

Vipassana Meditation on Psychosocial Problems among Adults with Alcohol Dependence Syndrome

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Abstract

Alcohol dependence has been showing a rising trend all over the world including India. Alcohol consumption has health and social consequences via intoxication, alcohol dependence and other biochemical effects of alcohol. Exposure and desensitization, thought-monitoring, relaxation, and acceptance, have all been suggested as potential active ingredients of mindfulness training which could help an individual to find new ways to behave by changing their thought process. Hence the present study was conducted with the aim to determine the effectiveness of vipassana meditation on psychosocial problems among adults with alcohol dependence syndrome. Pre-experimental research design was adapted with 30 participants who met the inclusion criteria was selected by convenience sampling technique. The demographic questionnaire was completed at the beginning of the study. Pre-test assessment on psychosocial problems was assessed using checklist. Vispasana meditation was administered to the participants for 10 days and post-test was conducted at the tenth day using same tool. The data were tabulated and analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Paired t test reveals that the administration of vipassana meditation was found to be effective in reducing the level of psychosocial problems of alcohol dependence symptoms among adults. The study findings concluded that vipassana meditation has great impact on reduction of psychosocial problems. The finding motivates to do more research in order to provide comprehensive care to the alcohol dependent related psychosocial problems.

Keywords: Alcohol dependence, vipassana meditation, biochemical effects, psychosocial problems.

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INTRODUCTION

Alcohol dependence has been showing a rising trend all over the world including India. Alcoholic beverages are a routine part of the social landscape in the population of many societies. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are about 2 million people worldwide who consume alcoholic beverages and 76.3% million with diagnosable alcohol use disorder [1]. The prevalence of alcohol use is still considerable in India according to the studies done across the country and also patterns of consumption vary. As per the report of Ministry of Social justice and empowerment of India, 19% of current users of alcohol consume alcohol in a dependent pattern with the prevalence of 2.7% and 2.5% of people consume alcohol in a harmful manner. States with high prevalence of more than 10% of alcohol use disorders are: Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, and Arunachal Pradesh. In addition, about 5.2% of the

population is affected by harmful or dependent alcohol use and in need of help for their alcohol use problems [2]. Alcohol consumption has health and social consequences via intoxication, alcohol dependence and other biochemical effects of alcohol. There is increasing evidence suggested that besides volume of alcohol, the pattern of harmful alcohol consumption is causal factor in more than 200 disease and injury conditions [3]. Alcohol dependence is a complex behaviour with far reaching harmful effects on the family, work, society as well as the physical and mental health of the individual. Psychological disorders can play a role in the formation of any addiction including alcoholism like 25% of alcohol dependent individuals have an anxiety and mood disorder 50% of alcohol dependent individuals have a personality disorder and 15-25% of adults with alcohol have an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Alcohol dependence leads to psychosocial problems [4]. These problems preceded the dependence and

sometimes they developed after dependence. Regardless of the dependence and addiction occurred, alcohol dependent adult must learn to address the issues and realize the problem to quit from it.

The treatment of alcohol dependence or addiction is based on the minnesota model of is conceptualization of alcohol abuse and dependence as a chronic, progressive disease that affects a person physically, mentally, and spiritually [5]. Cognitive-behavioral approaches focused both on skills training and cognitive and behavioral antecedents to substance use such as self-efficacy, expectancies, negative affect, and on spiritual awakening and acceptance of one's disease. Vipassana is one of India's most ancient meditation techniques which rediscovered by Gotama the Buddha more than 2500 years ago. Vipassana means "seeing things the way they really are," or mindful awareness of what is happening in the present moment. It can be practiced freely by everyone, at any time, in any place, without conflict due to race, community or religion, and it will prove equally beneficial to one and all. It is not a rite or ritual based on blind faith. It is neither an intellectual nor a philosophical entertainment [6]. Exposure and desensitization, thought-monitoring, relaxation, and acceptance, have all been suggested as potential active ingredients of mindfulness training [7-10]. So during mindfulness practice, the exposure to negative thoughts, emotions and sensations (e.g., physical urges), in conjunction with inaction, may encourage desensitization and the acceptance of unwanted emotions or thoughts. Several literature reviews reveals that alcohol consumer adults having psychosocial problems so the investigators felt that vispassana meditation will reduce impulsion to consume the alcohol Hence, The present study was conducted with the research hypothesis of significant changes in the psychosocial problems among adults with alcohol dependence syndrome.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research approach adopted in the study was quantitative approach by using pre-experimental research design with 30 participants. A study was conducted after obtaining formal permission from the concerned authority. Participants who met the inclusion criteria were selected by using convenience sampling technique. Participants could understand Tamil or English and consented for willing to participate in the study were included. Alcohol dependence syndrome with any severe organic disorders and critically ill were excluded from the study. All participants were explained the nature and purpose of the study and their right to participate or withdraw from the study. The written informed consent was obtained from each participant after assuring confidentiality. The demographic questionnaire was completed at the beginning of the study. Pre-test assessment on psychosocial problems was assessed using checklist.

