



Nature of Anger, Life Event Stress, Conflict and Defense Mechanism Among Individuals Having Peptic Ulcer: A Comparative Study

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Abstract Peptic ulcer occurs due to the erosive action of the acid gastric juice upon an area of mucous membrane that may be presumed to have become devitalized in some way and thus to have lost its normal powers of resistance to its own enzymes. Being a psychosomatic illness various psychological factors have been found to be associated with the occurrence and/or persistence of the disease. The present study deals with the nature of anger, life event stress, conflict and defense mechanism of 30 peptic ulcer patients and 30 unaffected individuals. MANOVA and further analysis through ANOVA were computed to statistically analyse the data. The results of the study revealed that peptic ulcer patients had lower trait anger, angry temperament, anger-out and defensive function; and higher anger-in and life event stress than the individuals in the comparative group. Findings also revealed differences in needs, conflicts and defenses between the two groups. Thus it can be concluded that peptic ulcer patients may have a tendency to suppress their anger, experience significantly greater life event stress, experience a significant conflict of autonomy versus compliance along with having low defensive functioning.

Keywords Peptic ulcer · Anger · Life event stress · Conflict · Defense mechanism

Introduction

Peptic ulcer causes erosion in the mucosal lining of the gastrointestinal tract that extends through the underlying muscularis mucosa and represents a prototypical psychosomatic illness which reflects the complex interrelationship between the psyche and the soma (Kaplan 1995).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century various psychological factors were profoundly linked with peptic ulcers. Various researches have time and again pointed out that emotional states particularly that of anger, internal conflicts, the defense mechanism used to handle conflicts and stress played a major role in the formation and maintenance of the disease. Acceleration of gastric function (hyperemia, hypersecretion and hypermotility) along with increased fragility of the mucosa was associated with anger (Szasz et al. 1947), anger, frustration and resentment, reactions of internal conflict and an unfulfilled desire for aggression and fighting back (Wolff and Wolf 1943); conflict between intense receptive-acquisitive wishes and their denial by a compensatory "giving" attitude (Alexander 1934); and psychological immaturity, strong dependent desires which were secondary to either rejection or spoiling in early childhood along with inadequate defense mechanisms to handle various conflicts (Kapp et al. 1947). It was assumed that the pathway by which psychic states influence the stomach, is a nervous one, via the parasympathetic centre and the Vagus trunks (regressive innervation) (Wolff and Wolf 1943; Szasz et al. 1947) giving rise to similar physiological impact.

Selye linked strains from persistent disease, injury, exertion and "mental pressure" to the stress syndrome and identified gastric ulcer as the prototypic psychosomatic stress disorder (Selye 1956). Bingham (1960) in his study comparing individuals of two groups (patients with

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Pandemic, Psychological Distress and Positive Mental Health – Indian Scenario during the Second Wave of the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Aims/Objectives: Positive psychological perspectives focus on personal qualities and life choices that promotes a healthy and meaningful life. The purpose of the present study was to explore the interaction between psychological distress and positive psychological perspectives during the second wave of the pandemic in India and to identify the predictors of psychological distress.

Methods: The sample consisted of 106 adult individuals residing in India. The participants filled out the questionnaires mailed to them during the months of June and July, 2021.

Results: The results of current survey indicated that there were significant differences in resilience score, hope total score, presence of meaning score and search for meaning score among individuals with various levels of psychological distress experienced during the second wave of the pandemic. Findings also indicated that resilience, age, current mental illness and gender are the predictors of psychological distress in the participants.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, positive psychology, resilience, hope, meaning in life

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation's Director-General on 11th March, 2020, had pointed out that 'Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly' (WHO, 2020). The impact of any pandemic is huge and devastating and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is not an exception to this. The first outbreak of this deadly virus occurred in Wuhan city of China (Zhou, et al., 2020) following which, it caused unprecedented impact on all lives across the globe. Heterogeneous measures were adopted by various countries worldwide to combat with this adversity; however, majority of the countries have witnessed at least two waves of COVID-19 and its enervating repercussions. India being no exception, experienced a ghastly second wave that created more havoc than the first wave (Kumar, 2021). During the third week of April, 2021, India saw a massive surge of cases with daily number of cases crossing the 2 lakh mark (Lancet, 2021) and mainly the younger population were exponentially affected by the devastating strains of the virus during this second wave (Jain, et al., 2021). Though restrictions imposed by the Government of India curbed the spread, helped to manage the situation to some extent and benefitted the country to prepare for the worst situation during the first wave. However still, the second wave of the pandemic affected the Indian population at an alarming rate with rapid spread of virus, exhaustion of resources and collapsing of public health care system. A global public health emergency of such a scale with multifaceted severe consequences will surely induce anxiety and distress as normal responses. Some may be more equipped than others to successfully deal with stress and adapt easily to new circumstances, making the impact of the pandemic highly heterogeneous. Studies focussing on prevalence and severity of psychological distress revealed increased prevalence of depression and anxiety in both patients who experienced

