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Efficacy of Psycho-Spiritual Therapies in Management of Psychopathological Symptoms Among Male Alcoholics

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Abstract : The aim of the present study is to assess the effectiveness of the psycho-spiritual therapies on reduction of psychopathological symptoms of alcoholic subjects. The study was conducted on 150 alcoholics admitted in 4 different rehabilitation centers in Dehradun city. The sample was selected through random sampling. Single group pre-post test design was used to study the impact of therapies on psychopathological symptoms of alcoholic subjects. Eight State questionnaire was administered on subjects to assess the level of psychopathology. Out of 150 alcoholic subjects 46 were selected for the combined psycho-spiritual therapy (Free Association & Part-I course of Art of Living). Post-test was taken, scoring was done and “t” test was applied for statistical analysis. There was a significant reduction in the psychopathological symptoms of alcoholic subjects. The results highlight the efficacy of psycho-spiritual therapies in management of psychopathology in alcoholics and their rehabilitation.

Keywords: Alcoholism; Psychopathology; Free Association; Part-I course of Art of Living; co-morbidity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Some call it the 'elixir' of life and it certainly gives a boost to one's dampening spirit or sense of misery and gloom at the end of a long day. The existence of alcohol can be traced back to thousands of years as found in chemical analysis of traces in pottery jars in northern china. The Hindu Ayurvedic texts describe both the beneficent uses of alcoholic beverages and the consequences of intoxication and alcoholic diseases. Ayurvedic texts concluded that alcohol was a medicine if consumed in moderation, but a poison if consumed in excess (McGovern, et. al. 2003).

The two great Hindu epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, mention the use of alcohol. In Ramayana, alcohol consumption is depicted in a good/bad dichotomy. The bad faction members consumed meat and alcohol while the good faction members were abstinent vegetarians. Alcohol abstinence was promoted as a moral value in India by Hindu sages like Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, Shankracharya, and by the Buddha (Mathew, R. J. 2003).

The chronic use of alcohol may lead to many severe physical and mental health problems. According to Rekha Prasad. (2009) more than half of all alcohol drinkers in India fall into the criteria for hazardous drinking, alcohol abuse is emerging as a major public-health problem in the country with about 14 million people dependent drinkers requiring “help”. Many studies have found high correlation between co-existence of alcoholism and psychiatric disorders. This comorbidity is especially higher for Mood Disorders (29.2%), Manic Depressive Disorder (27.9%) and anxiety Disorders (36.9 %) (Kessler, 1996; Regier, 1990).

Evidence shows that people who consume high amounts of alcohol are vulnerable to higher levels of mental ill health and it can be a contributory factor in some mental illnesses, such as depression. Approximately half of patients attending mental health services for conditions including anxiety disorders such as panic disorder or social phobia suffer from alcohol or benzodiazepine dependence. A person who is suffering the toxic effects of alcohol will not benefit from other therapies or medications as they do not address the root cause of the symptoms (Stevenson, J. S. 2005). With this in mind one would agree that this issue has been historically neglected and there has been limited attention which has indirectly contributed to poor services to people with dual diagnosis (Allsop, 2008).

If only one illness is treated, treatment will be less beneficial and an alcoholic may be vulnerable to relapse but when both disorders are addressed and treated, chances of lasting recovery are increased and person can return to his normal and constructive life. As mental health and substance abuse facilities expand their services for patients with dual disorders, further research is needed to guide the treatment of this population of patients.

As seen from the above stated facts that alcoholism has become a giant social problem practically affecting all sections of the society and combined with psychopathology it becomes even more dangerous and grave. Hence, special attention and action is required to combat the devil. The present study is an attempt in this direction. *The psycho-spiritual techniques will be used to study their effect on the rehabilitation process of the patients.* The study also aims to find *the comorbidity statistics for the Indian population through the patients established in the rehabilitation care.* These patients will be given the therapies and the change in their condition will be used to establish the effect of these therapies. Talk therapy (psychotherapy) can help a person learn to cope with symptoms of depression and mania, and change the patterns of thinking that may be making them worse. Therapy can also help a person look at his drinking habits and work on staying clean and sober.

The result of the study will be useful in tackling the problem which threatens the individual as well as the society in several ways.

