



# A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE ON ANXIETY AND STRESS AMONG THE WIVES OF ALCOHOLICS RESIDING IN MIZORAM.

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**Abstract:** Background: Alcohol dependence is a major public health problem that adversely affects not only individuals but also their family members, particularly spouses, who frequently experience psychological distress such as stress and anxiety. Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) is a complementary mind-body intervention that has shown promise in reducing emotional distress.

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique in reducing stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics residing in Mizoram and to determine the association between stress, anxiety, and selected demographic variables.

Methods: A quantitative quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test control group design was adopted. Sixty wives of alcoholics were selected through snowball sampling from E. Phaileng, Mizoram, and equally assigned to experimental (n=30) and control (n=30) groups. Stress and anxiety were assessed using standardized instruments before and after the intervention. The experimental group received Emotional Freedom Technique, whereas the control group received no intervention. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The experimental group showed a statistically significant reduction in stress and anxiety following the intervention compared with the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ). The mean reduction in stress and anxiety scores was 5.97 and 8.23, respectively. Significant associations were observed between stress, anxiety, and selected demographic variables, including age, duration of marriage, duration of husbands' alcohol consumption, and number of children.

Conclusion: Emotional Freedom Technique was effective in reducing stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics. The findings support the use of EFT as a simple, cost-effective, non-pharmacological intervention in community and psychiatric nursing practice.

**Keywords:** Emotional Freedom Technique, Stress, Anxiety, Alcohol Dependence, Wives of Alcoholics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Alcohol dependence is one of the leading causes of family dysfunction and psychosocial problems worldwide. Excessive alcohol consumption adversely affects physical, psychological, social, and economic well-being, not only of the individual but also of family members. Among family members, wives of alcoholics often experience continuous emotional distress because of domestic conflict, financial instability, social stigma, and caregiving responsibilities.

Stress and anxiety are among the most common psychological consequences experienced by spouses of individuals with alcohol dependence. Persistent exposure to alcohol-related family problems may lead to reduced quality of life, poor coping abilities, depression, and impaired mental health. Despite the availability of pharmacological and psychological interventions, many affected women have limited access to affordable and culturally acceptable mental health services.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) is a complementary therapeutic approach that combines cognitive therapy principles with tapping on specific acupuncture points. The technique is simple, non-invasive, inexpensive, and can be practiced without specialized equipment. Previous studies have demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress symptoms among various populations.

In Mizoram, alcohol-related family problems continue to affect the psychosocial well-being of many women. However, limited evidence is available regarding the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique among wives of alcoholics in this region. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of EFT in reducing stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics residing in Mizoram.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Alcohol dependence is a major public health concern that adversely affects not only the individual but also family members, particularly spouses. Wives of alcoholics often experience considerable psychological distress, including stress, anxiety, depression, poor coping ability, and reduced quality of life. Several studies have consistently reported moderate to high levels of stress and anxiety among spouses of alcohol-dependent individuals.

Studies conducted in India have demonstrated that the majority of wives of alcoholics experience moderate to severe stress. Nagesh (2015) reported that all participants experienced moderate stress, with significant associations between stress and age. Nanjundaswamy et al. (2014) found high perceived stress among wives of alcohol-dependent individuals, with domestic violence significantly contributing to increased stress and maladaptive coping strategies. Similarly, Sujan et al. (2019) observed that 86% of spouses of alcoholics had moderate levels of perceived stress, while Muskan et al. (2021) reported that 87% of wives experienced moderate stress.

Research has also highlighted the high prevalence of anxiety among spouses of alcoholics. Rakesh et al. (2017) found significantly higher anxiety and depression among wives of men with alcohol dependence compared with spouses of non-alcoholics. Likewise, Apeksha et al. (2020) reported that more than two-thirds of wives of alcohol-dependent husbands experienced abnormal levels of anxiety. These findings indicate that prolonged exposure to alcohol-related family problems substantially affects the psychological well-being of spouses.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) has gained increasing attention as a complementary intervention for reducing emotional distress. Stapelton and Kip (2023) reported that Clinical EFT produced significant improvements in symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, demonstrating large treatment effect sizes compared with control groups. Vural and Aslan (2019) also found EFT to be effective in reducing childbirth-related fear, while Church and Stapleton (2018) concluded that stimulation of acupuncture points is an important therapeutic component of EFT. Collectively, these studies support the effectiveness of EFT in managing stress, anxiety, and other psychological conditions.

Despite growing evidence supporting EFT, limited research has examined its effectiveness among wives of alcoholics, particularly in the Indian context and in Mizoram. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique in reducing stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics residing in Mizoram.

## III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Design

A quantitative research approach with a quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test control group design was adopted to assess the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) on stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics.

### Study Setting

The study was conducted in E. Phaileng, Aizawl District, Mizoram.

### Population and Sample

The target population comprised wives of alcoholics residing in E. Phaileng, Mizoram. A total of 60 participants were selected using the snowball sampling technique and equally allocated to the experimental group (n = 30) and the control group (n = 30).

### Inclusion Criteria

Participants who:

- who were willing to participate in the study ,
- who could read and write mizo language,
- whose husbands were addicted to alcohol more than a year ,
- who were married more than a year.

### Exclusion Criteria

Women who had severe psychiatric illness or were receiving psychological treatment for stress and anxiety during the study period were excluded.

### Instruments

Data were collected using:

- Section A: Demographic questionnaire
- Section B: Modified Perceived Stress Scale
- Section C: State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)

The tools were validated by experts and demonstrated satisfactory reliability.

