

## CO-DEPENDENCY AND DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS AMONG WIVES OF ALCOHOLICS RELATED?

Sreejamol M. G.\*<sup>1</sup>, Neethu Peter<sup>2</sup> and Nileena C. Suresh<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, <sup>2</sup>B.Sc. Nursing Student  
Amrita College of Nursing, Amrita viswavidyapeetham, Kochi-41 Kerala. India.

Received date: 13 July 2022

Revised date: 03 August 2022

Accepted date: 23 August 2022

\*Corresponding Author: Sreejamol M. G.

Associate Professor, Amrita College of Nursing, Amrita viswavidyapeetham, Kochi-41 Kerala. India.

### ABSTRACT

**Background & objective:** Alcoholism is a chronic behavioral disorder manifested by repeated drinking of alcohol beverages. The problem of alcoholism is not just related to alcoholics also the life of those who around them are adversely affected especially the wives. **Objective** of the study was to assess the co-dependency and depressive symptoms of wives of alcoholics. **Methods:** It is a descriptive study conducted among 100 wives of alcoholics in selected wards of Nayarambalam Panchayath, Kochi. Subjects were selected by using convenience sampling technique. Informed consent was taken from all the participants. The co-dependency and depression among wives were assessed using Spann-Fischer co-dependency assessment tool and Beck's Depression Inventory respectively. **Results:** Majority (70%) of the subjects belongs to the age group of 35-45 years. The result shows 63% of the wives had severe co-dependency and only few reported (3%) to have mild co-dependency rest of them had moderate (34%) level of co-dependency. Only 3% of wives of alcoholics had extreme depression and few had severe depression (17%). Mild mood disturbance and borderline clinical depression were observed among 21% and 14% of subjects respectively. One third of the subjects (35%) had moderate depression and 10% were free from depressive symptoms. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between co-dependency and depressive symptoms ( $r=0.382$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) **Conclusion:** Many of the wives suffer from various physical and psychological problems due to their husband's alcohol dependence and needs immediate care.

**KEYWORDS:** Assess, alcoholics, co-dependency, depressive symptoms, wives.

### INTRODUCTION

Alcoholism is a chronic behavioural disorder manifested by repeated drinking of alcohol beverages. The wives, who do not drink but are victimized by chemical abuse, are called co dependents. Co dependency is an unconscious addiction to another person's abnormal behaviour which affects badly adaptation skills of wives of alcoholics resulting in depression and various marital problems.<sup>[1]</sup> Stress has materialized as one of the most potent environmental factors for depression.<sup>[2]</sup>

World Health Organization released its Global Status report on Alcohol and Health. According to the report, about 38.3 percent of the world's population is reported to consume alcohol regularly. According to an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report released in May 2015, alcoholism increased by about 55 percent between

1992 and 2012. It is a quickly rising concern among the youth of the country. A report released in 2018 by WHO also says that more than three million people died as a result of harmful use of alcohol in 2016.<sup>[3]</sup>

The impact of alcoholism in marriage is profound.<sup>[4]</sup> Severe alcohol use disorder (SAUD) is associated with social cognition deficits. These deficits damage interpersonal relations.<sup>[5]</sup> All chronic health conditions impact marriage and family relationships, but none in quite the same destructive manner or the same depth as alcoholism. Today, experts who study alcoholic families know that family and marital problems often starts because of alcoholism, but they also learned that spouses and children may contribute to the drinker's habit and make it worse.<sup>[4]</sup>

The wives who do not drink but are victimized by chemical abuse are called co dependents. Most

alcoholics have periods when they stop drinking for a short while and seemingly do well, leading the co dependent person to believe that the problem can be solved. The alcoholic's co dependent family members do everything possible to hide the problem, preserve the family's prestige and project the image of a "perfect couples". Co dependent members often forget about their own needs and desires. Unknowingly, co dependent family members often become "enablers". An enabler is "a person who unknowingly helps the alcoholic by denying the drinking problem exists and helping the alcoholic to get out of troubles caused by his drinking". The enabler lies for the alcoholic and thus enables the alcoholic to continue drinking. Co dependency is an unconscious addiction to another person's abnormal behaviour which affects badly adaptation skills of wives of alcoholics resulting in depression and various marital problems.<sup>[6]</sup>

Co-dependent, or co-alcoholic, was originally defined in the late 1970s and early 1980s to help families and spouses of individuals with alcohol and drug problems. When the wife is a co dependent it will „interfere“ with the recovery of the alcoholism.<sup>[7]</sup> The co dependency is regarded as a psychological state characterized by a strong and extreme emotional, social, and sometimes physical dependence on a person or an object. As a result, such dependence on another person becomes a pathological state that affects all the relations of a co dependent person.<sup>[4]</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

It is a quantitative descriptive co-relational study conducted among wives of alcoholics in selected wards of Nayarambalam Panchayath, Kochi, Kerala. The sample size was 100, estimated based on the pilot study. The study subjects were wives of alcoholics were staying with their spouses at least for two years and having alcohol dependency more than three years with the frequency of intake being four or more days a week. The subjects were selected by non probability convenience sampling technique considering the inclusion criteria.