COVID-19 infection and the general public (Qiu, et al., 2020; Zhang, et al., 2020). The continuity of this stressful situation for a prolonged period is further depleting us from our psychological resources and overwhelming us with a pervasive uncertainty. The long term effects of this pandemic is still unclear to us, however the creation of distress among people beyond geographical locations, cultural and social systems is quite evident through its manifestations. (Wang, et al., 2020a, 2020b). The danger imposed by disastrous events such as the current pandemic, has been positively correlated with distress symptoms and negatively correlated with individual resilience (Braun-Lewensohn & Al-Sayed, 2018; Eshel & Kimhi, 2016). American Psychological Association defines resilience as a process of bouncing back from difficult experiences and adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress (Newman, 2002). The significance of the concept of resilience is derived from its direct link to the ability to effectively respond to unexpected occurrences (Turenne, et al., 2019). Studies portray that one of the foremost negative predictor of COVID-19 anxiety is individual resilience (Kimhi, et al., 2020). In United States national surveys, while assessing psychological resilience during the COVID-19 in the general adult population, lower scores on resilience were associated with worse mental health outcomes, including more severe depression and anxiety. Lower resilience was also associated with greater worry about the effects of COVID-19 (Killgore, et al., 2020, C. H. Liu, et al., 2020). For effective coping with unprecedented adversities in life hope may act as a potential resiliency factor having the capacity to reduce emotional problems like anxiety and depression. (Braun-Lewensohn, et al., 2021). It can aid one in examining the sources of personal strength related to the future (Sharabi, et al., 2012). According to Snyder (2002) hope helps an individual realise the divergent ways to achieve desirable goals and is

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Ameliorating Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorder with Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Enuresis Through Behaviour Therapy Approach – A Case Study

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Abstract

Preoccupation and subsequent repetitive behavioural or mental acts in response to it are distinct characteristic features of a group of disorder referred to as obsessive-compulsive and related disorder. Due to relatedness to each other, these conditions are often found to co-occur. Among these conditions, trichotillomania or hair-pulling disorder is characterised by the tendency to pull one's own hair recurrently and the pulling occur from any region of the body where hair grows. It may occur in brief episodes scattered throughout the day or for more sustained periods that can continue for hours (APA, 2013).

Keywords: behavioural or mental acts

Introduction

Preoccupation and subsequent repetitive behavioural or mental acts in response to it are distinct characteristic features of a group of disorder referred to as obsessive-compulsive and related disorder. Due to relatedness to each other, these conditions are often found to co-occur. Among these conditions, trichotillomania or hair-pulling disorder is characterised by the tendency to pull one's own hair recurrently and the pulling occur from any region of the body where hair grows. It may occur in brief episodes scattered throughout the day or for more sustained periods that can continue for hours (APA, 2013). The onset of trichotillomania is generally in childhood or adolescence and the disorder usually runs a chronic course (Christenson & Crow, 1996). Again, another disorder on this spectrum, which is also a frequently associated comorbidity of trichotillomania is excoriation disorder which is characterised by recurrent picking at one's own skin. Repetitive body-focused symptoms other than hair-pulling or skin picking (e.g., nail biting, lip biting) also commonly occur in a majority of the individuals lying on this continuum (APA, 2013). Research reveals that pharmacotherapy in trichotillomania, has shown inconsistent results in terms of long-term gains (Swedo & Leonard, 1992). Post-treatment evaluation studies of behaviour therapy have been found to be more effective in reducing symptoms of trichotillomania (Keijsers, et al., 2006). The

techniques commonly used in behaviour therapy are habit reversal, self-monitoring, response prevention, progressive muscle relaxation, and use of pleasant imagery (Rangarwani, 1997). The specific style of behaviour therapy called habit reversal therapy has given positive outcomes in many cases of trichotillomania, however there is limited completed RCT in this area (Rehm, et al., 2015). Researchers have reported mixed results using insight-oriented psychotherapy. Although some researchers (Kumar et al., 1982) report failure in a case, others (Aggarwal, et al., 1988) however, reported complete recovery which was maintained till 1-year follow-up. Advances in the understanding of the phenomenology of trichotillomania revealed behavioural treatments when combined with dialectical behaviour therapy and acceptance and commitment therapy augmented benefits of treatment (Rehm, et al., 2015). Again, though no distinct and recommended treatment option has been delineated for excoriation disorder, however, cognitive-behavioural therapy, particularly habit-reversal therapy and acceptance and commitment therapy have shown promise with this condition (Jafferany & Patel, 2019). Oppositional defiant disorder is a frequent and persistent pattern of angry or irritable mood and argumentation or defiant behaviour. Enuresis is distinguished by a tendency of repeated voiding of urine during day and night into bed or clothes and conversion disorder characterised by abnormal limb