

Impact of alcoholism on social and family life

Impacto do alcoolismo na vida social e familiar

Impacto del alcoholismo en la vida social y familiar

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REVISA

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RESUMO

Objetivo: Destacar a relevância das implicações do alcoolismo na vida do indivíduo, tanto social como familiar. **Método:** Pesquisa do tipo exploratória, bibliográfica e descritiva. **Resultado:** O presente trabalho buscou conhecer a realidade do alcoolismo, no Brasil, em meio aos estudos de vários autores. Buscando destacar os motivos que impulsiona o uso do álcool, os danos e tratamentos possíveis. **Conclusão:** O alcoolismo pode ser determinado como um conjunto de problemas relacionados ao consumo excessivo de álcool por indivíduos que apresente uma maior probabilidade para o vício. Alimentando uma roda viva de adoecimento físico, adoecimento psicológico, adoecimento emocional e desagregação do sistema familiar.

Descritores: Alcoolismo; Indivíduo; Adoecimento.

ABSTRACT

Objective: To highlight the relevance of the implications of alcoholism in the individual's life, both social and family. **Method:** Exploratory, bibliographic and descriptive research. **Result:** The present work sought to know the reality of alcoholism in Brazil, in the midst of studies by several authors. Seeking to highlight the reasons that drive alcohol use, the possible damages and treatments. **Conclusion:** Alcoholism can be determined as a set of problems related to excessive alcohol consumption by individuals who are more likely to be addicted. Feeding a living wheel of physical illness, psychological illness, emotional illness and breakdown of the family system.

Descriptors: Alcoholism; Individual; Illness.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Resaltar la relevancia de las implicaciones del alcoholismo en la vida del individuo, tanto social como familiar. **Método:** Investigación exploratoria, bibliográfica y descriptiva. **Resultado:** El presente trabajo buscó conocer la realidad del alcoholismo en Brasil, en medio de estudios de varios autores. Buscando destacar los motivos que impulsan el consumo de alcohol, los posibles daños y tratamientos. **Conclusión:** El alcoholismo se puede determinar como un conjunto de problemas relacionados con el consumo excesivo de alcohol por parte de individuos que tienen más probabilidades de ser adictos. Alimentando una rueda viva de enfermedad física, enfermedad psicológica, enfermedad emocional y ruptura del sistema familiar.

Descriptores: Alcoholismo; Individual; Enfermedad.

Introduction

The present work represents the analysis and reflection about alcoholism and its impacts on social spheres. This is a reflection of excessive and prolonged alcohol consumption. Alcoholism can be classified as addiction to excessive intake of alcoholic beverages, within this framework it is possible to observe dependency, abstinence, abuse, intoxication, amnesic syndrome, hallucinatory dementia, mood delusions, sexual disorders, anxiety, sleep disorders, among other disorders.¹

Living with an alcohol addict is not an easy experience for family and friends, as problems affect everyone, eroding relationships. In addition to a physical health problem, it is also a social disease, and treatment should involve everyone.¹

It is a serious illness, both physically and psychologically, affecting the alcoholic and the people who live with him. Causing great emotional stress in their family and friends, in addition to the possibility of violence, mistreatment and fights.¹

According to the Ministry of Health, the constant use of alcohol causes physical and psychological dependence, turning the occasional user into an addict, which can lead to death from excessive consumption and even progressively weaken the body of those who use it. It is possible to verify that the magnitude of the problem and alcohol misuse, verified in the last decades, gained proportions so serious that it became a public health issue in the country. And this situation is reflected in the other segments of society, being proved through its relationship with social problems, among them: traffic and work accidents, domestic violence and the growth of crime.¹

Among other pathologies, alcoholism stands out as a serious maladjustment in the intrafamily context, impairing psychosocial development, affecting children, young people and adults. It is a disease that affects the addict's physical, emotional and behavior.²

The social relevance of this research is justified in the search for an in-depth study on the proposed theme, due to its serious harmful effects within the social spheres.

The study is a bibliographic search conducted with data collection in sources such as articles, books and internet sites that address the proposed theme. And it was composed as a literature review that brings main concepts of alcoholism, based on the theoretical survey.