### Data collection instruments

Data was collected using three standardized tools along with a semi-structured questionnaire on demographic variables. The alcohol dependency of the spouses were identified by using AUDIT questionnaire.<sup>[7]</sup> Wives of alcoholic men, who scored above 16 in AUDIT questionnaire, were only chosen and maximum score is 40.

The codependency among wives were assessed using Spann-Fischer co-dependency assessment scale. Each item have 6 response categories (1=strongly agree, 2=moderately agree, 3=slightly x tool. Each disagree, 4=slightly agree, 5=moderately agree and 6=strongly agree). The maximum score is 96.<sup>[8]</sup>

The level of depression among wives of alcoholics were identified using Beck's Depression Inventory,<sup>[9]</sup> Each item have 4 responses of scores 0,1,2 and 3. There are 21 items in total.

### Data collection

Data were collected after obtaining ethical clearance from Institutional Ethical Committee of AIMS, Kochi. Formal permission was obtained from Nayarambalam Panchayath president before the data collection. A detailed explanation was given to the participants, and the participation was based on willingness. A written Informed consent was obtained from all the participants before the data collection. Data collection period was from 7/06/2019 to 14/06/2019. Ethical principles were maintained throughout the study.

**Software Used for Data Entry, Compilation and Statistical Analysis:** Data analysis was done using the SPSS 20.0 version.

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The sample characteristics were described using frequency and percentage. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to find out the correlation between the level of co dependency and depressive symptoms

## RESULTS

### Section 1: Sample characteristics

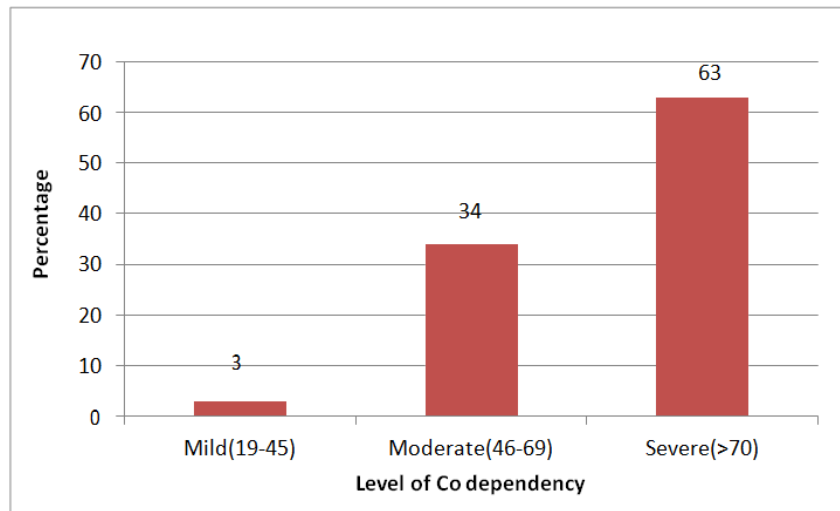
Majority (70%) of the subjects belongs to the age group of 35-45 years. Sixty five percentage of their husbands were in the age group of 45-55 years. More than half were (62%) belongs to Hindu religion. Among the 100 subjects 72% were from low socio economic status. Most of the subjects (80%) were educated up to High School.

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of husbands with alcoholism based on the score of AUDIT questionnaire.**

| Score | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------|-----------|------------|
| 16-19 | 30        | 30.0       |
| >=20  | 70        | 70.0       |
| Total | 100       | 100.0      |

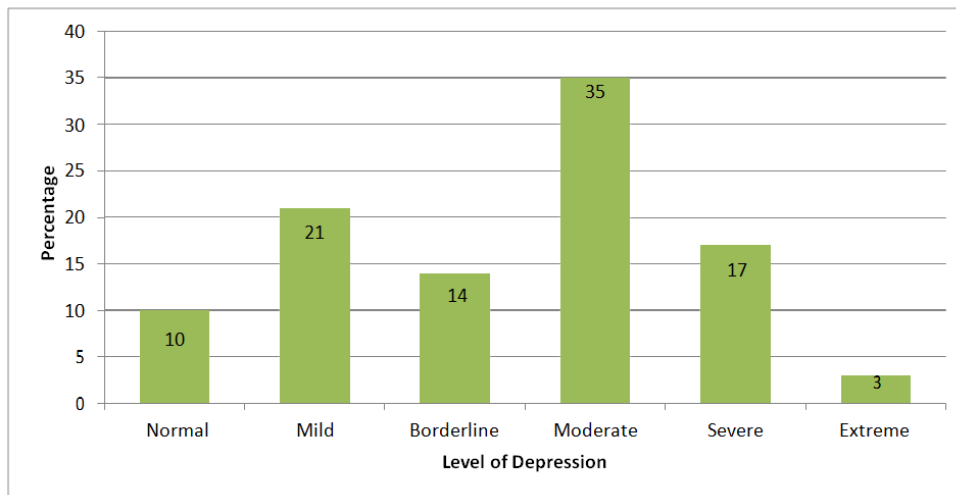
This table shows 70% of alcoholics scored more than or equal to 20 which is certainly dependent. and 30% of the alcoholic have score in between 16 and 19 shows dependency