Structured checklist consists of psychosocial problems like guilty, anxiety, mood enhancement, stress, delusion, embarrassment, anxious, feeling sick, feeling hungry, avoidance, facing troubles, habit of drinking in morning, substance abuse, engaging in illegal activities, hopelessness. Followed by pre-test, vispasana meditation was administered to the participants. Initially meditation was taught to them with brief explanation on strict silence and the instructed to follow the meditation. The session started with 20-30 minutes and gradually increased the duration. It was instructed to follow the same for 10 days. It was conducted under the guidance and supervision of the investigators. Post-test was conducted upon the end of 10th day using same checklist. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the procedure. Effectiveness of vipassana meditation on psychosocial problems was determined in the study group using SPSS package. The data were expressed as mean as frequency distribution. Paired t test was used for the comparison of means. A probability of 0.05 or less was taken as statistically significant.

RESULT

Table 1: Demographic variables of adult with alcohol dependence syndrome

Demographic Variables	Experimental Group	
	No.	%
Age in Years		
18 – 25	18	60
26 – 35	12	40
Gender		
Male	30	100
Female	0	-
Religion		
Hindu	11	37
Christian	12	40
Muslim	7	23
Marital Status		
Married	7	23
Unmarried / Single	23	77
Educational Status		
Govt employee	1	7
Private employee	12	40
Self-employee	14	46
Unemployment	2	7
Frequency of alcohol use		
Daily	4	13
Once in a week	18	60
Once in a month	5	17
Occasionally	3	10

Table 1 depicts that out of 30 participants, 18(60%) were the age group of 18-25 years and all 100% participants were male. Regarding religion 11(37%), 12(40%) and 7(23%) were hindu, christian, and muslim respectively. Majority 23(77%) were unmarried and none of them were illiterate. With

regards to employment 1(7%) was government employee, 12(40%) were private employee, employed, 14(46%) were self-employed and 2(7%) were unemployed. Regarding frequency of consuming

alcohol 4(13%) were taking alcohol daily, 18(60%) was taking alcohol once in a week and 5(17%) were taking alcohol once in a month and 3(10%) were consuming alcohol occasionally.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of pre-test and post-test level of psychosocial problem among adult with alcohol dependence syndrome

Level of psychosocial problem	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Mild	8	27	11	37
Moderate	13	43	13	43
Severe	9	30	6	20

Table 2 shows that psychosocial problem among adult with alcohol dependence syndrome in pre-test, out of 30 samples 8(27%) had mild psychosocial problems, 13(43%) had moderate psychosocial problems and 9(30%) had severe psychosocial

problems. Whereas in post-test, 11(37%) had mild psychosocial problems, 13(43%) had moderate psychosocial problems and 6(20%) had severe psychosocial problems.

