9 items related to socio demographic data of the study subjects such as age, educational status, marital status, religion, occupation, habitat, family income, type of family and family history related to substance abuse and type of substance use.

Modified Presumptive Stressful Life Event Scale : This self structured scale was prepared by following a standardized tool which was given by Dr. Gurmeet Singh. It comprises 51 life events out of which 13 life events were selected according to need of the study.

The reliability of self structured tool was computed by 'test-retest" method and was found 0.86. After obtaining the permission from significant authorities, data was collected from study subjects after written consent has been obtained. Appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze data.

**RESULTS**

**Sociodemographic characteristics of subjects**

Mean age of subjects were 26 years. Two third (64%) were males whereas 36% were females. About two third (62%) were from rural area, only 20% were from urban area.

As per educational status 42% were studied up to primary, 16% were illiterate, 14% were studied up to secondary, 12% were studied up to middle and graduate level and only 4% were studied up to matric level. Two third (64%) were housewives, 24% were farmers, 10% were doing Govt. job, only 2% were doing private job. Half (50%) of patients were abusing heroin, 30% alcohol, 6% alcohol+poast, 4% poast and poast + morphine, 2% were abusing tramadol, tramadol+ heroin, poast+ tramadol.

Hence, it can be concluded that majority of subjects were mothers residing in rural area, which belonged to nuclear family, who educated upto primary level and whose patient were abusing heroin.

**Figure 1 Distribution of Study Subjects according to Psychosocial stresses.**

**N 100**

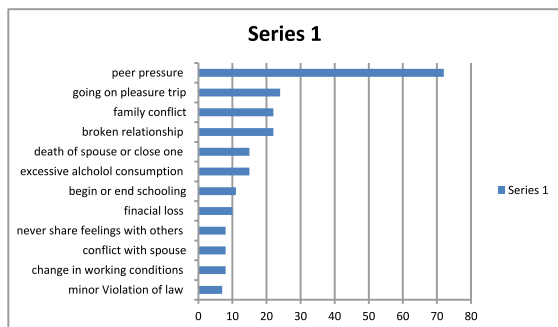


Figure 1 depicted the distribution Study Subjects according to Psychosocial stresses. Approximately two of study subjects had peer pressure as a psychosocial stressor to initiate substance abuse, followed by going on pleasure trip (24%), 22% family conflict and broken relationship, 15% death of spouse or close one, 10% financial loss, 8% conflict and 7% minor violation of law.

Hence, it can be concluded that peer pressure acts as a significant psychosocial stressor to initiate substance abuse.

**DISCUSSION**

The present study revealed that peer pressure is a major psychosocial stressor among substance abusers. Similar findings were also demonstrated by a study conducted by Farrel D. Albert and S. Kamila<sup>6,7</sup>. They concluded that peer pressure and peer drug use were significantly related to the reported frequency of drug use. Borrari Brian and Cary B. Kate extensively reviewed literature about peer influences and drug use. They found that interpersonal processes strongly influence college student drinking. The peer environment contributes to high risk alcohol use by way of direct influences, modeling and perceived norms.

**CONCLUSIONS**

It was concluded that the majority of study subjects indulged in opioid use disorder and peer pressure emerged as a significant psychosocial stressor for substance abusers. Education must be imparted at school to curb the menace of substance abuse from its roots. Similar studies can be conducted on a large sample with multiple settings. The present study was delimited to a single setting.

**Conflict of interest:** None

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