

PREVALENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG INMATES IN CENTRAL PRISON, POOJAPURA

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Abstract

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BACKGROUND

A lot of research around the world has proved that the prevalence of common mental disorder and psychological distress in jail population is much higher when compared to a general population. On thorough searching of the internet and other sources, we found that such a research is yet to be carried out in jails in India especially Kerala. Our research aims to prove the prevalence of psychological distress among inmates of central prison Poojappura and assess the risk factors involved.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the prevalence and correlates of psychological distress among male inmates between the ages of 18 to 60 years who have been incarcerated for a period of more than one year.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

1/10th of the total study population (96 from 960 inmates) in central prison Poojappura was chosen randomly for the pilot study. The general health questionnaire – 12 was used to find out the prevalence of psychological distress among inmates. Other correlates were obtained from a socio demographic questionnaire and substance abuse from the TCU drug screen-2. The inmates tested positive for GHQ were taken as case and the rest as control group. Data were analysed to find out the prevalence and risk factors and their association using odds ratio, χ^2 test and logistic regression.

RESULTS

The prevalence of psychological distress was found to be 51.04%. By using odds ratio we found inmates with psychological distress have 3.129 times more chance of having history of using alcohol before incarceration, 3.626 times more chance of having apprehensions of being accepted by family and society on returning, 3.971 times more chance of having history of psychological distress in family members, 2.147 times more chance of having faced hunger due to poverty.

CONCLUSION

Almost half of the inmates interviewed were found to have psychological distress. Statistically significant association was obtained for alcohol use, apprehensions of being accepted by family and society, history of psychological distress of family members and history of having faced due to poverty.