

Determinants Contributing to Relapse in Alcohol Dependence – A Single Centric Comparative Study

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Conflict of interest: Nil

Abstract

Introduction: Alcoholism is a psychiatric disorder combined with mental, physical and social difficulties and tends to have relapsing course. Relapse is a challenging clinical concern in alcohol dependence due to its high magnitude of conditions and limited availability of treatment. The present study was designed to assess the risk factors for relapse among cases with alcohol dependence.

Materials and Methods: Seventy-six participants of alcohol dependence above 18 years of age who attaining the criteria for alcohol dependence were recruited. Participants were randomly divided into two groups. Group 1 has 38 participants relapsed with alcohol dependence after proper treatment, group 2 has 38 participants with alcohol dependence who consumed before 12 months diagnosed as per ICD 10. The stressful events of participants were assessed by presumptive stressful life event scale. Personality disorders were assessed by ICD-10 International personality disorder examination.

Results: The difference of marital status, educational status, occupation, onset of alcohol consumption and family history was significant between study groups ($P < 0.05$). In group 1, 82.20% of participants were reported stressful events that influence alcohol relapse, whereas in group 2, 7.09% of subjects reported stressful events. Stressful events related to financial conflicts (26.32%), unemployment (23.68%), marital conflicts (18.42%), familial negligence (13.16%), craving of alcohol (13.16%) and workplace conflicts (5.26%) were most common cause of dependence relapse.

Discussion and Conclusion: The results were concluded that participants with unemployment, poor educational status, family history of alcohol abuse and early onset of alcohol were significant predictors among participants of relapsed group. It is necessary to counsel the victims and family to improve self-efficacy and social support.

Keywords: Alcohol dependence, relapse, stressful events, craving, family history

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Introduction

Alcohol dependence is a major global public health concern, also termed as dual disease that included both mental and physical components [1]. It includes several behavioural, physiological and cognitive symptoms that provoke desire to consume alcohol, and decreased control over alcohol intake.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that approximately 2 billion people consume alcohol and alcohol related products. Among them, approximately 76.3 million people were vulnerable to alcohol use disorders [2]. In India, 62.5 million people consume alcohol and 90% of alcoholics encountered

with one relapse in the four years following de-addiction [3].

Relapse is termed as restarting the use of substance after a period of abstinences. It involves several factors like punitive family history, craving of alcohol, stressful events and social difficulties were associated with relapse [4,5]. Several studies reported that relapse is more common in cases that had treatment for alcohol dependence [6]. The detailed knowledge upon factors associate relapse is important for clinician to design ideal strategies for relapse prevention [7]. Several studies reported diversified results due to place of study, race and culture [8,9]. Assessment of risk factors for relapse in Indian context might be interesting due to its diversified cultures, population and characteristics. With the limited availability of literature at the current study settings, this study was designed to assess the risk factors for relapse among cases with alcohol dependence.

Material and Methods

This comparative study was conducted in the Department of Psychiatry at MNR Medical College and Hospital, Sangareddy from August 2021 to July 2022. A total of 76 participants of alcohol dependence above 18 years of age and willing to participate were included. Cases not

attaining the criteria for alcohol dependence, under substance abuse other than alcohol, and previous history of psychiatric illness were excluded. Written informed consent was obtained from study participants and study protocol was reviewed and approved by institutional ethics committee.

According to the alcohol dependence status, participants were randomly divided into two groups. Group 1 has 38 participants relapsed with alcohol dependence after proper treatment, group 2 has 38 participants with alcohol dependence who consumed before 12 months diagnosed as per ICD 10. The complete patient details were gathered through semistructured patient proforma. The alcohol dependence was diagnosed according to the guidelines of International classification of diseases-10 (ICD-10) criteria. The stressful events of participants were assessed by presumptive stressful life event scale. Personality disorders were assessed by ICD-10 International personality disorder examination.

