

THANATOPHOBIA AMONG YOUNG DRUG ADDICTS OF PUNJAB

Ms. Sukhwinder Kaur, MA, MEd, NET*

ABSTRACT

The current descriptive sample survey explored the impact of status of education (educated/uneducated) and locale (rural / urban) on Thanatophobia (death anxiety) of young drug addicts. Devising an effective and replicable Addiction Treatment & Rehabilitation Protocol demands an evidence-based knowledge of all aspects of the addict's psyche. Although Drug Addicts are known to exhibit higher death anxiety level than general population, this research concluded that death anxiety level among drug addicts are independent of their educational status or locale. The findings are to be applied to a larger sample to assist clinical psychologists working in Addiction Medicine.

Keywords: Drug Addiction, Death Anxiety, Thanatophobia, Education, Locale

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is the body's response to a perceived futuristic threat. It is valuable in self-preservation by avoiding unnecessary risks. Thanatophobia (Death Anxiety = DA) is the morbid, abnormal or persistent fear of one's own mortality. It is a "feeling of apprehension when one thinks of the process of his own 'dying'." Drug addiction is fast reaching an epidemic proportion throughout the world. Edward Kaufman (1994) showed that alcoholics and Drug Addicts are particularly prone to higher Death Anxiety, probably due to early childhood losses. Also, due to maladaptive behavior, addicts are very prone to "fear of loss of self." The present study is conducted to explore the impact of educational attainment and locale (rural/urban divide) on Thanatophobia in 200 Drug Addicts of Ludhiana, Punjab aged between 18-25 years using Death Anxiety Scale.

Anxiety is a feeling of apprehension and psychic tension, nervousness, or unease towards a subjectively unpleasant undefined threat. Unlike 'fear,' anxiety occurs in situations only perceived as uncontrollable or unavoidable, but not realistically so.

David Barlow (2000) defines anxiety as "A future-oriented mood state in which one is ready or prepared to attempt to cope with upcoming negative events."

Sylvers (2011) et al differentiated Fear and anxiety in four domains: (1) duration of emotional experience, (2) temporal focus, (3) specificity of the threat, and (4) motivated direction. Fear is defined as short lived, present focused, geared towards a specific threat, and facilitating escape from threat. Anxiety is long acting, future-focused, and is broad-focused towards a diffuse threat. Anxiety promotes excessive caution while approaching a potential threat and interferes with constructive coping.

*Assistant Professor, Sadbhavna College of Education for Women, Raikot ,
Ludhiana, Punjab, India

Rynn (2004) advocated that long-term Anxiety 'trait' (chronic or generalized) is a conscious or unconscious, stable tendency to react (to perceived threats) with state anxiety. It may reduce quality of life by systematically altering decision-making process.

Anxiety disorders may be secondary to drug or alcohol addiction or withdrawal.

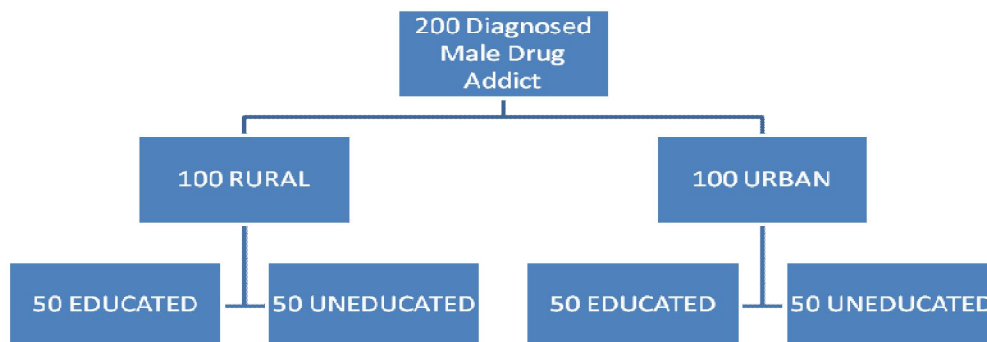
OBJECTIVES

1. To study the death anxiety among educated & uneducated young Drug Addicts
2. To study the death anxiety among rural & urban young Drug Addicts
3. To study the death anxiety among rural educated & rural uneducated young Drug Addicts
4. To study the death anxiety among urban educated & urban uneducated young Drug Addicts

