A Study on Self –Esteem among Alcoholics

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ABSTRACT

Alcoholism is considered as a social problem. It is not only affects the person and also affects the entire life of the family members as well as the society. People who consume alcohol develop health problems as well as psychological problems like depression, guilt, low level of intelligence, poor self confidence, low self esteem and other mental illness. In this study the researcher focused self esteem of alcohol abusers. Self esteem is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude towards the self which allows a person to face the life with more confidence but it will be poor in alcohol abusers. The main aim of this study is to find out the level of self esteem among alcoholics. The researcher has adopted a descriptive research design and census method to collect data. The study was conducted at one of the de-addiction centre in Tiruchirappalli district. A self prepared questionnaire and Self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg in 1965 was used to collect the data. The findings revealed that more than half of the respondents have low level of self esteem. The other findings and the suggestions will be discussed in the full length paper.

Key words: Alcohol, Self esteem and alcohol abuser

INTRODUCTION

Self esteem is a mental indicator like physical indicator such as blood pressure. It's an experience of self worth which means a person evaluate themselves. People with high self esteem are very confident in their thoughts and actions whereas people with low self esteem are full of self doubt or uncertain about themselves and they depends others for support. As a human being, we do face the problems in day-to-day life and also have problems with self esteem at sometimes. In that case people who have low self esteem suffer and expect others to help to

solve their problem by under evaluation of them. Low self esteem is a root of mental illness such as depression, alienation, anxiety or other types of mental illness, but in extreme some may even commit suicide. In other side, some people may prone to addictions to drugs to escape or forget their problems. Self esteem plays an important role in the use of alcohol. Low self esteem was described as the most powerful psychological explanation of alcohol abuse or addiction (Furnham and Lowick 1984). Some of the research studies have also pointed out that low self esteem poses high risk for alcohol addiction. There is inverse relationship between low self esteem and alcohol addiction. Parish and Parish (1991) found that people with low self-esteem are much more likely to consume alcohol as a way to try to gain some degree of peer support and acceptance. Alcoholism is a social significant problem in our society. It is not only affects the person and also affects the entire life of the family members as well as the society. There is a clear connection between self esteem and alcohol dependents. Alcoholic dependents with low self esteem may face many failures in personal and family life, poor performance at work, financial problems and deteriorating physical health. Hence the researcher focused on this area.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Glindemann (1999) studied of 44 university students in Virginia (29 men and 15 women) and was found that the relationship between self-esteem and actual drinking behavior was much stronger than indicated in previous studies which relied only on self-report measures. This study indicated that an unexpected result. Women with low self-esteem became more intoxicated than men with low self-esteem, and women with high self-esteem became less intoxicated than men with high self-esteem. **Gibbons (2000)** investigated the relationship of substance use and self esteem by applying cross-sectional survey design. Self -esteem was assessed using Hare Self-esteem Scale. Four hundred and eleven samples were selected for the survey. Results revealed that there was a direct relationship between alcohol use and self-esteem (F=12.8, df=2, 343, p<0.001). Recent alcohol abusers had the lowest self-esteem scores and never users had the highest scores. **Donnelly (2003)** conducted on self-esteem among alcoholic dependants. Study comprised of two groups such as alcoholic dependants as one group and non-alcoholics in another group. Results showed that alcoholic dependants have lowered self esteem compared to non alcoholic's self esteem. **Swaim and Wayman (2004)** found that Mexican-American women with lower self-confidence were much more likely to take part in heavy episodic drinking.

Oswego (2005) conducted on drinking problems and self-esteem of college students.148 lower division college students who were given the paper and pencil tests: The Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test, and the "Personal Self" section of The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Results revealed that college students are having low self-esteem ($F = 4.23$, $p = .04$). Tabulation also revealed that incidence of heavy drinking (31%). The study concluded that a drinking behavior led low self esteem among college students. **Steffennhagen and Burns (2006)** studied self esteem and Alcohol use on 61 alcoholic dependants who were admitted in a rural Midwestern medical centre. An individual's reactions to his or her social environment were mediated by a sense of self esteem and so low levels of self esteem were developed during Socialization. Results suggested that specific form of social support is important for alcoholic dependants to recover. **Pritchard, Wilson, and Yamnitz, (2007)** have found from their study, individuals with low self-esteem seemed to have more physical health problems. It was not found, however in this study, that there actually was a relation between self-esteem and alcohol usage. **Nanne (2008)** conducted a study on importance of self-esteem as a prospective factor in physical and mental health among college students. The results showed that self-esteem can lead to better health and social behaviour, poor self-esteem was associated with poor health and abnormal behavior such as substance abuse and violence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Statement of the problem

Self esteem is an important factor among alcoholics. People with low self esteem used to feel that lack of power, affection or love, appreciation and recognition from others. So they are easily get addict with alcohol in order to numb out from the sufferings or problems temporarily. Alcohol dependants with low self esteem may poor in their functions like occupation, family responsibility and other skills. Low self esteem leads increased alcohol consumption vice versa increased alcohol consumption makes low self esteem. It affects not only them and also their family, friends and entire society. Hence the researcher intended to bring into lime light about how the low self esteem influences the alcohol dependants.

