

PREVALENCE OF ANXIETY SYMPTOMS AMONG THE CLIENTS MAINTAINED IN METHADONE MAINTENANCE TREATMENT PROGRAMME AT TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL

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Abstract:

Background: The symptoms of anxiety are widely prevalent among the former opioid addicts in methadone maintenance treatment (MMT). It is clinically important to be aware of the severity of the co-morbidity as it plays a crucial role in the methadone dosage, length of time in treatment and the relapse rate and the co-existence of co-morbidity has been described as the factor which worsens the prognosis.

Aim: to study the prevalence of the symptoms of anxiety among MMT clients

Methods: a descriptive, survey and a cross-sectional study, 60 MMT clients were selected who had been attending the MMTP for more than 2 months and were given with semi-structured proforma specifically designed for this study only. Then after, they were evaluated for the anxiety symptoms with Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI). Finally, the information obtained from the demographic profile and the rating scale were analyzed with the help of computer program SPSS.

Results: The study showed around 41.7 % of the patients had symptoms of anxiety with varying severity. Correlates of presence of anxiety symptom among MMT client in the present study showed higher prevalence among age group 20-29(88%), 66% were separated and 64% were unmarried, 50% were Buddhist, majority of the case were chhetri (70%), 75% had primary level education, 67% were unemployed, and 65% from middle class socio-economic status.

Limitation: The study was a cross sectional, which showed only the symptoms of anxiety not the disorder and the drug use, withdrawals itself, could distort evaluation and lead to misdiagnosis of anxiety.

Conclusion: The major risk factor for was male gender, separated, primary education level, students and middle socio-economic status.

Key words: Anxiety, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Methadone.

Introduction:

Substance use disorders co-vary with other psychiatry disorders. Comorbidity is prevalent for substance use and dependence and for anxiety, affective, antisocial and

other personality disorder^{1,2,3,4}. Some psychiatric disorders preceded the onset of drug dependence while others are precipitated by the chronic drug use^{8,10}. In a study specifically restricted to methadone

maintenance treatment, found a strong association between opioids user and psychopathology^{7,9,10}. In a study conducted by Ronald et al, in 1994, nearly 50% of respondents reported at least one lifetime disorder, and close to 30% reported at least one 12 month disorder⁶. The most common disorders were major depressive episode, alcohol dependence, social phobia, and simple phobia substance abuse patients have higher rates of health problem and involvement with the criminal activity. A study conducted by Drake, Swift, and Hall et al. in 1994, a sample of 222 MMT clients was tested for the levels of depression, anxiety and antisocial personality disorder, the subject (51.4%) showed to have anxiety as showed from the score of STAI¹.

The higher prevalence of psychopathology among opioid user is relevance to treatment provider for several reasons as clients with co-morbidity respond poorly to treatment and the psychopathology has been associated with higher levels of HIV infections. Milby, McLellan et al.1999, found the prevalence rates for anxiety and affective disorders in three follow-up samples of opioids addicts treated with methadone maintenance: at least one anxiety disorder was diagnosed in 55% of the total sample⁵. At least one anxiety disorder coexisted with at least one affective disorder in 36% of the sample There are several studies in the world literature that addresses the issues of the prevalence of depression among MMTP clients but till date no studies has been conducted in Nepal focusing on the co-existence of anxiety symptoms among MMTP clients. Thus the study has been carried out to see the prevalence of anxiety symptoms among MMTP clients.

Method and methodology:

Sample

The study was survey, descriptive and cross-sectional. It consisted of total sample of 60

clients attending MMTP for more than two months. (The Clients were selected with inclusion and exclusion criteria)

Inclusion criteria:

1. Clients on regular MMT at least for two months.
2. Clients who gave the consents for participating in the study.
3. Clients able to read and write.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Clients not willing to participate in the study.
2. Clients using other psychoactive substance besides methadone.
3. Clients with other medical and surgical illness.

Every case was explained with the purpose of the study and the verbal consent was taken. They were given first with the semi structured proforma, specifically designed for this study, which composed of socio-demographic profile: later the clients were given Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), which gave the subjective results. The collected data was analyzed using suitable statistical tools.

Results:

In the current study, 41.7% of the patients had symptoms of anxiety with severity. Correlates of presence of anxiety symptom among methadone maintenance treatment clients in the present study showed the prevalence of anxiety symptoms highest among age group 20-29 years (88%) separated (66%) and unmarried patients (66%), Buddhist religion (50%), chhetri caste (70 %), patients with primary level of education (75%), Unemployment (67%), and middle class socio-economic status (65%).

Table: 1. Distribution of Respondents According to Presence of Anxiety after weighted Scoring from Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)

Anxiety	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	41.7
No	35	58.3
Total	60	100

Table show the distribution according to presence of anxiety, (Presence of anxiety means more than 21 in BAI). 41.7% of sample indicated the presence of anxiety.

Table: 2. Distribution of Respondents According to Different Levels of Weighted Score on Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)

Beck Anxiety Inventory(BAI)	Frequency	Percent
No Anxiety(<21)	18	30
Mild Anxiety(21-32)	34	56.7
Moderate Anxiety(33-48)	8	13.3
Total	60	100

Table: 3. Distribution of Respondents According to Socio-demographic Profile

Demographic Profile		Anxiety	
		Frequency	Percentage
Age Group	20-29	16	88
	30-39	2	12
	>40	6	50
Religion	Hindu		57
	Buddhist	7	36
	Christian	2	50
Marital Status	Single	18	64
	Married	5	35
	Separated	12	66
Caste	Brahimin	3	50
	Chettri	7	70
	Newar	19	55
	Mongolin	6	60
Education	Primary	3	75
	Secondary	10	43
	Intermediate	8	61
	Higher	14	70
Occupation	Unemployed	26	66.7
	Student	1	33
	Business	2	20
	Service	2	25
Socioeconomic Status	Lower	2	50
	Middle	32	65
	Upper	2	50

Discussion and Summary:

Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program in recent years has been promoted in many countries as a substitution therapy for opiate dependence and also with the perspective of reducing HIV transmission among drug user especially injecting drug user.

Psychiatric co-morbidity was associated with a more severe pattern of substance abuse and greater psychosocial problem. It has been found that the psychopathology to be an important predictor of addiction treatment success, with negative relation between severity of the psychiatric problem

and the treatment success. In this study, the anxiety symptoms were higher among age 20-29-age group, separated, among

students & with primary level of education and from middle socio- economic status also scored high in the BAI.

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