

AGGRESSION AND STRESS LEVEL IN RECOVERED DRUG ADDICTS

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ABSTRACT:

Aggression is described as an action or behavior that is meant to hurt or inflict distress. It is usually a reaction to something unpleasant. Stress is a form of mental pressure. It can lead to many serious health issues if experienced in high amounts. This research was conducted to study the aggression level and stress level in recovered drug addicts. A total number of 30 samples were selected. All were recovered drug addicts. Perceived stress scale (PSS-10) by Sheldon Cohen and Buss-Perry Aggression scale were used. The results indicated that recovered drug addicts' experience extraordinarily high levels of aggression and stress.

Keywords: *Aggression, Stress, Drug addiction, Recovered drug addicts.*

I. INTRODUCTION

AGGRESSION: As defined by the social psychologists, Baron and Richardson in 1994, *Aggression is a behavior that is intended to harm another individual who does not wish to be harmed.* Aggression, according to social psychologists, can be both verbal and physical. Physical aggression is the aggression that involves physiological damage or harm. Verbal aggression or Non-physical aggression is the aggression that does not involve any kind of physiological harm or damage instead words or gestures are used to inflict psychological harm damage to another person such as yelling, screaming, taunting, etc. It can also include social aggression which means causing harm or damage to another person's social relationships on purpose, for example; gossiping, silent treatment or spreading rumors about others. The type or degree of intent that underpins aggressive behavior distinguishes aggression into two basic forms, Hostile aggression and Instrumental aggression. Hostile aggression is a form of destructive behavior driven or motivated by the feelings of anger. It's usually rash and impulsive, with the sole purpose of causing harm to the other person. Whereas Instrumental aggression is a form of aggression that is deliberate and premeditated. It can be very much planned, cold and calculated. It is the act of harming others in order to obtain something such as publicity, money, political power, etc. Anger differs from aggression in the sense that the latter is the belligerent, disruptive or militant **behavior** or action taken whereas the former is an **emotion**.

STRESS: The word 'stress' was coined by Hans Selye back in 1936. Any change that causes physical, mental, or psychological pressure can be categorized as stress. According to the 'American Psychological Association' there are 3 types of stress: **Acute stress**- It is the most common form of stress. It is short term and

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is really easy to handle. However if encountered regularly, it can prove detrimental to physical and mental health. **Episodic acute stress**- It is when the individual keeps experiencing acute stress quite frequently. It makes the person feel as if he is under-pressure all the time. If not treated, it can lead to constant irritability, unintentional rage and hostility. **Chronic Stress**- It is a reaction to long-term emotional pressure or tension over which a person believes they have no influence over. It includes the release of corticosteroids by the endocrine system. The individual remains in constant state of physiological arousal.

DRUG ADDICTION: It is also known as substance use disorder. It is a condition that affects an individual's brain and actions, resulting in an inability to regulate the use of any kind of drugs or medicine, whether legal or illegal. Drugs include substances such as alcohol, marijuana, and nicotine. It may begin with a little experimentation with a recreational drug, and for certain individuals, the drug use becomes more often with time. Soon, drugs may be needed simply just to feel happy. Living without the drug becomes more impossible as the drug use grows. Stopping substance use will lead to excessive cravings and then leave the person physically sick (withdrawal symptoms).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ziherl, ČebašekTravnik, KoresPlesničar, Tomori and Zalar conducted a study on trait aggression and hostility in recovered alcoholics in 2007. The sample includes 64 male recovered alcoholics and 69 male non-alcoholics. Munich alcoholism test was used to diagnose reliable non-alcoholics. The Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory was used to determine the aggressive and hostile attributes. The study concluded that physical and verbal aggression factors did not vary substantially between the recovered and non-alcoholics. The RA group showed symptoms of hostility and covert aggression.

Steven Walfish, Renelle Massey and Anton Krone conducted a study on Anxiety and anger among abusers of different substances in 1990. The sample included 809 adult individuals from rehabilitation centres who were diagnosed with drug addiction. The findings indicated that each group had significantly higher anxiety and frustration ratings when compared to the non-client cohorts. However, no alterations in anxiety or frustration ratings were seen based on the choice of drug used.

Rounaghi, Pakseresht, Asiry and AtrkarRoushan conducted a study on the relationship between aggression and addiction tendency among university students in 2018. A sample of 280 students were selected randomly. Demographic characteristics survey, Ahvaz Aggression Questionnaire (AAQ), and addiction tendency inventory were used. The findings of this study revealed a connection between aggression and proclivity for addiction in students.