Hypotheses

- There is a significant difference among occupation of the respondents with regard to the

level of self esteem

- There is a significant difference between the respect of the respondents and the level of self esteem
- There is a significant relationship between the age and monthly income of the respondents and the level of self esteem

Methods

The main aim is to study the level of self esteem among alcohol abusers. The researcher has adopted descriptive research design to describe the socio demographic characteristics & the level of self esteem among alcoholics. The present study was conducted at one of the de-addiction centre at Tiruchirappalli district. The universe of the study consists of 53 members who visited de-addiction centre for treatment in the month of October 2013. The researcher adopted census method and collected data from all the members during that period. A self prepared interview schedule was used to collect the socio-demographic details of the respondents and self esteem scale developed by Rosenberg in 1965 also used. The reliability was found to be 0.83

FINDINGS

Findings related to socio-demographic data

➤ Majority of the respondents (77.4%) were married

➤ Majority of the respondents (79.2%) were Hindus

➤ Nearly half of the respondents (43.4%) were working in daily wages

➤ More than half of the respondents (62.3%) were residing at urban area.

➤ Half of the respondents (52.8%) were living in nuclear family

➤ More than half of the respondents (58.5%) were not having any physical problem

➤ More than half of the respondents (64.2%) didn't receive respect from their family and society

➤ More than half of the respondents (54.7%) were stigmatized by the society

➤ Majority of the respondents (67.9%) were not received psychological support from the family.

Figure-I
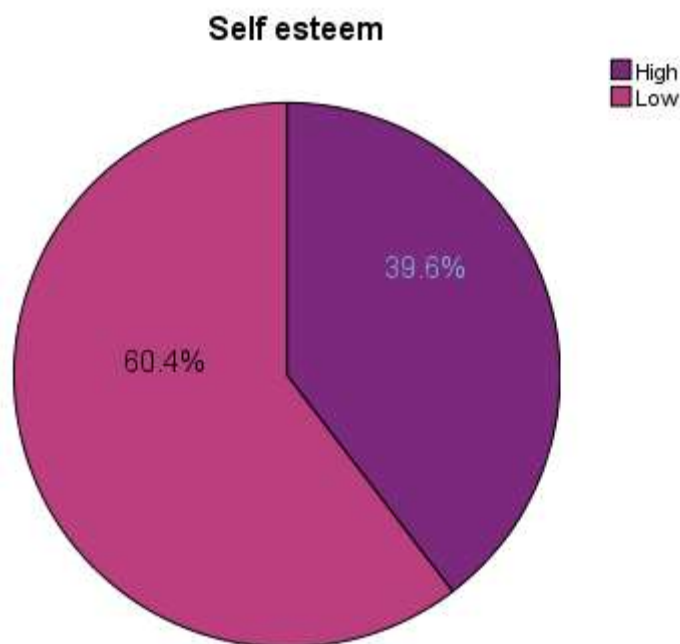
Self esteem

Findings related to hypothesis

Table-I

One way analysis of variance among various level of occupation of the respondents with regard to the level of self esteem

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Between group	2	101.895	50.947	4.155	0.02
Within	50	613.124	12.262		
group	52	715.019			
Total					

One–way analysis of variance inferred that the occupation was significant (F=4.155, p<0.05) with regard to the level of self esteem. Further the mean scores revealed that the respondents who were doing business have high level of self esteem (M= 20.09, SD=2.38) than the

respondents who were in private job (M= 17.52, SD=3.25) and the respondents who were doing cooli work (M= 16.39, SD= 4.07).

Table-II

't' test between the received respect of the respondents with regard to the level of self esteem

Respect	Yes			No			t	df
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Self esteem	53	18.84	3.93	53	16.85	3.43	-1.921*	51

The independent 't' test results showed that there was statistical significant mean difference in the level of self esteem between received respect (M=18.84, SD=3.93) and never received any respect from others (M=16.85, SD=3.43). The mean scores revealed that the respondents who received respect from their family and others have high level of self esteem.

Table-III

Karl pearson's co-efficient of correlation between age, income of the respondents and self esteem

	Age	Monthly income	Self esteem
Age			
Monthly income	-.119		
Self esteem	.127	.065	

Karl Pearson's Correlation of co-efficient was used to find out the relationship between variables Age and monthly income and the level of self esteem. It was found that there was no statistically significant relationship with regard to age (r=0.127, p>0.05), monthly income (r= 0.065, p>0.05) and the level of self esteem of the respondents.

Suggestions

1. Social workers create awareness about treatment for alcohol dependency to public through media like radio, television, newspapers, posters and social media.

2. A lot of research should be carried on this area in order to prevent the alcoholism.

3. Encourage them to do meditation to identify their inner thoughts in order to improve self esteem.

4. To build their self esteem by mindfulness training, self esteem activities and cognitive behavior therapy.

5. Social work methods like case work and group work method can apply to address the problems, make their family members to understand and help them. Through community organization programme create awareness about the importance of treatment for alcoholism.

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