



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER; STIGMA IN PEOPLE: ROLE OF PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT IN DEPRESSION.

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ABSTRACT... Introduction: In the present study social support will be defined in order to find its moderating role in depression among people with substance use disorder. **Objectives:** The Objective of the study was to explore that stigma is a significant predictor of depression in people with substance used disorder. Further, the study aim was to explore the significant role of perceived social support in depression among the people with substance use disorder. **Study Design:** Sample was collected through purposive sampling technique. **Setting, Period:** Sample was gathered from different treatment and rehabilitation centers situated across Sialkot and Multan from August 2015 to June 2016. **Material & Methods:** Sample included 200 males with substance used disorder between age range of 20 to 50 (Mean age = 31.34, S.D = 7.988) were assessed on perceived stigma of substance abuse scale (Loma, O' Hair, Knollenberg, Hayes, & Fletcher, 2010) and Saddiqui Shah Depression Scale (Shah, 1992). Regression analysis was applied to analyze the hypotheses. **Results:** The results reflected significant relationship of perceived stigma and depression ($r = .464$; $F (54.275)$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = .215$]. Result shows perceived social support as a moderator between stigma and depression among people with substance use disorder ($r = .565$; $F (46.138)$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = .319$]. **Conclusion:** Stigmatizing attitude of significant others in people with substance use disorder is increasing the negative feelings among people with substance use disorder. Perception of this blaming attitude by other causes a deep effect on them and they suffer depression. Further, the Perception of social support from others plays a momentous role in the lives of people it is helpful to cope all the problems.

Key words: Substance Abuse, Perceived Stigma, Depression, Perceived Social Support.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of substance use is hazardous and people suffering with substance used disorder are increasing in the entire world. It is affecting people's lives by creating several health issues because it is interfering with their mental stability of the individuals. Substance used is a long-lasting and reverting brain disease that is characterized by use of substance and its desire without thinking about its harmful effects. Scarcity, illegality, high hazardous actions and many other labeled diseases are the examples of societal damages which are allied with Substance abuse.¹

It is frequently believed that the beginning and prolongation of substance used is controlled by an individual. As the substance used disorders

are widespread universal psychological disorders, there are many consequences of these disorders and the most important and dangerous among them is stigma. The term stigma denotes a societal procedure in which people with strong societal positions mark a person as degraded and diminished by the society.²

Basically, Stigma is the occurrence of the thoughts of being a person who is publically hidden due to his censure position in the society.³ The acceptance of dissimilarity and rejection are the two most important components that the majority of descriptions of stigma are comprised of. So to a certain extent stigma is an aspect that fallout in extensive societal condemnation rather than being only a scratch or blaze on the body of a person.⁴

Although societal stigma related to substance use does not burden all victims similarly. Stigma strongly effects those who suffer it on more than one problem and who have less means to prevent it, for example on poor socioeconomic status, chronic diseases, psychological problems, homelessness etc.⁵ Furthermore, substance use related stigma starts when people get involve in treatment of this disorder and it gets stronger when a person suffer treatment failure.⁶ Further, the stigma is linked with alcoholic use disorders which later on lead to psychiatric disorders.⁷ It is really sad to say, researches show with the passage of time very little change in stigmatizing behavior towards substance users and attitude towards people with SUDs was not improved over time.⁸ Stigma not only effect the people with substance used disorder but also has badly effects his or her family member.⁹ Stigma has numerous negative effects on SUDs users but it interferes the recovery process of SUDs. Researches claimed that people with substance use disorder are more widely stigmatized group in contrast to other mental illnesses.^{10,11}

The situation has become worst because it is hard to decrease this difficulty till than stigmatizing attitudes regarding drug abuse are extensively acknowledged, recognized at social level and well-looked-after by law implementation forces.¹²

Some disorders are devastating and upsetting for individuals' daily routine as well as their relations is known as depression. People with depression may be presented weepy, cheerless, blank, desperate and dejected most often and most of the time shoed deprived attention, troubled sleep or hunger, less interest in daily activities, low confidence and self-blame. If these symptoms continue they may lead a person towards considerable damages in completing their routine activities or they may have suicidal ideations.¹³ The central symptoms of a depression are unhappy or irritable mood and loss of pleasure in almost all activities. Other related symptoms are weight changes, sleep disturbances, fatigue, feelings of unimportance or incorrect blame, loss of attentiveness or indecisiveness, and repeated thoughts of death.¹⁴

The present study tends to find the occurrence of depression due to stigma of substance use. Individuals who are stigmatized may feel shame, disgust, devaluation, rejection, disgrace, and many other dispositions they also feel themselves inferior and all these things increase the chances for them to suffer depressive symptoms. These findings are consistent with previously conducted studies for example; in a study on stigmatization, It was investigated that stigmatization increased the risk of depression in perceivers.¹⁵

