

“ A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG SPOUSE OF ALCOHOLICS SELECTED AT THIRUBUVANAI, PUDUCHERRY”

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ABSTRACT

Alcoholism is a major public health problem that affects not only the individual but also the family members, particularly spouses. Living with an alcoholic partner often exposes spouses to emotional, psychological, social, and financial difficulties, leading to increased stress and affecting their coping abilities. The present study aimed to assess the level of stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholics selected at Thirubuvanai, Puducherry. A quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design was adopted. Fifty spouses of alcoholics were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured demographic questionnaire, Modified Perceived Stress Scale, and Modified Brief COPE Inventory Scale. Findings revealed that 100% of the respondents had a moderate level of stress. Regarding coping strategies, 82% had low coping ability and 18% had moderate coping ability. The study highlights the need for counseling and support services.

Key words: Stress, Coping Strategies and Spouse of Alcoholics.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Alcoholism is a major public health problem that affects not only the individual but also the family members, especially spouses. Living with an alcoholic partner often exposes spouses to emotional distress, marital conflicts, financial difficulties, social isolation, and increased family responsibilities. These challenges can lead to significant psychological stress and negatively affect their overall quality of life. Spouses of alcoholics frequently experience anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and feelings of helplessness due to the unpredictable behavior of their partners. To manage these difficulties, they adopt various coping strategies, which may be either adaptive or maladaptive. Understanding the coping mechanisms used by spouses is important for identifying their needs and providing appropriate support. Despite the growing impact of alcoholism on families, limited research has been conducted on the stress levels and coping strategies of spouses of alcoholics, particularly in rural communities. Therefore, this study was undertaken to assess the level of stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholics selected at Thirubuvanai, Puducherry, and to provide evidence for developing effective nursing interventions and support services.

INTRODUCTION

Alcohol consumption is a major public health concern worldwide and contributes substantially to disease burden, disability, and mortality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 38.3% of the global population consumes alcohol, and harmful alcohol use accounts for nearly 3.3 million deaths annually, representing 5.9% of all global deaths. In India, alcohol consumption has increased considerably over recent years, with prevalence rates ranging from 33% to 50% in several regions of South India. Alcohol dependence affects not only the individual but also family members, particularly spouses, who

often experience emotional distress, financial difficulties, marital conflicts, social isolation, and psychological stress. Continuous exposure to an alcoholic partner may adversely affect coping abilities and overall well-being. Despite the significant impact of alcoholism on family functioning, limited studies have explored stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholics, especially in Puducherry. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to assess stress levels and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholics in Thirubuvanai, Puducherry.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of stress and coping strategies among spouse of alcoholics.
2. To associate the pretest level of stress with their selected demographic variables among spouse of alcoholics.
3. To associate the pretest level of coping strategies with their selected demographic variables among spouse of alcoholics.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The research approach used for this study was quantitative approach. The research design adopted for the present study is Descriptive Survey Approach, Descriptive correlational design. This study was conducted at Thirubuvanai, Puducherry. The village in the union territory of Puducherry, India. It is located in Mannadipet commune panchayat of the Villianur taluk. It serves as the centre of Thirubuvanai (Union Territory Assembly constituency). The investigator found the above specified setting convenient to conduct the study.

Independent Variable

- In this study, independent variable refers to the demographic variable (age, education status spouses and education status husband, occupation, marital status, monthly income, number of children, religious, types of the family and Family history of alcohol abuse/ dependence)

Dependent Variable

- In this study, dependent variable refers to the level of stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholic.
- Target population of the study includes stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholic in Thirubuvanai.
- The sample for this study was stress and coping strategies among spouses of alcoholic in Thirubuvani.
- The sample size of the present study was 50.
- In this study, the subjects were selected by Non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted for data collection from 50 wives of alcoholics living in Thirubuvanai.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Spouses who were relieved stress from alcoholic husband.
2. Spouses who were age 18 years and above.
3. Spouses who were currently living with the alcoholic spouse for a minimum at least 1 year.
4. Spouses who were able and willing to provide informed consent.
5. Spouses who were able to understand and respond to the questionnaire.
6. Spouses who were residing in the Thirubuvanai.
7. Spouses who were able to understand and respond in Tamil or English.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Spouses with continuous medical treatment for any chronic illness.
2. Spouses who are separated or divorced from the alcoholic partner.
3. Spouses of individuals with substance abuse issues other than alcohol.
4. Spouses who were unwilling to participate or unable to give informed consent.
5. Spouses who were currently undergoing psychiatric treatment or therapy for stress-related disorders.
6. Spouses who are alcoholics themselves.

RESULT

SECTION–I THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF SPOUSES OF ALCOHOLIC.