II. PROBLEM

To study the effectiveness of psycho-spiritual therapy in management of psycho-pathological symptoms among alcoholics.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF VARIABLES**1. Independent Variable –**

- Psycho-spiritual therapy
- ✓ Psychotherapy - Free Association
- ✓ Spiritual Therapy - Part-1 course of Art Of Living

2. Dependent Variables –

- Alcoholism
- Psychopathological Symptoms
- ✓ Anxiety
- ✓ Stress
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Guilt
- ✓ Regression
- ✓ Arousal
- ✓ Extraversion

IV. OBJECTIVE

To assess the effectiveness of psycho-spiritual therapy upon alcoholics suffering from psycho-pathological symptoms.

V. HYPOTHESIS

There is a significant reduction in the psychopathological symptoms of comorbid alcoholics undergoing free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living (combined psycho-spiritual therapy).

1. Subhypotheses

- 1.1 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) anxiety level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing both free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.2 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) stress level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing both free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.3 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) depression level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing both free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.4 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) fatigue level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing both free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.5 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) regression level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.6 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) guilt level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.7 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) extraversion level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing part-1 course of art of living.
- 1.8 There is a significant reduction in the (psychopathological symptoms) arousal level of comorbid alcoholics undergoing part-1 course of art of living.

VI. SAMPLING

The present study was conducted on alcoholic men admitted in the rehabilitation centers in Dehradun District.

VII. SAMPLE

The data was collected on total 150 alcoholics undergoing rehabilitation for alcoholism through random sampling. Their age range was from 18 to 60 yrs.

From the sample of 150 alcoholics, 46 comorbid alcoholics were selected for psycho-spiritual therapy.

Psycho-Spiritual Therapy (Free association+ Art of Living Part-1 course) was given to comorbid alcoholics and its effect was studied. Initially 46 alcoholic subjects were randomly chosen for the therapy but 6 subjects dropped out during the course of the therapy. Thus, the final sample is 40.

VIII. RESERCH DESIGN

A single group pre – post test design was used to conduct the study.

IX. INTERVENTION PLAN**Combined Therapy****Free Association Course + Part-1 Course of Art of Living**

Total Duration : 3 months

- ✓ Two sessions of 45 minutes per week given to every individual case.
- ✓ Initial 6 consecutive day course with 3 hour session daily.
- ✓ 30 minutes follow up daily for rest of the duration.

X. DISCRPTION OF TOOL

Eight State Questionnaires : The Indian adaptation of the test done by Dr. S.D. Kapoor.

XI. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

After the collection of data the investigator analysed the data meaningfully and tested the hypotheses. t – test statistical techniques were used to study the problem.

XII. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Table no. 1.1 : Showing significance of difference between pre-post mean anxiety, stress, depression, regression, fatigue, guilt, extraversion & arousal of alcoholics who underwent both free association therapy and part-I course of art of living.

PSYCHO-PATHOLOGY	GROUP-C N = 40				“t”
	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		
	M	SD	M	SD	
ANXIETY	8.08	1.27	4.65	0.58	15.97**
STRESS	7.55	1.20	4.95	1.04	11.51**
DEPRESSION	7.13	1.26	5.1	0.78	9.63**
REGRESSION	7.25	1.33	4.88	1.04	9.81**
FATIGUE	6.1	1.65	4.13	1.04	7.21**
GUILT	7.98	1.46	4.95	0.90	10.95**
EXTRAVERSION	4.85	1.61	5.65	0.76	3.22**
AROUSAL	4.75	1.10	5.38	0.67	3.26**

**= significant at 0.01 level

The table no.1.1 shows the significance of difference (t ratio) between pre-post test mean anxiety, stress, depression and fatigue level of alcoholics who underwent both free association therapy and part-I course of art of living. It can be observed that pre test (M =8.08, 7.55, 7.13, 7.25, 6.1, 7.98, 4.85 & 4.75; SD = 1.27,1.20, 1.26, 1.33, 1.65,1.46, 1.61 & 1.10) and post test (M =4.65, 4.95, 5.1, 4.88, 4.13, 4.95, 5.65 & 5.38; SD =0.58, 1.04, 1.04, 0.78, 0.90, 0.76 & 0.67) show a significant reduction in the anxiety, stress, depression, regression, fatigue, guilt, extraversion and arousal levels and significant increase in the extraversion and arousal levels of alcoholic subjects. The $t(40) = 15.97, 11.51, 9.63, 9.81, 7.21, 10.95, 3.22, 3.26$ $p < 0.01$. Therefore, “*Hypothesis no.1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 & 1.8 are accepted.* There was significant reduction in the anxiety, stress, depression, regression, fatigue, guilt levels whereas significant increase was found in the extraversion and arousal levels of alcoholics who underwent both free association therapy and part-I course of art of living.