Table 3: Comparison of pre-test and post-tests level of psychosocial problems among adults with alcohol dependence symptoms receiving vipassana meditation within the experimental group

Psychosocial Problem	Mean	Standard Deviation	Paired T Value
Pre-test	10.70	1.91	t = 2.497
Post-test	9.74	1.93	p = 0.014 S*

S* - Significant

The Table 3 portrays that, the pre-test and post-test mean score of alcohol dependence symptoms of adult was 10.70±1.91 and 9.74±1.93. The calculated paired 't' value of t = 2.497 was found to be statistically

significant at p<0.05 level. This clearly infers that the administration of vipassana meditation was found to be effective in reducing the level of psychosocial problems of alcohol dependence symptoms among adults.

Table 4: Association between post-test levels of psychosocial problem with selected demographic variable of adult with alcohol dependence syndrome

S. No.	Demographic Variables	Inadequate		Moderate		Adequate		Chi-Square Value
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1.	Educational status							$\chi^2=10.474$ d.f=4 p = 0.033 S*
	Illiterate	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Primary	0	0	2	6.6	0	0	
	Secondary	2	6.6	6	20	1	3.3	
	Undergraduate	4	13.3	13	43.3	2	6.6	
2.	Frequency of alcohol use							$\chi^2=9.798$ d.f=4 p = 0.044 S*
	Daily	0	0	2	6.6	0	0	
	Once in a week	7	23.3	13	46.6	4	13.3	
	Once in a month	1	3.3	3	10	0	0	
	Occasionally	0	0	0	0	0	0	

S* - Significant

The above table reveals that, the demographic variables of educational status and frequency of alcohol use had shown statistically significant association with post-test level of psychosocial problems at p<0.05 level among adult with alcohol dependence syndrome.

DISCUSSION

Vipassana is the process of self-observation and self-purification. It begins by observing the natural breath to concentrate the mind. The study focused on vipassana meditation on psychosocial problems among

adults with alcohol dependence syndrome. The current study observed the significant reduction in psychosocial problems after implementation of vipassana meditation. The percentage of severe psychosocial problem has been reduced from 30% to 20%. This finding is compatible with evidence suggested by Sarah Bowen et al, 2007 et al who reported that those who participated in the course reported significant decreases in avoidance of thoughts when compared to controls in the study of the role of thought suppression in the relationship between mindfulness meditation and

alcohol use [11]. The study finding is also consistent with the study conducted by Bowen Sarah *et al*, 2006 who proved that participants showed decreases in alcohol-related problems and psychiatric symptoms as well as increases in positive psychosocial outcomes after mindfulness meditation among substance use in an incarcerated population. The mindfulness training programme has positive impact on psychological well-being among alcohol abusers and substance users [12]. Ala'Aldin Al-Hussaini, 2001 *et al* reported that 10 days' Vipassana training had significantly improved their physical and psychological well-being among multi-ethnic population in the city of Muscat [13]. Similarly Seema P *et al* found that Scores of psychological well-being for the experimental group were higher and the difference was statistically significant after vipassana meditation among the employees [14]. Ayushi Bhargava *et al*, 2019 reviewed effectiveness of Vipassana meditation in improving mental health and reported that Vipassana has been found to be very effective short term meditation technique to touch almost every sphere of lives after thorough analysis of the twenty three research papers [15]. Mino Dargah, 2017 who revealed that Vipassana meditation were associated with high quality of life in his study on impact of Vipassana meditation on quality of life among Vipassana meditators living in California [16]. In another study by Chambers *et al*, 2008 conducted study on the impact of intensive vipassana mindfulness training on attention control, cognitive style, and affect and the result revealed that improvements in self-reported mindfulness, depressive symptoms, rumination, and performance measures of working memory and sustained attention [17]. The study finding is consistent with related studies, however there is limited to alcohol users. Though there is a significant reduction in psychosocial problems, the percentage of reduction was minimal. It could be due to the duration of the meditation period. Thus the present study recommends conducting further study with larger sample with long duration for more generalization.

CONCLUSION

The study findings concluded that vipassana meditation has great impact on reduction of psychosocial problems among alcohol users. Vipassana meditation is very simple technique to control both mind and body. The finding motivates to do more research in order to provide comprehensive care to the alcohol consumers to reduce the psychosocial problems.

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All the authors actively participate in the work of study. All the authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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