

SELF ESTEEM AND LOCUS OF CONTROL IN MALE SUBSTANCE DEPENDENTS

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE

To find out levels of self esteem and locus of control among male drug dependent patients.

STUDY DESIGN

Cross sectional

PLACE AND DURATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in the department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, DHQ Hospital, Faisalabad in a duration of six months.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

100 male patients dependent on drugs from the inpatient facility of Model drug abuse and treatment center situated in the department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, DHQ Hospital, Faisalabad participated in this study through purposive convenient sampling technique. Rosenberg self esteem scale and Rotter's Locus of control scale were administered to measure the levels of self esteem and locus of control. The results were obtained by using SPSS 17.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics show that out of 100, 23 patients (23%) had low self esteem; the rest 77 (77%) fell into average category of self esteem. 24 patients (24 %) had internal locus of control while 76 (76 %) had external locus of control.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that majority of participants had external locus of control while about one fourth participants had internal locus of control. Majority of the participants dependent on drugs had normal self esteem, about a quarter of the total sample had low self esteem.

KEY WORDS

self esteem, locus of control, drug dependence, addiction, substance abuse.

INTRODUCTION

A maladaptive pattern of substance use that imposes physical hazards over a period of one year leading to significant distress or impairment in various areas such as social, interpersonal, job, or legal is defined as Substance abuse, while substance dependence is characterized by a typical drug seeking behavior which becomes the most important priority in person's life despite of the psychosocial impairment caused by the use of the substance; and the development of tolerance or withdrawal phenomena¹.

Why some people get involved in addiction and in turn what are the changes that drugs bring into them has been researched out for long and has produced multiple findings. A research found out sensation seeking, depressed mood, and low self-esteem to be more associated with substance abuse².

A number of different theories of drug use have suggested that drug users can be distinguished from non-users on a number of different personality traits or characteristics. Interpersonal aggression, seeking more affiliation to drug using peers, emotional immaturity, group dependence, unconventionality, feelings of isolation, over dependency, poor control of emotions, distress, ambivalence towards authority, low frustration tolerance and low self-esteem are also considered important in this regard³.

In locus of control research, Lefcourt and Phares, observed an external orientation related to anxiety, depression, neuroticism, and substance abuse^{4,5}. In the literature available, locus of control and mental well-being are interrelated. Persons with an external locus of control will be able to face the stressor with a perspective that does not lay the outcome of the stressor on to him. That may be why persons with external locus of control may be more likely to abuse substances such as alcohol and heroin⁶. An external locus of control implies that people refuse to take responsibility. In the view of some authors, if persons with substance abuse are taught to develop control over their cravings, the symptoms would become more manageable. In this context, the ideal are those therapeutic interventions with the capacity to shift the provision of relief from external sources such as dependence on drugs, groups or drugs to internal sources such as one's control^{4,6}.

A number of studies showed that when substance abusers scored significantly higher on external locus of control, were more influenced by other's opinions and environmental cues, tended to blame outside circumstances for their mistakes and refused to take responsibility while non abusers did not⁶⁻⁹.

The levels of self esteem and locus of control have not yet explored in local settings. Current research aims at examining the levels of self esteem and locus of control in the drug addicts and knowing if there is a relationship

between them. So that phenomenon may be understood in a better way and management plans may be guided precisely.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Participants

100 male patients dependent on different drugs of abuse from the inpatient facility of Drug Abuse Treatment Center of Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, DHQ Hospital, Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad participated in this study through consecutive convenient sampling technique.

Instruments

Rosenberg self esteem scale

Rosenberg self esteem scale¹⁰ was administered to measure the level of self esteem. Urdu version of this scale was used. It is valid and reliable tool consisting of 10 statements followed by four 4 point rating scale scoring from 0-3. Item no 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were scored in reverse order.