Method

To carry out this research, information available in books, articles and online sites was used, such as the Ministry of Health, World Health Organization, Medscape, Pubmed, SciELO and others.

Composing an exploratory, bibliographic and descriptive research. Having as main objective the improvement of the proposed theme through the reading of concrete data, making possible the analysis of the scientific production on alcoholism.

However, 32 authors were consulted and 24 had their studies and contributions described in the work.

The bibliographical research deepened the conceptual theorist with information that contextualized the research objective. In order to describe and study certain phenomena, however, to determine them it is necessary that the subject addressed is sufficiently described and detailed.

Results and Discussion

Alcohol, considered a legal drug, is a substance that slowly becomes dangerous and very harmful to the body. Constant consumption is addictive and is responsible for damage to health, accidents, social problems, among others.

The present work sought to know the reality of alcoholism in Brazil, in the midst of studies by several authors. Seeking to highlight the reasons that drive alcohol use, the possible damages and treatments.

The results were presented here considering the main categories pointed out in the analyzed studies, during the systematic review, highlighting those of greater relevance to the presented proposal.

The trigger for the beginning of consumption, the growth in use, treatments and the relevance of family support, were relevant topics for the work. It was also identified, through studies, as risk factors associated with early alcohol use, male gender and parents' divorce. The difference in personality (anxiety, depression, guilt, shyness, bad mood, aggressiveness, self-centeredness, impulsivity and drama) and environments (places where access to drinking is facilitated) as a stimulus for alcoholism.

It is interesting to highlight another study, which are the significant relationships between family relationships and alcohol use. There are other articles that mention the possible contribution of work to alcohol abuse or that the problem would be in the form of selecting / hiring workers for activities with high occupational risk, such as work stress, lack of recognition, violence, moral harassment, break in the work link -social life, overload, time pressure, unfavorable thermal conditions, absence of labor guarantees and other elements more related to work organization and socio-professional relations.²

Whether personal, medical, social, professional or family problems, the motivators for excessive alcohol consumption is unanimous to say that the use of alcohol in the survival and coping with social ills only tends to worsen the already existing situation.

Alcoholism is a problem that causes several losses and all orders. The individual who loses control when consuming alcohol tends to be excluded from social relationships, social space, as well as their workplace.³

The act of drinking can be seen as a social phenomenon, marked by learning and purposes. This is the opposite of research of a hegemonic character: focus on moralism, centrality in the scope of the pathological, the disease, the deviant, the lack of character, the individual. This set of studies is far from debating the role of society in the production of the act of drinking and focusing on the spaces that allow to move through this discussion, listed as the work itself and its requirements, the values, the social acts, the cultural inscriptions that are relate to drinking in its different modes and intensities.³

The treatments have not evolved many in recent years, but they offer great support to the individual who really wants to get rid of alcohol dependence.

Alcoholism: illness or weakness

Alcohol is widely used for its disinhibiting, antidepressant and easily accessible effects, making it one of the biggest public health problems that affect men and women at all ages and social classes, alcoholism, described by her associated with the strong desire to drinking and difficulty controlling consumption and insistent use despite the negative consequences that alcohol produces.⁴

When we reflect on the concept of the word drug, we immediately think of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, crack cocaine, among many other names that are given to existing legal and illegal drugs. We do not deport ourselves to alcohol as one of the most used and most harmful drugs to human beings today, since alcohol has been consumed since the most primitive times of our society and is seen as a complement to moments of joy and celebration, where people people come together to celebrate and celebrate life.⁴

Alcohol is defined as a very powerful drug that kills more people than all drugs combined, with the exception of cigarettes alone, because it is a legal drug and easily accessible to all layers of society due to its low value, it makes victims in all social classes.⁵

Alcohol addicts and their families are subject to experiencing some of the expressions of the social issue. Among these expressions, unemployment, sub-housing, malnutrition, precarious health services and other problems that affect, especially, the low-income population, on which social inequalities are most perverse, stand out.⁵

Ingesting alcohol in an abusive manner is related to causing various pathologies and disorders such as mental disorders in general, liver cirrhosis, pancreatitis, cancer, in addition to being associated with the occurrence of traffic accidents and homicides. Approximately 5.2 million deaths from accidents occur every year, of these, 1.8 million are associated with alcohol consumption.⁶