XIII. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

The hypothesis which expected that there would be a significant reduction in the psychopathological symptoms of comorbid alcoholics undergoing psycho spiritual therapy (free association + part-I course of art of living) , was accepted. As seen from table-1.1 there was a significant reduction in the psychopathological symptoms of the sample. The mean of alcoholic subjects on the post test was significantly less than the mean of the pre-test on anxiety, stress, depression, regression, fatigue & guilt but mean was significantly higher on extraversion and arousal. of alcoholic subjects. This might be attributed to the effectiveness of the psycho-spiritual therapy which is more beneficial for the alcoholic subjects as they got the benefit of both therapies. The psycho spiritual therapy is a combination of free association therapy and part-1 course of art of living.

Both therapies combined together work as a holistic therapy and have a tremendous beneficial effect on the alcoholic subject’s body and mind. The psycho-spiritual therapy resolves the conflicts of the mind, and energise the body that leads to the state of homeostasis. The balanced mind results in reduction of anxiety, stress, depression, regression of alcoholic subjects. The psycho-spiritual therapy improves the quality of sleep of alcoholic subjects and provides life force energy in abundance reducing the fatigue and providing optimum arousal levels. Alcoholics tend to feel helpless, isolated and trapped due to addiction and psychopathology, the psycho-spiritual therapy enables them to come out of that trap and vicious circle of comorbidity. It enhances the social interactions, teaches social skills and extends social support in alcoholics. The therapy increases the awareness of the alcoholic subjects so that they are able to introspect and plan their life more objectively and constructively. It is said that alcoholic addiction is a result of spiritual corruption so the way to get rid of the addiction is to make one self spiritually rich. The therapy strengthens the morality in the person thus making him stronger, upright and positive, hence reduced regression, depression, anxiety and stress. Through the above stated therapy they learn the art of living. They learn to live in the present moment and awareness is created that present moment is inevitable, however good or bad it maybe so accept it with a smile and face it with courage. This reduces the guilt feeling and regression of comorbid alcoholic subjects.

The therapy reduces the inferiority complexes, feeling of rejection, discrimination, enhances self-esteem which leads to better perception of oneself and mainstreaming in the society. It also helps in improving personal and interpersonal relationships. The strength gained from the therapy eliminates the fear of relapse in alcoholic patients thus, enhancing the confidence, commitment, responsibility and reducing regression. The therapy replaces fear with a sense of security and happiness and well being.

The psycho-spiritual therapy cleanses the mind and body brings maturity and stability in alcoholic subjects, helps them understand true meaning of the existence and gives them the strength to walk on the path towards self-actualization. Several studies have found out that psycho-spiritual therapies have beneficial effect on psychopathology of persons as well as alcoholics. **Pargament, K.I. (2007)** concluded that spirituality can be part of the solution in mental illness, people want spiritually sensitive help and spirituality cannot be separated from psychotherapy. **Gambhir (2006)** studied the effects of psycho spiritual practices on the stress and other health related problems among the teachers. In result they found that psycho spiritual practice significantly reduces the level of stress and related problems and have a positive effect on the mental health. **Suryanarayan (2002)** Studied effects of integrated approach of psycho spiritual therapy on state of anxiety and depression. He found a positive effect of psycho spiritual therapy in reducing state anxiety and depression. **Gerberg, P. (2007)** discussed the effects of doing the Art of Living Kriya program in a patient undergoing psychoanalysis since a long time. She found Kriya useful in healing negative past impressions and the ‘dissociation’ that rendered the patient unable to connect with others and with his own feelings.

XIV. CONCLUSION

It is proved that psycho spiritual therapy has a positive effect on the level of psychopathological symptoms of alcoholic subjects. Hence if these interventions are adopted it can bring positive and constructive changes in the lives of comorbid alcoholics and help them lead productive and fulfilling lives.

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