The statistical analysis was conducted by SPSS version 23.0. Categorical variables were expressed as frequency and percentage. Chi-square test was applied to compare the categorical variables. The p value <0.05 was considered as statistically significant outcome.

Results

Table 1: Sociodemographic details of study participants

Demographic variables	Group 1 (n=38)	Group 2 (n=38)	Chi-square value	p-value
	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)		
Age (In years)				
18-30	04 (10.52%)	06 (15.79%)	5.620	0.541
31-40	16 (42.10%)	15 (39.48%)		
41-50	10 (26.32%)	09 (23.68%)		
>50	08 (21.05%)	08 (21.05%)		
Gender				
Male	37 (97.36%)	38 (100%)	2.078	1.252
Female	01 (2.64%)	-		
Marital status				
Married	19 (50%)	20 (52.63%)	4.362	0.001

Single	14 (36.84%)	14 (36.84%)		
Divorce/widow	05 (13.15%)	04 (10.52%)		
Residential status				
Urban	26 (68.42%)	29 (76.32%)	1.853	0.655
Rural	12 (31.58%)	09 (23.68%)		
Educational status				
Primary school	08 (21.05%)	06 (15.79%)	4.379	0.001
High school	05 (31.15%)	06 (15.79%)		
Pre-university	10 (26.32%)	12 (31.58%)		
Graduate	01 (2.64%)	02 (5.26%)		
Un-educate	14 (36.84%)	12 (31.58%)		
Occupation				
Skilled	03 (7.90%)	11 (28.95%)	3.24	0.0219
Semi-skilled	15 (39.47%)	24 (63.16%)		
Unemployed	20 (52.63%)	03 (7.90%)		
Age at onset of drinking				
<18 years	06 (15.79%)	04 (10.52%)	3.212	0.0392
>18 years	32 (84.21%)	34 (89.48%)		
Family history				
With	30 (78.95%)	05 (31.15%)	4.919	0.001
Without	08 (21.05%)	33 (86.84%)		

