Efficacy of group intervention in the psycho-social care of patients with epilepsy

Jayachandran, D.

ABSTRACT

Key words: Group intervention, Epilepsy, Psycho-education, Yoga- Meditation, Knowledge, Attitude and Practice, State-Trait Anxiety, Depression, Psycho-Social Effect, Self-Esteem, Locus of Control, Quality of Life.

Topic of Research: "Efficacy of group intervention in the psycho-social care of patients with epilepsy."

Background: Epilepsy is a chronic brain disease with serious psycho-social complications. The psycho-social implications of epilepsy are more disabling than the seizures. Psycho-educational group intervention as a novel approach for patients with epilepsy and their family members has been in practice in the Centre for Comprehensive Epilepsy Care, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Science & Technology (SCTIMST) in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India for the past 17 years. Yoga- meditation (Pranayama) has also been practiced in this center for the past 4 years with proven efficacy in seizure reduction.

Design: The study followed a prospective, randomized experimental research design involving two experimental groups (psycho-education and meditation) and a common control group.

Tools used: Eight scales / inventories were used to assess the efficacy of the interventions. Out of the eight scales, two scales namely: EPSES and QOLIE-31 are translated from English to Malayalam and standardized by the investigator using 440 patients with epilepsy (220 patients for each scale).

Subjects for Experimental Study: Thirty six patients (20 males and 16 females), age range 16-35 years with an established diagnosis of epilepsy with at least two seizures during the past one year.

Interventions: 1. Psycho-educational group sessions for patients with epilepsy and their family members. 2. Pranayama (Yoga- Meditation) for 20 minutes twice daily (morning and evening).

Results: Out of the 28 dependent psycho-social variables tested with different scales/ inventories there were statistically significant positive changes in more than half of the variables either in ANOVA or ANCOVA or in both in the Psycho-education group. Two variables (Trait and Total Anxiety) recorded significant change in Meditation group, which is another major finding of the study.

Conclusion: The study revealed efficacy of both intervention techniques, but Psycho-education was found to be more effective than Meditation in improving psycho-social status and Quality of Life of patients with epilepsy. The findings can have wider application in the management of epilepsy.