### Intervention

Participants in the experimental group received Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) according to a standardized tapping protocol. The intervention consisted of guided tapping on specific acupressure points while focusing on stressful emotions and using positive affirmations. The control group did not receive the intervention during the study period.

### Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining ethical approval and informed consent, baseline data on stress and anxiety were collected from both groups. The experimental group subsequently received the EFT intervention. Post-test assessments were conducted using the same instruments after completion of the intervention.

### Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (paired t-test, independent t-test, and Chi-square test). A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

## IV. RESULTS

Table 1. Distribution of participants according to pre-test and post-test stress levels

Stress level	Experimental pre-test n(%)	Experimental post-test n(%)	Control pre-test n(%)	Control pre-test n(%)
Mild	14(46.67)	24(80)	12(40)	13(43.33)
Moderate	15(50)	6(20)	18(60)	17(56.67)
Severe	1(3.33)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

The findings revealed that before the intervention, half of the participants (50%) in the experimental group experienced moderate stress. Following the intervention, the proportion decreased to 20%, while participants with mild stress increased to 80%. In contrast, only minimal changes were observed in the control group.

Table 2. Distribution of participants according to anxiety level

Anxiety level	Experimental pre-test n(%)	Experimental post-test n(%)	Control pre-test n(%)	Control pre-test n(%)
Mild	7(23.3)	20(66.7)	18(60)	25(83.3)
Moderate	23(76.7)	10(33.3)	12(40)	5(16.7)
Severe	0	0	0	0

The proportion of participants with moderate anxiety decreased substantially in the experimental group after receiving Emotional Freedom Technique, indicating improvement in psychological well-being.

Table 3. Comparison of stress scores before and after intervention

Group	Mean difference	Statistical test	p-value
Experimental	5.97	Paired <i>t</i> -test	<0.05
Control	Minimal change	Paired <i>t</i> -test	>0.05

There was a statistically significant reduction in stress among participants who received Emotional Freedom Technique compared with the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 4. Comparison of anxiety scores before and after procedure

Group	Mean difference	Statistical test	p-value
Experimental	8.23	Paired <i>t</i> -test	<0.05
Control	Minimal change	Paired <i>t</i> -test	>0.05

The findings demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in anxiety among participants receiving Emotional Freedom Technique compared with the control group.

#### Association with Demographic Variables

Chi-square analysis revealed statistically significant associations between pre-test stress and anxiety levels and selected demographic variables, including age, duration of marriage, duration of husbands' alcohol consumption, and number of children ( $p < 0.05$ ). No significant associations were observed with the remaining demographic variables.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrated that Emotional Freedom Technique significantly reduced stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics. Participants who received the intervention showed greater improvement than those in the control group, supporting the effectiveness of EFT as a complementary psychological intervention.

The findings are consistent with previous research reporting that EFT effectively reduces emotional distress, anxiety, and stress among diverse populations. Similar improvements have been reported in studies evaluating EFT for post-traumatic stress disorder, childbirth-related anxiety, and other stress-related conditions. The observed association between stress, anxiety, and demographic characteristics further suggests that prolonged exposure to alcohol-related family problems contributes to psychological distress among spouses.

Overall, the study provides evidence that Emotional Freedom Technique is a practical, non-invasive, and cost-effective intervention that can be incorporated into community mental health and psychiatric nursing practice to improve the emotional well-being of wives of alcoholics.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) in reducing stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics residing in E. Phaileng, Mizoram. The findings revealed a statistically significant reduction in both stress and anxiety among participants in the experimental group compared with the control group following the intervention ( $p < 0.05$ ). Significant associations were also observed between pre-test stress and anxiety levels and selected demographic variables, including age, duration of marriage, duration of husbands' alcohol consumption, and number of children.

The study concludes that Emotional Freedom Technique is an effective, simple, safe, and cost-effective non-pharmacological intervention for reducing psychological distress among wives of alcoholics. The integration of EFT into community and psychiatric nursing practice may contribute to improving the mental well-being and quality of life of this vulnerable population.

#### VII. NURSING IMPLICATIONS

##### Nursing Practice

Psychiatric and community health nurses can incorporate Emotional Freedom Technique into routine nursing care to reduce stress and anxiety among wives of alcoholics.

##### Nursing Education

The findings may be included in nursing curricula to enhance students' knowledge of complementary and evidence-based non-pharmacological interventions for mental health promotion.

##### Nursing Administration

Nursing administrators can organize continuing nursing education programmes and workshops to train nurses in the application of Emotional Freedom Technique.

##### Nursing Research

Further randomized controlled trials with larger sample sizes and longer follow-up periods are recommended to strengthen the evidence regarding the effectiveness of Emotional Freedom Technique.

### VIII. LIMITATIONS

- The study was limited to one community in Mizoram.
- A non-probability snowball sampling technique was used.
- The sample size was relatively small (60 participants).
- Long-term follow-up was not conducted.

### IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Similar studies may be conducted using larger sample sizes.
- Randomized controlled trials are recommended to improve generalizability.
- Comparative studies between EFT and other psychological interventions may be undertaken.
- Long-term follow-up studies are recommended to evaluate the sustained effects of EFT.
- Similar research can be conducted among other caregivers of individuals with substance dependence.

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### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

### SOURCE OF FUNDING

The study did not receive any external funding.

### ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee of Holy Family College of Nursing, University of Delhi. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study.

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