From the health point of view, alcoholism is a chronic disease, with behavioral and socioeconomic aspects, characterized by compulsive alcohol consumption, in which the user becomes progressively tolerant to the intoxication produced by the drug and develops signs and symptoms of withdrawal, when the same is withdrawn.⁶

In this context, the various forms of resistance and coping with the situation of alcohol dependence arise, through the search for public policies, specific programs of attention to the alcoholic and his family and, also, access to the social support network. The constant use of alcohol causes physical and psychological dependence, turning the occasional user into an addict, which can lead to death from excessive consumption and even progressively weaken the body of the user.⁷

Scholars believe that the action of alcohol in the central system is due to the fact that alcohol enters the brain quickly with countless effects on neurons, that is, a good part of the neurochemical systems, causing changes in the serotonergic neurotransmitters, in the dopaminergics in the VTA and in the nucleus. accumulation and the release of opioid peptides in the central nervous system that cause its pleasurable effects.⁸

Exposure to alcohol in a short period of time reduces the electrical impulses of neurons determining the depression of brain and nerve activity, as a consequence of increased GABA activity at GABA-ergic receptors since it decreases the action of excitatory amino acids, for example, glutamate at the level of NMDA receptors.⁸

The assumed consumption of substances with psychotropic action has evolved according to the civilizational trajectories and that, although in the first phase it acts on mental functioning (causing euphoria, stimulating, anesthetizing, intoxicating), in a second phase, it induces dependence and tolerance, presenting high immediate biopsychosocial risks.⁹

For years alcoholism was considered for a long time as a "moral problem", with the passage of time, he found that it is a pathology and one of the assumptions is that addicts would have different genetic and personality characteristics than the rest of the population. possible a biotype stands out.⁹

In 1967, at the 8th World Health Conference, alcoholism was incorporated into the International Classification of Diseases. On this occasion, the World Health Organization classified drugs by their degree of dangerousness, using criteria such as the greater or lesser toxic danger, the greater or lesser capacity to provoke physical dependence and the greater or lesser speed in which this dependence is established. Based on these criteria, drugs are classified as: Group 1: opium and derivatives (for example, morphine and heroin); Group 2: barbiturates and alcohol; Group 3: cocaine and amphetamines; Group 4: LSD, cannabinoids, tobacco, among others.¹⁰

Currently alcoholism is conceptually described in the Tenth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) and in the fourth revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the North American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV) as an alcohol dependence syndrome. Thus, the definition of alcoholism adopted in ICD-10 and DSM-IV also started to favor consumption patterns and not only the results of excessive alcohol intake.¹⁰

The magnitude of the problem of alcohol misuse, verified in recent decades, has grown to such a serious extent that it is now a public health issue in the country. In addition, this context is also reflected in other segments of society due to its proven relationship with social problems, such as: traffic and work accidents, domestic violence and increased crime.¹¹

Alcoholism depends on social, economic and cultural variables. It involves a multi-determined continuum of drinking-related behaviors. Problems related to alcohol result not only from the exaggeration of the amount consumed, but from the lack of control over the form of consumption (when, where and how much). Alcohol abuse leads to addiction, depression and personality instability.¹¹

A person consumes alcohol abusively for several reasons, such as the need for alcohol to accept reality, the tendency to shirk responsibilities, anguish, aggressiveness, poor resistance to frustrations and tensions; the level of conscience tends to lead to impulsive, negligent behavior towards the family, frequent job losses, financial problems, aggressiveness towards society. There may be some genetic contribution that facilitates alcohol dependence, but cultural factors are undoubtedly the most important.¹²

Alcoholism is the claim to infinite enjoyment. The alcoholic seeks the possibility of enjoyment and wants to be recognized and respected as a subject. It is someone who is not afraid, not facing barriers or limits, is willing to go to the end in search of pleasure.¹²

This behavior comes at a price, comparing the brain of an alcoholic dependent to that of a healthy person, that of an alcoholic has atrophy, because neurons are progressively destroyed, the fact can be observed by the dilation of the ventricles, by the narrowing of the corpus callosum (the main connection between the two hemispheres) and the reduction of the hippocampus (memory region).¹²

