

Association of Severity of Expressed Emotion with Type of Caregivers in Patients of Major Depressive Disorder

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Abstract: *Background:* Expressed emotion refers to a global index of particular emotions, attitudes and behaviours expressed by relatives (caretaker) about a family member diagnosed with psychiatric illness. *Materials and Methods:* A total of 40 patients with depression were recruited from Psychiatric OPD S.S.G. Hospital Vadodara and comparison of mean LEE in relation to type of caregivers was measured. *Results:* This study found that 't' value was found to be 17.30 with p value <0.0001. The difference was found to be statistically significant (P<0.05), showing that the mean LEE was significantly higher for Spouse in comparison to Parents as caregiver. *Conclusion:* Expressed emotion was higher in families having spouse as caregiver in comparison to families with parents were caregiver.

Keywords: depression, expressed emotion, caregivers

1. Introduction

Expressed emotion refers to a global index of particular emotions, attitudes, and behaviours expressed by relatives about a family member diagnosed with psychiatric illness. The concept of EE was introduced in studies done by Brown et al¹, where it was shown to have an effect on relapse of schizophrenic patients. . Expressed emotion (EE) is the general reflection of the family's attitude towards the patient as a precursor to relapse in major psychiatric disorders. There is vast majority of evidence that the quality of family relationships is closely related to the development, maintenance and treatment response of many psychiatric disorders. The roles of families in the care of people with psychiatric disorders and the ensuing caregiver burden have been increasingly acknowledged in the research literature in the last three decades. The chronic burden of care giving to a patient with psychiatric illness is likely to generate negative emotions.

Aim: To explore the Association of severity of Expressed Emotion with type of Caregivers in Patients of Major Depressive Disorder.

2. Methodology

This was a cross sectional study conducted on 40 patients of Major Depressive Disorder who were on medication, attending Psychiatry OPD of SSG hospital, Vadodara. Expressed emotion in caretakers was measured using Level of Expressed Emotion scale (LEE) and Unpaired 't' test was applied to compare mean LEE in relation to type of caregivers.

3. Results

The study population consisted of a total of 40 patients diagnosed as having Major Depressive Disorder. Patients

were selected from outpatient department of psychiatry through serial sampling.(mean age of MDD patient's was 46.07 with a standard deviation of 10.6226)

Comparison of mean LEE in relation to Care Giver

Occupation	N	Mean \pm SD	't' Value	P Value
Spouse	9	122.0 \pm 14.6	17.30, DF =38	0.000*
Parents	31	43.6 \pm 11.2		

Unpaired 't' test applied. p value = 0.000*, Significant

The above table shows the comparison of mean LEE in relation to Care giver.

The mean LEE in the Spouse was 122.0 \pm 14.6, while for Parents it was 43.6 \pm 11.2. The difference was found to be statistically significant (P<0.05), showing that the mean LEE was significantly higher for Spouse in comparison to Parents as caregiver.

4. Discussion

The present study was conducted to explore the Association of severity of Expressed Emotion with type of Caregivers in Patients of Major Depressive Disorder .Expressed emotion was studied extensively in schizophrenia previously. In addition, there is a growing literature concerning the role of EE in Unipolar depression^{2,3}, Bipolar disorder⁴,Eating disorders⁵and Dementia⁶ . Few studies have examined the relationship between EE and Mood disorder.

It is well established that high family levels of EE are consistently associated with higher rates of relapse in patients with schizophrenia. The first study to undertake the EE measure and connect it to the course of schizophrenia was investigated by Brown et al.⁷ where the patients were followed up for 9 months after they were discharged and sent to their home from hospital. It was found that prolonged contact of patients with the critical caregivers determines the relapse in schizophrenia⁸.Previous study observed that the

strongest link with relapse and readmission was the type of home to which patients were discharged. Surprisingly, the patients who were discharged from hospital to stay with their parents or wives were more likely to get relapse and needed readmission than those who lived in lodgings or with their siblings. It was also found that patients staying with their mothers had reduced risk of relapse and readmission if patients and/or their mother went out to work.⁹ It suggested that the probable adverse influence of prolonged contact of patients with their family members in influencing the degree of disability and level of functioning.¹⁰

The mean LEE in the Spouse was 122.0 ± 14.6 , while for Parents it was 43.6 ± 11.2 . The difference was found to be statistically significant ($P < 0.05$), showing that the mean LEE (Expressed Emotion) was significantly higher for Spouse in comparison to Parents as caregiver. This study found that the relationship between patients and caregiver is an important for overall prognosis of depression.

5. Limitations

- 1) Sample size is less in this study.
- 2) It is cross sectional study.

6. Conclusion

This study found that Expressed emotion was higher in families having spouse as caregiver in comparison to families with parents were caregiver.

Expressed emotion is significantly associated with severity of MDD. Correlation value between expressed emotion and MDD was 0.742 and p value was less than 0.05. There was high chance of relapse in families of high expressed emotion. Further studies need to be done on larger sample size to throw more light on the above association.

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