

ABSTRACT**Psychiatric Comorbidity in Alcohol-Dependent Men****Winston B. Gopaul**

High prevalence rates of psychiatric illness have been reported in alcoholics. This comorbidity has been associated with a poor treatment outcome. In this study, eighty-four alcohol-dependent men consecutively admitted to the treatment programme at the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Centre, Caura Hospital were assessed for the presence of comorbid mood disorders, anxiety disorders and substance use disorders. The prevalence of these disorders was compared with that of a control group.

A comorbid mood or anxiety disorder was diagnosed in 47.6% of the alcohol-dependent group and 6.0% of the control group. This was a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 37.182$, d.f.=1, $p < 0.001$). Major Depressive Disorder was the most common mood disorder and Social Phobia was the most common anxiety disorder in alcohol-dependent subjects. The rate of other substance use disorders was also significantly higher in the alcohol-dependent group compared to the control group (84.5% vs 22.6%) ($\chi^2 = 64.711$, d.f.=1, $p < 0.001$). Alcohol-dependent men with a comorbid psychiatric illness demonstrated a greater severity of alcohol dependence compared to those without a comorbid disorder. However, they did not demonstrate a greater level of psychosocial impairment or an increased tendency to use other substances in addition to alcohol.

The results of this study emphasise the importance of screening all alcohol-dependent patients for the presence of comorbid psychiatric and substance use disorders.

Keywords: Winston B. Gopaul; Comorbidity; Alcohol-Dependent Men; Mood Disorders; Anxiety Disorders; Substance use disorders