Present study focused on many aspects of the problem, including stigma, depression and effects of perceived social support among people with substance use disorder. There is indication from numerous researches that one of these emotional problems is depression. For example, one research found high morbidity of depression for heroin users in distinction with normal people.¹⁶ One other study also in line the same thing by using a checklist for depression symptoms.¹⁷

Social support plays an essential role in maintaining noble life style but in different cultures people perceive social support in their own way. Studies have indicated that socially inaccessible people are at high risk of illnesses. Beginning, development and recovery from disease are significantly obstructed by social support or lack of it.¹⁸ Social support is helpful in reducing the severity of illness and recovery as well.¹⁹ Furthermore, lack of perceived social support available to a person is linked with depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, social phobia and -many physical diseases.²⁰ Lack of association with family relations has an important part in abuse of addictive materials.²¹ By providing positive support family and friends can help the people in discontinuing substance use.

Social support is the presence of the feelings of belongingness that a person observes from his relations or the true attachment of people with the person.²² Lack of assistance from the family can increase the drug addiction whereas the association with family and friend can play a vital role in the treatment of substance use disorder.²³

People with substance use disorder are perceived to be immoral, unlawful and dangerous and they are most stigmatized population. The stigma attached to substance use is harmful for the users also and it is creating so many complications in their lives. This research is determination to investigate relationship of stigmatization and depression as well as it is signifying the role of perceived social support in moderating depression and stigma. Men are social animals they always need social bonding to lead their lives properly. Those who use illicit substances suffer many problems including stigma that is spoiling their identities and their emotions. These sorts of attitudes are leading the people with substance use disorder towards many emotion problems including depression. In the present study social support will be defined in order to find its moderating role in depression among people with substance use disorder. It is found that Physical and mental health of individuals is associated with Social support.²⁴

That social support directly effect on health and welfare. If people have strong social support they can easily bear all the ups and downs of life but if they lack this support it would become difficult for them to bear the circumstances.

Almost every country of the world is suffering from the calamities created by substance use. It has become the most serious problem as compared to any other. At present Pakistan Substance use is the most overwhelming issues among all the rate of people who use substance is increasing day by day according to the report of UNODC almost 6% of the population of Pakistan is using drugs.²⁵

METHOD

Participants of the study

Participants of the present study were consisted of 200 male patients with substance use disorder. The age range of whole sample was 20-50 years with (Mean age = 31.34, S.D = 7.988). The sample was recruited from different hospitals, treatment and rehabilitation centers of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) situated in different areas of Sialkot and Multan through purposive sampling

technique.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The outdoor patients with substance use disorder, patient in follow up sessions, Patients with drug induced psychosis and severe physical ailments, neurological disorders and Patients with legal problems were also excluded from the sample.

TOOLS

Demographics form

It was consisted on personal as well as ancestral information.

Urdu translated version of Perceived stigma of substance abuse scale (Mushtaq, Ijaz, & Kausar, 2013) which originally developed by.²⁶ Luoma, O'Hair, Kohlenberg, Hayes, & Fletcher (2010) was used in the study It has eight items that measure the judgment of the occurrence of defaming beliefs toward substance use. It is scored on four point rating scale (1 'totally disagree' to 4 'totally agree'). 6 out of 8 items are reversed scored. Total scores a person can get are 32. High scores predict higher perception of stigma. The face validity, construct validity, and adequate internal consistency of this scale is good $\alpha = .71$.

Sadiqqi Shah Depression Scale

For measuring depression Sadiqqi Shah Depression scale was used.²⁷ It measures the degree of depression among clinical and nonclinical population. It has 36 items which are further divided into 12 items each as mild depression, moderate depression and severe depression. It is scored on 4 point rating scale ranging from 0 as never to 3 as always. The participants are required to rate the items as per their feelings/experiences. High scores predict higher level of depression in the participants. The minimum scores on the scale could be 0 and the maximum could be 108. The alpha coefficient of Sadiqqi Shah Depression scale for clinical sample was reported to be .90 and for non-clinical sample was .89.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Multidimensional scale of perceived social

support was originally developed by.²⁹ This scale is consist of 3 subscales to assess the perception of social support within three groups (family, friends and significant others).it is scored on 7 points Likert Scale ranging from 1= Very Strongly Disagree to 7= Very Strongly Agree. Each subscale contains 4 items Family Subscale contains items 3, 4, 8, and 11. Friends Subscale contains items 6, 7, 9 and 12. Significant Other Subscale contains items 1, 2, 5 and 10. It can be scored as a total by adding the scores of all 12 items and then dividing the total by 12. Its subscales can also be scored by adding scores of each subscales and dividing them by 4. Any mean scale score ranging from 1 to 2.9 could be measured low support; a score of 3 to 5 could be measured moderate support; a score from 5.1 to 7 could be measured high support. The scale has good internal (.88) and test retest (.85) reliability.