There are several individual and social consequences of alcohol consumption, in addition to drunkenness, as its abusive consumption is responsible for many deaths and disabilities (due to accidents and illnesses it causes), lack of productivity at work and family and criminal violence. All of these factors, coupled with the fact of causing great physical and psychological dependence and being one of the few substances that cause irreversible injuries.¹³

The situations of violence, crime, traffic accidents caused by drunk individuals leave no doubt that alcoholism is also a disease whose social symptoms must be alerted and prevented. This often leaves room for society to treat the individual in a way that excludes him from his environment, which makes the alcoholic having difficulties to recognize himself as sick.¹³

According to the International standard, the harmful use of alcohol is considered, when its weekly consumption for adults is 21 doses for men and 14 doses for women. One serving is equivalent to a glass of wine, a can of beer or two fingers of whiskey.

As the drug continues to be ingested and its blood concentration increases, the brain begins to show signs of deterioration, causing imbalance, altered cognitive ability, increasing difficulty in articulating words, lack of motor coordination, slow and irregular eye movements, double vision, facial flushing and tachycardia.¹³

The thought is disconnected and the perception of reality is disorganized. Later on, lethargy, decreased heart rate, drop in blood pressure, respiratory depression and vomiting still appear, which can eventually be sucked in and reach the lungs causing pneumonia or other dangerous side effects. To conclude, stupor and coma, severe respiratory depression, hypotension and death can happen. And all of these symptoms can lead to numerous claims.¹⁴

Statistics from the Brazilian Alcohol and Drug Association (ABEAD) report that the alcohol and driving association is responsible for 75% of traffic accidents with deaths; 39% of police occurrences, and constitutes the 3rd cause of absenteeism, accounting for 40% of psychiatric consultations in Brazil.¹⁴

In addition, data from the Ministry of Health of Brazil, demonstrate that Mental Disorders are the 4th cause of hospitalization, being supplanted only by admissions for respiratory, circulatory and childbirth problems, with alcohol being the main reason in 20.6% of the cases.¹

Alcoholism within a family brings a great deal of stress, quickly becoming a disease for the entire family group, as Jackson postulated in 1954. This stress is responsible for the disruption of stability that, in turn, leads the family to a exaggerated attachment to the known, chronicling attitudes based on regulatory mechanisms.¹⁵

What is certain is that there is still no certainty as to what makes a person dependent on alcohol, as it is a personal disorder of those who acquire it, because what is noticeable is that each person reacts differently and for different reasons, contexts and circumstances.¹⁵

Alcohol-related disorders

Alcoholism is in fact considered a disease, whose WHO (World Health Organization) determines it as drug addiction, that is, it results in the dependence that the drug causes to the organism, when it is administered frequently, thus generating a compulsion for the substance in a continuous, with the purpose of feeling the psychic effects or even to avoid any discomfort of SAA (Alcohol Abstinence Syndrome), when the alcoholic discontinues the use of alcohol.¹⁵

We also have a group that does not have the typical characteristics of an alcoholic person (such as difficulties to walk and speak), which makes the diagnosis of the continued use of alcohol later.¹⁶

Tolerance is characterized by a resistance that the body presents due to the adaptation in the continuous use of alcohol in the same dose, in which the CNS (Central Nervous System) becomes tolerable to a routine of alcoholic level in the bloodstream. Clinically, it is represented by individuals who can use the drink without showing signs of drunkenness, differently from those who have undesirable effects, that is, not tolerant.¹⁶

According to data, a large number of individuals who have the Dependency Syndrome have CNS (Central Nervous System) disorders, such as epilepsy and multiple sclerosis. And justify the use of alcohol as a palliative for disorders caused by disorders.¹⁶

In the cardiovascular system, the chronic use of alcoholic beverages is considered a factor responsible for the systolic and diastolic elevation of the pressure due to the increase in blood vessel irrigation, causing hypertension, cardiac arrhythmia and myocardiopathy.¹⁷