**Section II: Co-dependency among wives of alcoholics n-100**



**Figure 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of co-dependency.**

**Section III: Distribution of depression among wives of alcoholics n =100**



**Figure 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of various levels of depression among wives of alcoholics.**

**Table 2: Correlation of co-dependency with depression.**

| Co-Dependency | DEPRESSION                       |         |     |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---------|-----|
|               | Pearson correlation co-efficient | p value | n   |
|               | 0.382                            | <0.001  | 100 |

There is a statistically significant positive correlation between codependency and depression ( $r=0.382$ ,  $p=<0.001$ )

**DISCUSSION**

This study reveals that majority of the wives (63%) had severe level of co dependency. Most of the wives (90%) reported to have different levels of depression. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between codependency and depression ( $r=0.382$ ,  $p=<0.001$ ) also found.

Renju James conducted a descriptive study on wives of alcoholics to assess the co dependency and depressive

symptoms in Mysore The results showed that among 212 wives of alcoholics only few (32.1%) were having mild depression level whereas majority (72.2%) were reported medium level of co dependency. Pearson’s coefficient of correlation showed positive ( $r= +0.763$ ) correlation between co dependency and depression. This study findings supporting the current study .Both the study results revealing the relationship between co dependency and depression.<sup>[11]</sup>

Sumanpreet Kaur have conducted a descriptive study among 212 wives of alcoholics The study assessed depression and co dependency among wives of alcoholics in selected rural community of Punjab and

result showed that majority (32.1%) were having mild depression level and most of them (72.2%) were having medium level of co dependency. Pearson's coefficient of correlation showed positive correlation ( $r=+0.763$ ) between co dependency and depression.<sup>[12]</sup>

Prof P Padmavathi have conducted a study on co dependency and depressive symptoms among wives of alcoholics selected in hospital Erode This study results showed that most (90%) of them were reported to have high co dependency and majority (94%) of them had mild depression.<sup>[13]</sup>

Most of the study findings similar and supporting the current study findings .From the above studies it is evident that alcoholism have an influence on co dependency and depression among wives of alcoholics.

### CONCLUSION

Many of the wives suffer from various stresses due to their husband's alcohol dependence. Each person have responsibility in understanding the needs and problems of wives of alcoholics and rendering care by giving them an opportunity to ventilate their bottled emotions.

**Conflict Of Interest:** Nil.

**Financial Support And Sponsorship:** Nil (self).

### REFERECES

1. Hayes J, Wakefield B, Andresen EM, Scherrer J, Traylor L, Wiegmann P, Demark T, DeSouza C. Identification of domains and measures for assessment battery to examine well- being of spouses of OIF/OEF veterans with PTSD. *Journal of rehabilitation research and development*, 2010 Dec 1; 47(9): 825-40.
2. <https://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/india/alcohol-consumption-in-india>
3. Athira KV, Bandopadhyay S, Samudrala PK, Naidu VGM, Lahkar M, Chakravarty S. An overview of the heterogeneity of major depressive disorder: Current knowledge and future prospective. *Curr Neuropharmacol* 2020; 18(3): 168-187.
4. Orford J, Guthrie S, Nicholls P, Oppenheimer E, Egert S, Hensman C. Self-reported coping behavior of wives of alcoholics and its association with drinking outcome. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 1975 Sep; 36(9): 1254-67.
5. Maurage P, Pabst A, Lannoy S, D'Hondt F, de Timary P, Gaudelus B, et al. Tackling heterogeneity: Individual variability of emotion decoding deficits in severe alcohol use disorder. *J Affective Disord*, 2021; 279: 299-307
6. Senthil M, Vidyarthi S, Kiran M. Family interaction pattern and family environment among spouses of alcohol dependence patients and normal control. *IJHSSI*, 2014; 3: 26-32.
7. Fiscer, Spann, L., and Crawford, D. Measuring

codependency. *Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly*, 1991; 8: 87-99.

8. Saunders JB, Conigrave KM, Latt NC, Nutt DJ, Marshall EJ, Ling W, Higuchi S, editors. *Addiction medicine*. Oxford University Press, 2016 Aug 11.
9. Olsson G, von Knorring AL. Beck's Depression Inventory as a screening instrument for adolescent depression in Sweden: gender differences. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 1997 Apr; 95(4): 277-82.
10. MarstolfDS, Jason C, Thomas K, Greenfield.A Conceptual Model Of The Functioning of Married Person with Impaired Partners : Spouses Of Alcoholic Patients *British journal of psychiatry*, 2000; 196-254.
11. James.R,a descriptive correlation study to assess the co-dependency and depressive symptoms among wives of alcoholics in selected rural communities at Mysore (doctoral dissertation).
12. Kaur S. A descriptive study to assess depression and codependency among wives of alcoholics in a selected rural community of Gurdaspur, Punjab. *Asian Journal of Nursing Education and Research*, 2016; 6(2): 183-7.
13. Prof P Padmavathi et al. A study on codependency and depressive symptoms among wivesof alcoholics. *IJNAM*, 2014.