RESULTS

Variables	Frequency%	
Age		
30-40Years	102	51.0
31-40Years	70	35.0
41-50Years	28	14.0
Mean Age of Total Sample	31.34	
Income Group		
Low	15	7.5
Middle	50	25.0
High	135	67.5
Family Structure		
Joint	129	64.5
Nuclear	71	35.5
Relapse Rate		
One Time	71	35.5
Two Times	53	26.5
Three Times or More	76	38.0
Duration of Substance Abuse		
1-5 Years	118	59.0
5-10 Years	51	25.5
10 and More Years	31	15.5
Table-I. Descriptive statistics for the age of sample, income group, family structure, relapse rate and duration of substance use. (n=200)		

Note. $P < 0.01$ table shows perceived social

support as a moderator between stigma and depression among people with substance use disorder.

CONCLUSION

Substance use is a big dilemma of every society it is not only destroying the users but also their families and the society. It is adversely damaging the individuals physically, psychologically, morally and economically. Further, People with substance use disorder suffer a lot of risks and harmful consequences including health issues, loss of prosperity, and loss of respect, emotional problems but most frequently is stigma. In Pakistan stigmatizing attitudes are common because most of the people live in joint family system so, most of the families are inter-related that is why interface in the matters of each other is also very common. If people own diverse position because of which they become less desirable for the society they are stigmatized and this stigmatization disturbs their communication with the people. Human beings delicately feel stigma because they are social in their temperaments. Stigma also interferes in recovery of the people with substance use disorder. This stigmatizing attitude of others is increasing the negative feelings among people with substance use disorder because they are perceived as dangerous, dishonest, untrustworthy, impulsive and immoral by the general public. People also blame them for being responsible of their own conditions. Perception of this blaming attitude by other causes a deep effect on them and they suffer depression when they feel themselves unable to get job, housing and other facilities. Even after recovery the stigma is not detached from their lives.

Perception of social support from others plays a momentous role in the lives of people it is helpful to cope all the problems. Without social support life become miserable and the situations become difficult to handle. It is obvious that perception of stigmatizing attitudes by others is hurting for the people with substance use disorder and it may lead them towards depression but with the presence of social support it is easy to manage the emotional issues.

Variable	N	R	sig
Stigma	200	.464**	.000

Table-II. Summary of pearson correlation with relationship of stigma and depression with substance use disorder **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Variable	N	R	sig
Stigma	200	-.403**	.000

Table-III. Summary of pearson correlation with relationship of stigma and perceived social support with substance use disorder. **.

 Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Variable	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig.
Stigma PSSS Depression	.565	.319	.312	46.138	.000

Table-IV (a). Summary of linear regression with perceived social support would moderate the relationship between stigma and depression in people with substance use disorder (n= 200)

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	42.527	4.782		8.893	.000
Stigma	.776	.155	.322	5.013	.000
PSSS	-4.075	.744	-.352	-5.481	.000

Table-IV (b). Summary of coefficient with perceived social support would moderate the relationship between stigma and depression among people with substance use disorder. n=200

Social support is also helpful for the recovery of people with substance use disorder. Likewise depression related to stigma is reduced with the presence of perceived social support.

RECOMMENDATION

In Pakistan there is lack of research on stigma and its harmful consequences. This such study may open new tracks for the researchers to find out reasons of the problem and collective work in part of decreasing the stigma of substance use may be done. This research may be helpful for the rehabilitation and treatment centers across Pakistan to modify their treatment strategies and to increase the knowledge about perceived social support among the families of people with substance use disorder.

The sample of the present study was collected from the treatment centers situated in one city so the results may not be generalizable on the entire population of Pakistan. All the treatment centers from which the data was collected are organized by NGOs and most of the people included in the study are from low socio-economic status so,

along with stigma poor socio economic status may be a cause of depression.

Further relationship of stigma with other problems such as relapse, disturbed family functioning, isolation and suicidal ideations are also recommended to be explored.

In this research only male patients were recruited as sample so the further study is acclaimed to add both male and female patients. Further the present study restricted the sample to the indoor patients only but in the later studies both indoor and outdoor patients will be recruited.

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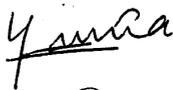
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*Listen without defending;
speak without offending.*

– Unknown –

AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION

Sr. #	Author-s Full Name	Contribution to the paper	Author=s Signature
1	Naeem Ullah Leghari	Analysis and interpretation of data contributed in conception and shares its expert research opinion.	
2	Zakia Bano	Contributions to conception and design acquisition of data, analysis interpretation of data.	
3	Zoofishan Ahmad	Contributed in conception and interpretation of data and give his expert view for manuscript designing.	
4	Bushra Akram	Drafting & Review the article.	