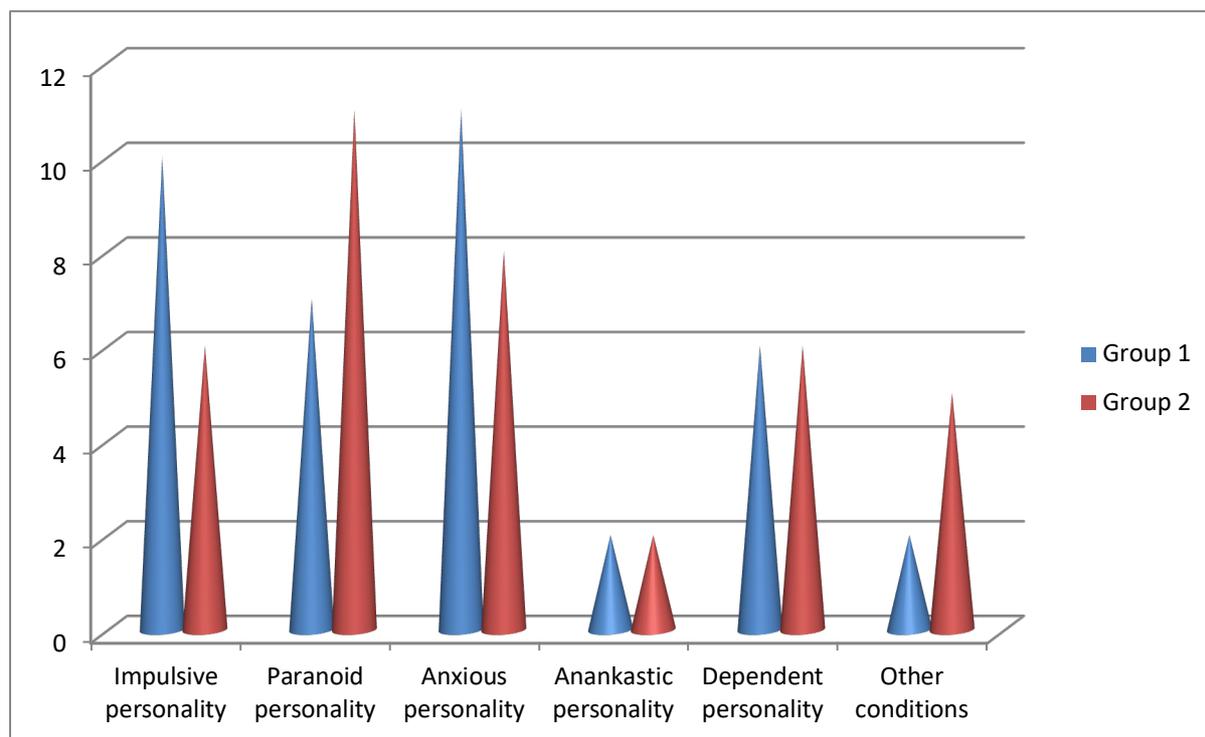


Figure 1: Personality difficulties among the participants of both study groups

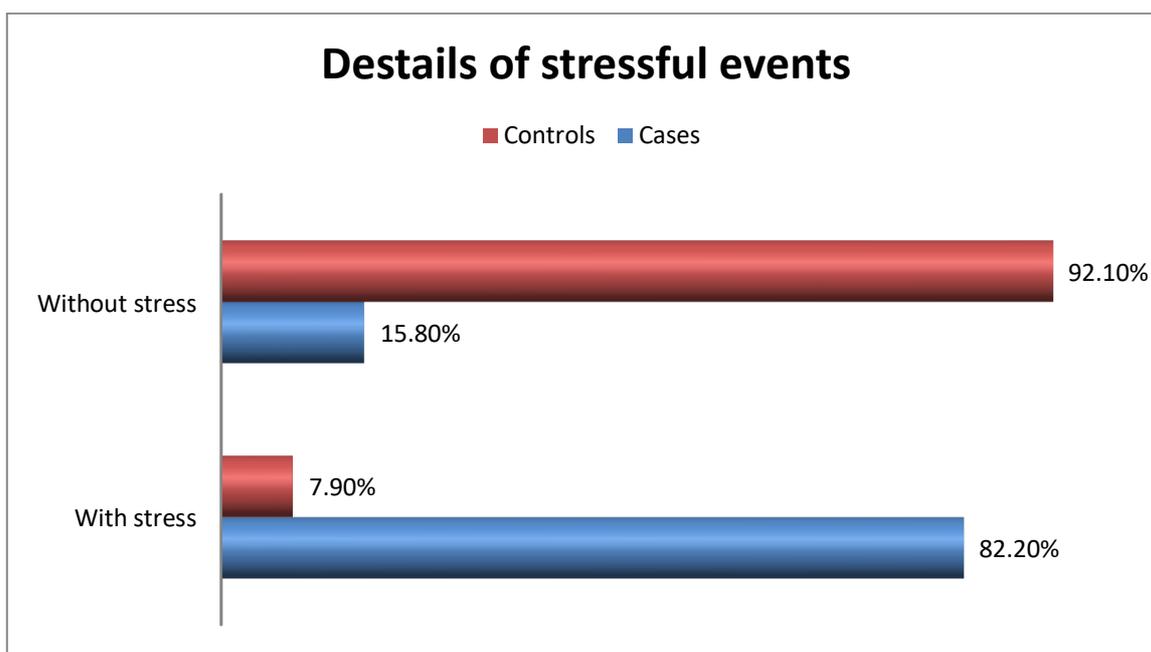


Figure 2: Details of stressful events among study participants

Table 2: Details of stressful events on relapse among participants of group 1.