HamedMostafaei, Mojtaba Hosseini, Hossein Jenaabadi conducted a study to investigate the relationship between aggression and the addiction potential high school male students in 2014. A sample of 150 students were selected randomly. Aggression Questionnaire (AGQ) and Addiction-Potential Scale (APS) were used. The study indicated that there is positive relationship between aggression and the addiction potential. Aggression can predict the addiction potential by 43%.

De Mojá and Spielberger Charles D. conducted a study on Anger and Drug Addiction in 1997. The sample included young adult drug addicts and non- drug users. The Italian version of Spielberger's State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory was used. The results suggested that drug addicts were more likely to show frustration and demonstrate anger against other individuals or items in the environment and have less influence over their feelings of anger than non-users.

De Mojá Carmelo A. conducted a study on Anxiety and depression in drug users and abusers in 1990. The sample included 60 men aged 18–30 years, divided into 3 groups i.e. 20 drug users, 20 drug abusers and 20 individuals in the control group. The trait subscale of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and Zung's Self-Rating Depression Scale was used. The results concluded that drug abusers showed higher ratings on trait-anxiety and depression than drug users and the control group.

Sinha, R., Fuse, T., Aubin, L.R. *et al.* conducted a study on Psychological stress, drug-related cues and cocaine craving in 2000. The sample include 20 cocaine dependent individuals. All the participants were subjected to stress, drug cues, and neutral-relaxing imagery stimuli in a single laboratory session. With stress and drug cue imagery, but not with neutral-relaxing imagery, significant rises in cocaine and alcohol cravings were found. Furthermore, subjective anxiety, heart rate, and salivary cortisol levels all increased in just the same way in both stress and drug cue conditions. In comparison to the neutral state, the stress and substance cues conditions saw significant increases in negative emotion ratings and reductions in positive emotion ratings.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Aggression is a form of social behaviour that is either overt or covert but mostly malicious, with the aim of causing injury or other harm on another person. It can happen automatically in response to anything or without any provocation. Whereas stress is a form of mental distress. Stress may be external and linked to the environment, but it can also be exacerbated by internal perceptions that cause a person to feel anxious or other negative emotions in response to a situation, such as pain, distress, or other factors, which they then label as stressful.

OBJECTIVES

- To check the Aggression level in recovered drug addicts.
- To check the Stress level in recovered drug addicts.

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants: In the present study, the total number of 30 individuals were selected. All are recovered drug addicts.

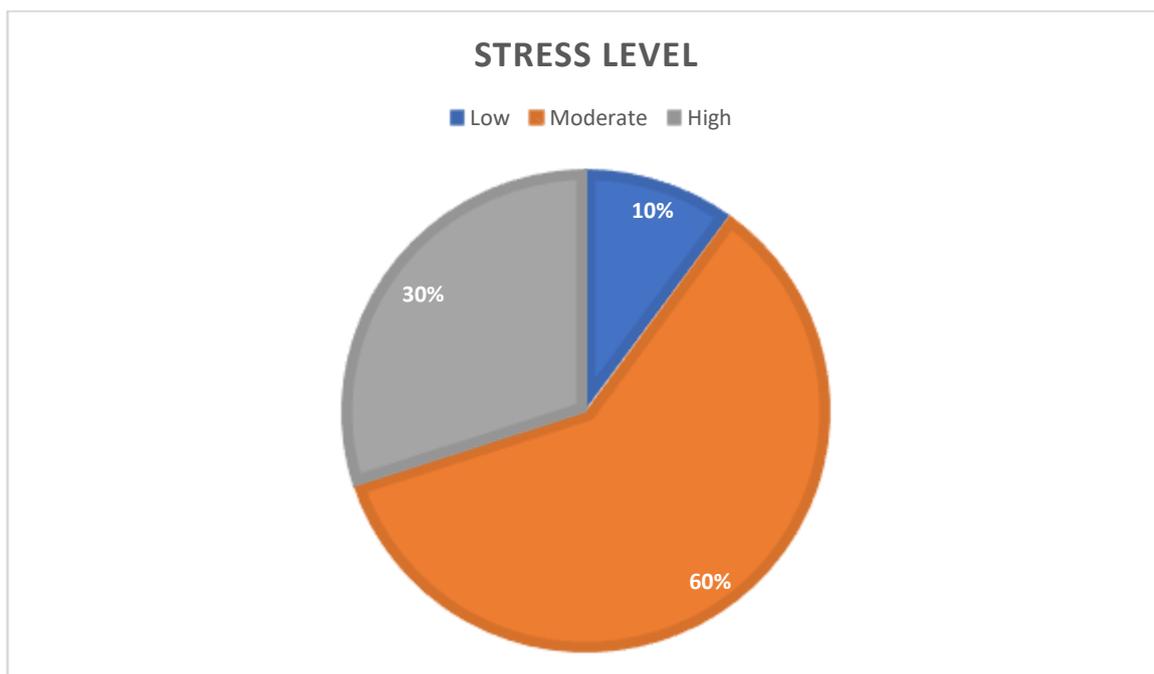
Tools:

Aggression questionnaire (Buss and Perry, 1992): This questionnaire was designed by professors from the University of Texas at Austin, Arnold H. Buss and Mark Perry in 1992. The AQ is a 29-item questionnaire that asks participants to rate statements on a 5-point scale ranging from "extremely uncharacteristic of me" to "extremely characteristic of me." The scores are normalised on a scale of 0 to 1, with

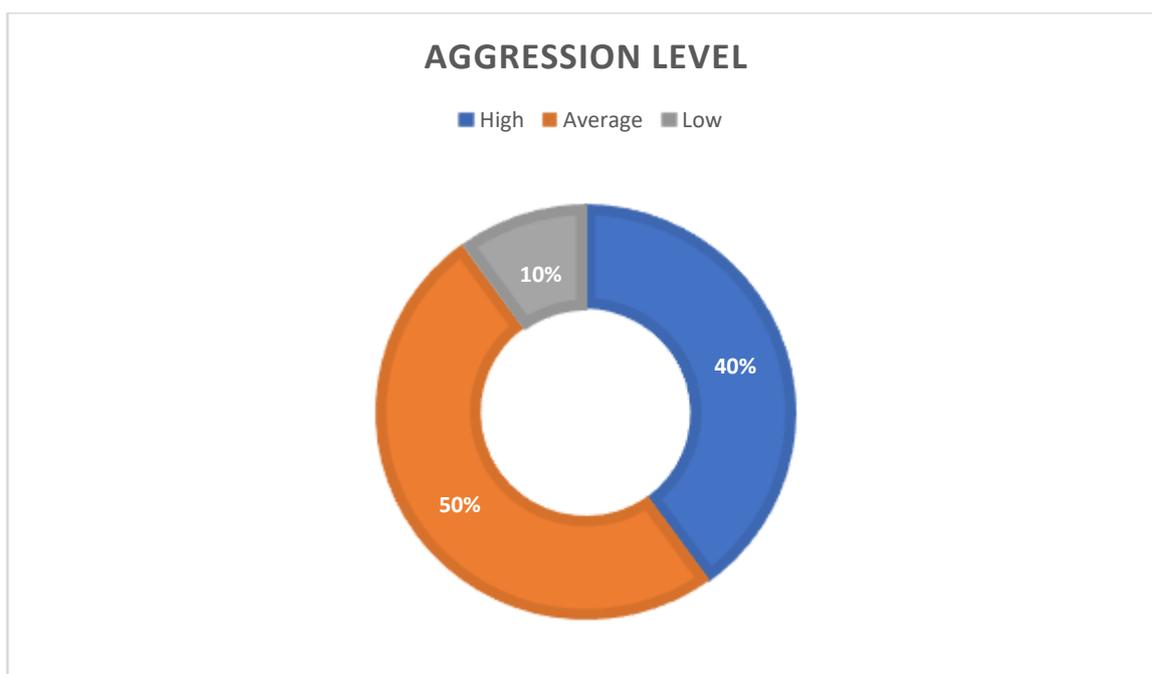
1 being the most aggressive level. Physical violence, verbal aggression, rage, and animosity are the four variables assessed.

Perceived Stress Scale: This scale was developed by Sheldon Cohen. It was designed to assess the degree to which difficult circumstances in one's life are perceived. It consists of 10 items. Each item on the PSS is scored on a 5-point Likert scale, with 0 (never) to 4 (very often).

IV. RESULT AND INTERPRETATION:



The pie-chart depicts that 10% of recovered drug addicts doesn't experience much stress. However, 60% of recovered addicts fall into the category of moderate stress whereas 30% of them experience high levels of stress.



The pie chart depicts that 10% of the recovered drug addicts falls into the category of low aggression level whereas 50% of them experience moderate aggression. Meanwhile, 40% of the recovered addicts are seen to be highly aggressive.

V. CONCLUSION:

From the above results and interpretations, it can be concluded that drugs significantly impact the lives of the individuals even after overcoming the addiction. It could be seen that 40% of recovered drug addicts fell into the category of highly aggressive behavior whereas 50% were moderately aggressive. Similarly, 60% of the recovered drug addicts are under moderate stress and 30% showed high stress levels. Recovered drug addicts are highly prone to stress and anxiety. They are seen to be highly aggressive as well. They can't seem to handle the life situations positively. They feel enormous pressure over little things. They are found to be quite violent and impatient. They are under constant state of negative thinking.

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