Already in the skeletal muscles of alcoholics or not, the effect is due to the acute or chronic use of alcohol, causing it to have less muscle strength, caused by a decrease in the synthesis of muscle proteins, characterizing an atrophy in the fibers of the muscles.¹⁷

In the gastrointestinal system and in the liver it has been proven through studies that long-term ethanol ingestion, as in chronic use, can cause major problems, including gastritis, due to increased gastric secretions, which can lead to gastroesophageal reflux. The condition can be reversed with the use of proton pump inhibitors and the removal of alcohol.¹⁷

Liver disease is the disease diagnosed by alcohol abuse, mainly of chronic use, leading to liver impairment, which can cause alcoholic liver steatosis and, consequently, the condition may evolve causing cirrhosis, making the organ of its function impossible, requiring liver transplantation.¹⁸

In the Central Nervous System (CNS) the action of alcohol although it has an anxiolytic action, as well as barbiturates and benzodiazepines, and its effects cause depression. This action occurs simultaneously as the blood concentration increases, causing everything from pleasurable sensations to a state of intoxication or intoxication.¹⁸

Dependence also presents dissociative disorders in the family environment where the individual is inserted. When the subject involves alcohol and family, it requires special care due to the fragility that exists in the union of the members caused by the emotional distance of the dependent. This characterizes the destruction of the home, where the family, for not knowing how to deal with the situation, ignores the alcoholic or even become victims of violence. In this situation, care must be focused not only on the alcoholic, but on the whole family.¹⁸

The addiction to alcohol affects a greater number of male individuals in which the partner tries to maintain the union with the partner for reasons of the family constitution, involving the children, the moments of joy, the simple religious conception of the union, or even for being a woman and seeking to maintain dignity before society. However, children are in fact members of the family of great target for alcoholism due to living in an unstructured home, such as the separation of the parents or the simple fact of living with the alcoholic father.¹⁹

The failure that alcohol causes to the individual leaves him unable to perform his role in society, whether in the family environment, at work, in financial life and in traffic, making it tragic, not only for the dependent, but for everyone who lives around you.¹⁹

For the drinker to maintain the use of the drink it is necessary a high expense, where he begins to have a financial lack of control. Thereafter, other complications arise more easily, such as the loan made by the family to pay the debts, because they are no longer able to afford the expenses. All of this leads to an imbalance, involving everyone around you, and dishonesty is a factor resulting from the use of alcohol, which causes the loss of work, that is, a total social imbalance.¹⁹

In Brazil, research shows that about 70% of adults develop dependence on the drug due to the resistance that the body attributes to repeated use in the same amount of alcohol. It is then determined, a triggering factor for the chronic use of the substance, which leads to a compulsive act of drinking, which is caused by a physical dependence, which results in an Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome (SAA), in which it is diagnosed by signs and symptoms specific.²⁰

Studies report that SAA (Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome) starts 6 hours after the withdrawal or decrease of alcohol in dependent individuals, causing a clinical picture due to insomnia, tremors, nausea, restlessness, to more serious complications, such as seizures in approximately 5% of patients, and delirium tremens (DT), characterized by mental confusion that occurs between 72 to 96 hours after alcohol withdrawal, due to motor and autonomic dysfunction. The mortality rate in TD is 2 to 25%.²⁰

Treatment of alcoholism

Among the most common ways to treat alcoholism are:

Detoxification, implies abstinence from alcohol to eliminate it completely from the body. It takes approximately four to seven days (depending on the individual's body). People who undergo detoxification typically take medications to prevent delusions and other withdrawal symptoms.²⁰

Counseling: counseling and therapy sessions that can be individual or group, with the aim of helping the alcoholic recover, identifying situations in which people may be tempted to drink and finding ways to get around this desire. One of the best known recovery programs is Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). A 12-step program that guides recovering alcoholics.²¹

Family help: the dependent needs to have a motivation that makes him go against his impulses, in this context the family must show support and eliminate factors that encourage or favor alcohol consumption from the context.²¹

Medications: some medications are administered to prevent relapse (according to the doctor and the patient's condition). Some reduce the urge to drink, blocking regions of the brain that take pleasure when alcohol is consumed; others cause a severe physical reaction to alcohol, which includes nausea, vomiting and headaches.²¹