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Studying thanatophobia (death anxiety) among young drug addicts in relation to their status of education and locale using descriptive survey technique. The study was conducted among diagnosed male drug addicts of Ludhiana, Punjab, India. Death Anxiety Scale – developed by Vijay Lakshmi Chauhan & Gayatri Tiwari was used for data collection

Sampling design



RESULT ANALYSIS

Hypothesis 1 : There exist no significant difference in Death Anxiety between educated & uneducated young Drug Addicts

Table 1

Significance of Difference in Death Anxiety between educated & uneducated young Drug Addicts

Category	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Ratio	Significance Level
Educated	100	12.85	3.65	1.46	NOT significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level
Uneducated	100	13,58	3.35		

Inference : Hypothesis 1 accepted. There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between educated & uneducated young Drug Addicts

Hypothesis 2 : There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between rural & urban young Drug Addicts

Table 2

Significance of Difference in Death Anxiety between rural & urban young Drug Addicts

Category	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Ratio	Significance Level
Educated	100	12.59	3.74	2.60	NOT significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level
Uneducated	100	13.84	3.17		

Inference : Hypothesis 2 accepted. There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between rural & urban young Drug Addicts

Hypothesis 3 : There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between rural educated & rural uneducated young Drug Addicts

Table 3

Significance of Difference in Death Anxiety between rural educated & rural uneducated young Drug Addicts

Category	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Ratio	Significance Level
Rural Educated	50	12.12	3.99	1.28	NOT significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level
Rural Uneducated	50	13.06	3.45		

Inference : Hypothesis 3 accepted. There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between rural educated & rural uneducated young Drug Addicts

Hypothesis 4 : There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between urban educated & urban uneducated young Drug Addicts

Table 4

Significance of Difference in Death Anxiety between urban educated & urban uneducated young Drug Addicts

Category	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Ratio	Significance Level
Rural Educated	50	13.58	3.11	0.83	NOT significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level
Rural Uneducated	50	14.10	3.24		

Inference : Hypothesis 4 accepted. There exists no significant difference in Death Anxiety between urban educated & urban uneducated young Drug Addicts

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that among drug addicts of 18 – 25 years, Death Anxiety is independent of Education Status & Rural-Urban divide.

REFERENCE

- Barlow, D. H. (2000). Unraveling the mysteries of anxiety and its disorders from the perspective of emotion theory. *American Psychologist* 55 (11), 1247–63.
- Becker (1962). *The birth & death of meaning*. New York: Free Press.
- Becker (1973). *The denial of death*. New York: Free Press.
- Becker (1975). *Escape from evil*. New York: Free Press.
- Daradkeh, F. & Moselhy, H.F. (2011). Death anxiety among Drug Dependents in an Arabic Psychiatry Hospital. *Drug Alcohol Abuse*, 37(3), 184-188.
- Edward, K. (1994). *Psychotherapy of Addicted Persons*. New York: Guilford Publications.
- Erikson, H. (1973). *Childhood and Society*, Penguin, pp. 259-260
- Elisabeth, K.R. (2011). *On Death & Dying – what the dying have to teach the doctor, nurse, clergy and his own families*. London: Oxon Routledge publication.
- Langs, R. (2004). *Fundamentals of Adaptive Psychotherapy and Counseling*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan
- Langs, R. (2004). Death anxiety and the emotion-processing mind. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 21(1), 31-53.
- Rynn, M.A., Brawman, M.O. (2004). Generalized anxiety disorder: acute and chronic treatment. *CNS Spectr* 9 (10), 716–23.
- Petra, B. (2006). *Stress and Anxiety – Application to Health, Workplace, Community and Education*. United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- Sylvers, P.; Lilienfeld, S.O.; L, J. L. (2011). Differences between trait fear and trait anxiety: Implications for psychopathology. *Clinical Psychology Review* 31 (1), 122–37.
- Vivekananda, S. (2011). *Complete Works Swami Vivekananda-The education that India that needs*. New Delhi: Foundation New Delhi, 4(9).
- Tillich, P. (1952). *The Courage to Be*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 76.