Rotter's Locus of control Scale

Rotter's Locus of Control Scale¹¹ was used to measure internal or external locus of control, which is a 29-item forced-choice test. It is the most widely used and cited measurement of Locus of Control (LOC). One point score is given on the choices, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5b, 6a, 7a, 9a, 10b, 11b, 12b, 13b, 15b, 16a, 17a, 18a, 20a, 21a, 22b, 23a, 25a, 26b, 28b, 29a. The filler items are not scored. Higher score indicated external locus of control and lower score indicated internal locus of control. Bio data form consisted of questions about personal and demographic variables.

Procedure

Research protocol was presented to Ethical Review Committee of the Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad. Raters approached the patients in the in patient facility of department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, DHQ Hospital, Faisalabad. After informed consent was taken, data were collected on prescribed Performa in verbal interview format. Analysis was done on SPSS 17.

RESULTS

Results showed that out of 100 drug addicts 48 were single while 50 were married. 44 patients were illiterate, 21 went to primary school, 15 had middle level schooling, and 10 were matriculate. 39 lived in nuclear families while 61 in joint families. 62 lived in urban areas while 38 lived in rural areas. Out of 100, 52 were laborers, 27 were doing some job, and 13 were doing their own small businesses. 60 patients belonged to lower class of society, 14 were from lower middle class, 25 were from middle class and only 1 belonged to upper class. 93 had social support available to them. 49 patients were poly drug users, 41 were dependent on heroine, while only 10 were intravenous drug abusers. 64 patients were between 14 to 30 years of age that caters late adolescence and early adulthood while 30 patients were between 31 to 40 years of age.

23 patients had low self esteem; the rest 77 fell into average category of self esteem. 24 patients had internal locus of control while 76 had external locus of control. Chi square statistics could neither produce enough evidence to establish association between study variables and nor with demographic variables.

Table 1

Cross tabulation between self esteem and locus of control

		Self esteem		Total
		Low self esteem	Average	
Locus of control	Internal	4	20	24
	external	19	57	76
Total		23	77	100

DISCUSSION

Most of the study participants showed an average self esteem but still a quarter of the participants were found having low self esteem. Finding told that about 23 % of the patients dependent on drugs may have a low self esteem that may go noticed and untreated. A research found out low self esteem in the list of the factors associated with drug dependence, their finding included sensation seeking, depressed mood, and low self-esteem to be more associated with substance abuse².

A few researchers claimed on the basis of a number of different theories of drug use that drug users could be distinguished from non-users on a number of different personality traits and low self-esteem are also considered important in this regard³.

Majority of the patients dependent on drugs were found to have an external locus of control, only a quarter of the patients dependent on drugs had an internal locus of control. People with an internal locus of control believe that their own actions determine the rewards that they obtain, while those with an external locus of control believe that their own behavior doesn't matter much and that rewards in life are generally outside of their control¹¹. A number of studies showed that when substance abusers scored significantly higher on external locus of control, were more influenced by other's opinions and environmental cues, tended to blame outside circumstances for their mistakes and refused to take responsibility while non abusers did not^{6,9}.

In locus of control research, Lefcourt and Phares, observed an external orientation related to anxiety, depression, neuroticism, and substance abuse^{4,5}. In the literature available, locus of control and mental well-being are interrelated. Persons with an external locus of control will be able to face the stressor with a perspective that does not lay the outcome of the stressor on to him. That may be why persons with external locus of control may be more likely to abuse substances such as alcohol and heroin⁶. An external locus of control implies that people refuse to take responsibility. In the view of some authors, if persons with substance abuse are taught to develop control over their cravings, the symptoms would become more manageable. In this context, the ideal are those therapeutic interventions with the capacity to shift the provision of relief from external sources such as dependence on drugs, groups or drugs to internal sources such as one's control^{4,6}.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the participants dependent on drugs had normal self esteem; about a quarter of the total sample had low self esteem. The professionals dealing with patients with drug dependents should be prepared to anticipate low self esteem in the patient population in order to detect and manage it timely. The study also showed that majority of participants had external locus of control while about

one fourth participants had internal locus of control. In this context, professionals treating such patients should focus on those therapeutic interventions which have the capacity to shift the provision of relief from external loci of dependence such as dependence on drugs, groups or environment to internal loci such as one's control, choice and responsibility.

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