According to the age in years among 50 samples 38% (19) were between 31-40 years, 30% (15) spouses had in their 30% (15) of education up to higher secondary level. Majority husband had in their 28% (14) of education up to primary and secondary level. Spouses 36% (18) were employed in a private job and 34% (17) of them were working as cooli . 60% (30) spouses had their monthly income between Rs 1,000 and Rs 30,000. In regard to number of children, 78% (39) spouses had two children. 84% (42) larger part of spouses in was Hindus. Greater percentage 36% (18) of spouses were living in nuclear family. 70% (35) spouses were family history of alcohol abuse/ dependence.

SECTION-III ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG SPOUSES OF ALCOHOLIC.

S. NO	Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	Total Stress	20	30	25.48	2.140*
2	Total coping strategies	21	32	28.08	2.562*

The total stress minimum level 20 and maximum level 30 Mean was 25.48 with standard 2.140 and total coping strategies minimum level 21 and maximum level 32 Mean was 28.08 with standard 2.562 is highly significant 0.05 levels. There is significant of pretest level of stress and coping strategies.

SECTION –VI ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE PRETEST LEVEL COPING STRATEGIES WITH SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES.

N= 50

S.NO	Demographic variables	Frequency N	Low Resilience	Moderate Resilience	High Resilience	x ²	p
1.	Age in years						
	a. 20 – 30 years	11	7	4	0	3.500	0.321

	b. 31 - 40 years	19	16	3	0		
	c. 41 – 50 years	12	11	1	0		
	d. 51 – 60 years	8	7	1	0		
2.	Educational status of the spouse						
	a. Uneducated	4	3	1	0	1.949	0.745
	b. Primary education	12	9	3	0		
	c. Secondary education	13	11	2	0		
	d. Higher Secondary	15	12	3	0		
	e. Graduate & above	6	6	0	0		
3.	Educational status of the husband						
	a. Uneducated	2	1	1	0	5.188	0.269
	b. Primary education	14	10	4	0		
	c. Secondary education	14	11	3	0		
	d. Higher Secondary	10	9	1	0		
	e. Graduate & above	10	10	0	0		
4.	Occupation of the spouse						
	a.Unemployee	11	9	2	0	5.614	0.230
	b.Self employee	3	2	1	0		
	c.Cooli	17	14	3	0		
	d. Privte job	18	16	2	0		
	e. Government job	1	0	1	0		
5.	Occupation of the husband						
	a.Unemployee	9	8	1	0	2.249	0.690
	b.Self employee	12	9	3	0		
	c.Cooli	16	12	4	0		
	d. Privte job	11	10	1	0		
	e. Government job	2	2	0	0		
6.	Monthly income						
	a. < Rs 10,000	15	12	3	0	0.090	0.956

	b. Rs 10000 – 30,000	30	25	5	0		
	c. > Rs. 30,000	5	4	1	0		
7.	Number of children						
	a. One	2	2	0	0	0.895	0.639
	b. Two	39	31	8	0		
	c. More than three	9	8	1	0		
8.	Religion						
	a. Hindu	48	40	8	0	4.833	0.089
	b. Christian	1	0	1	0		
	c. Muslim	1	1	0	0		
9.	Type of the family						
	a. Nuclear	17	12	5	0	2.300	0.317
	b. Joint	15	13	2	0		
	c. Extended	18	16	2	0		
10.	Family history of alcohol abuse/ dependence						
	a. Yes	35					
	b. No	15					

*p<0.05 significant

There is no significant association between pretest level of coping strategies with selected demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

The present study findings indicate that most spouses of alcoholics experienced moderate stress (100%) and poor coping ability (82%), highlighting the significant psychological burden associated with living with an alcoholic partner. Similar results were reported in previous studies where spouses of alcoholics showed high stress levels due to emotional, financial, and social challenges. The mean stress score (25.48 ± 2.140) and coping score (28.08 ± 2.562) further confirm moderate stress with inadequate coping mechanisms. No significant association was found between coping strategies and demographic variables, suggesting that stress and coping are influenced more by the severity of alcoholism than background factors. These findings emphasize the need for structured counseling, stress management training, and family-centered mental health interventions to improve coping and overall well-being among spouses of alcoholics in Thirubuvana, Puducherry.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that spouses of alcoholics experience a significant level of stress, with all respondents showing moderate stress and most demonstrating low coping ability. This indicates that living with an alcoholic partner greatly affects emotional, psychological, social, and financial well-being. The findings also reveal that coping strategies are inadequate among the majority of participants, and there is no significant association with selected demographic variables. Therefore, alcoholism has a uniform negative impact on spouses regardless of background. The study highlights the urgent need for counseling services, stress management programs, family support, and community-based mental health interventions to improve coping and quality of life.

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