	Group 1	
	Frequency	Percentage
Marital conflicts	07	18.42%
Familial negligence	05	13.16%
Financial conflicts	10	26.32%
Craving of alcohol	05	13.16%
Unemployment	09	23.68%
Work place conflicts	02	5.26%

Discussion

Majority participants were between age group 31-40 years (42.10% in group 1, 39.48% I group 2), followed by 41-50 years (26.32% I group 1 and 23.68% in group 2). Both the study groups contain majority male participants. Majority were married participants (50% in group 1 and 52.63% in group 2) followed by participants with single marital status (36.384% in group 1 and 36.84% in group 2).

Participant’s belonged to urban area was more than rural area. Uneducated participants were common followed by participants with pre-university (26.32% in group 1& 31.58% in group 2), high school (31.15% in group 1&15.79% in group 2), and primary school (21.05% in group 1 & 15.79% in group 2). Unemployed

participants (52.63% I group 1 & 7.90% in group 2) were common followed by Semi-skilled workers (39.47% in group 1 & 63.16% in group 2) and skilled participants. In majority cases, started drinking alcohol above 18 years of age in majority cases. A study by Rampure R *et al.*, found that 39.3% of participants started alcohol consumption before 20 years of age with mean age of 20.9±6.3 years (10). Chauhan VS *et al.*, found mean age of onset of drinking alcohol was 26.12 years [11].

Among the study participants, anxious personality difficulties were common followed by impulsive personality, paranoid personality and dependent personality difficulties in group 1. In group 2, paranoid personality difficulties,

anxious personality, impulsive personality and dependent personality were common difficulties (Graph 1). In group 1, 82.20% of participants were reported stressful events that influence alcohol relapse, whereas in group 2, 7.09% of subjects reported stressful events (Graph 2). The difference of stressful events between two study groups was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

A study by Rampure R *et al.*, stated that curiosity, lack of desirable life events, high cravings, poor interpersonal support and peer pressure are the commonest factors associated with relapse [10]. A study by Chauhan VS *et al.*, stated that positive family history of substance abuse, familial conflicts, personal conflicts, social anxiety, social difficulties, negative mood states, undesirable life events were commonly associated with relapse [11].

A study by Vijayan V *et al.*, stated that most common risk factors for relapse was psychological related, social factors and familial factors [12]. High cravings of alcohol (82%), pleasurable incidents (77%), familial conflicts (85.5%), financial conflicts (63.9%), and loss of dearest ones (41.2%) are the major causes for relapse [13]. Suresh Kumar *et al.*, reported that family history of dependence and high risk situation are important predictors of relapse [14]. Jayaseelan and Bakyaraj stated that stressful life events were commonly associated with relapsed cases [15]. Korlakunta *et al.*, stated that high cravings, poor motivation, familial conflicts and peer pressure are common cause of relapse [16].

Kaundal PK *et al.*, stated that family history of substance use was major factor to identify relapse related psychosocial factors [17]. Kumar P *et al.*, reported that craving (98%) and poor motivation (84%) was common reasons for relapse in cases with alcohol dependence followed by stressful events (76%), peer pressure (54%) and withdrawal (24%) [18]. Vihram R *et al.*, reported that family problems, peer pressure and craving are the common

reasons for relapse in alcohol dependence [19]. Afkar A *et al.*, stated that individual conflicts, family conflicts, cultural conflicts, social conflicts and economic conflicts were major factors associated with addiction relapse [20].

The present study findings were consistent with above findings where Stressful events related to financial conflicts (26.32%), unemployment (23.68%), marital conflicts (18.42%), familial negligence (13.16%), craving of alcohol (13.16%) and workplace conflicts (5.26%) were most common cause of dependence relapse (Table 2). The present study has limitations in terms of minimal study participants and limited to tertiary care hospital. Further analysis is required to extend the study at community level to identify the factors associated with relapse in alcohol dependence.

Conclusion

Alcohol dependence is the major cause for several disease and disabilities. The results were concluded that participants with unemployment, poor educational status, family history of alcohol abuse and early onset of alcohol were significant predictors among participants of relapsed group. Financial conflicts, unemployment and marital conflicts were major stressful events reported by relapsed group participants.

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