Pharmacotherapy is a method used with the main objectives of treating alcoholic patients in a way that reintegrates into their social life, being a means in which it will depend on self-esteem and personal dedication. This is called SAA (Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome) through drugs that can be associated with support groups called Alcoholics Anonymous. Among the drugs most used to treat alcoholism, disulfiram, acamprosate and naltrexone stand out.²²

The use of disulfiram differs from other drugs for the treatment of alcoholism, as it is considered to be of ancient use and was used without the consent of the alcoholic individual, leading to a decrease in its use due to having several side effects, when associated with alcohol. The cause of this is its aversive effect, due to the inhibition of the enzyme aldehyde dehydrogenase, which then leads to an increase in the concentration of acetaldehyde in the bloodstream 5 to 10 times, causing undesirable symptoms from mild to severe.²²

Undesirable manifestations after alcohol use usually take 15 to 30 minutes to appear, causing tachycardia, shortness of breath, lowering blood pressure and other effects, in which it is necessary to inform the individual of the side reactions that occur if it is associated with ethanol, that is, the patient must remain abstinent for at least 12 hours in order to have a good response to treatment. The administered dose of the drug is 500mg a day, and then it can vary from 125 to 500mg / day.²²

Acamprosate is a drug that has the action of blocking the neurotransmitter glutamate, produced in greater quantities due to the chronic use of alcohol. Acamprosate has an effect similar to that of GABA, as it acts by decreasing the excitatory activity of the CNS when alcoholic abstinence occurs. In a way, it is well tolerated by the body and the most common adverse reaction found is diarrhea. The treatment with this drug is done through 333mg tablets being administered 3 times a day.²³

Naltrexone is a drug approved in 1994 for the treatment of alcoholism, and its main objective is to inhibit opioid receptors so that the sensation of pleasure reinforced by alcohol, especially for chronic use, caused by the increase in dopamine is reduced. It is a medication that acts directly by antagonizing these receptors, making the desire to consume alcoholic beverages lessen, thereby facilitating the prevention of relapses, by increasing the time of abstinence. Even ingesting alcohol, the person is able to control the drug due to the effect of Naltrexone.²³

The treatment of the disease is done by administering a daily dose of 50mg, emphasizing that several studies report the association of drug treatment with psychosocial therapy for a better result. It may have side effects such as nausea, especially in women. Great attention is needed on the association of naltrexone with disulfiram, as both are potentially hepatotoxic.²³

In pharmacological treatment, during medication dispensing, the risks that may occur, when associated with the medication with alcohol, must be informed, advising its correct use in order to obtain a good result. It is also important to guide the family of risks during treatment, as the individual may have relapses, and understanding of the family is essential to help them overcome.²⁴

The laboratory diagnosis, required by physicians, complements the evaluation when he suspects alcohol dependence, requesting some tests in order to adequately investigate the organic changes resulting from the disease that leads to SAA (Alcohol Abstinence Syndrome). Examinations of mean corpuscular volume (CMV) and levels of liver enzymes are requested through the hepatogram for the measurement of TGO, TGP and GGT, which are of importance for the diagnosis of alcoholism.²⁴

Conclusion

Alcoholism can be determined as a set of problems related to excessive alcohol consumption because it contains a greater probability for addiction. Feeding a living wheel of physical illness, psychological illness, emotional illness and breakdown of the family system.

Previously considered a stimulus of joy, today it is seen as a stimulus for aggression, discord, pain, and is responsible for the breaking of family, friendship and work ties.

The present work sought through the study of information based on reflective analysis of the impacts of alcohol on the personal and social life of the individual dependent on this substance.

With the elaboration of this work, a wide analysis and discussion of the data found provided subsidies for both lay people and technicians who want to deepen the proposed theme, seeking alternatives to reduce the risks to which they are subject and involved.

Among the most affected sectors, we can highlight the family environment. How to live harmoniously, how to form balanced citizens, how to contribute to a society under construction, if the human being himself is destroying himself day by day.

It is necessary to invest in clarification campaigns, in treatments, in re-education to stop the growing number of alcoholics.

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