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STRESS LEVELS IN FAMILIES
WHERE THERE IS AN ALCOHOLIC MALE ADULT
A TWELVE MONTH STUDY

A thesis presented in fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology
at Massey University

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ABSTRACT

There has been a growing interest in the effects of stress in families where there is an alcohol problem. The present study tested the hypotheses that:

- A. alcoholic families evidence higher stress levels than matched control group families and
- B. that alcoholic families receiving stress management sessions evidence lower stress levels at one year follow-up than matched control group alcoholic families that did not receive stress management sessions.

In the first part of the study, forty families that had an alcoholic adult male were identified upon request for alcohol treatment. Matched Medical and Community control groups were available and data was obtained from all groups. In the second part of the study, one half of the forty identified alcoholic families received stress management sessions, the remaining twenty received no stress management follow-up.

In support of Study I hypothesis and data obtained from family stress level measurements, there was indicated a significant difference in stress levels on several variables between alcoholic and non-alcoholic families.

In support of the Study II hypothesis those twenty alcoholic families receiving stress management showed a significant lower stress level at one year follow-up than the twenty alcoholic families that did not receive stress management.

The study also indicates trends in families of alcoholic males that show these families have higher stress levels and make more visits to their medical doctors than do control group families.

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SECTION 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research is on family interactions and stress levels complicated by alcoholism; the secondary focus is on stress management as a component of family treatment.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

An awareness of the magnitude and destructiveness of alcoholism is necessary for full appreciation of the devastation of alcoholism in nuclear families.

Current estimates indicate that in 1986 there were 370,000 adult New Zealanders, or nineteen percent, who have had a drinking problem at some time in their lives. Recent statistics (1986) indicate that 170,000 New Zealand males consume more than 60 millilitres of alcohol per day and 100,000 New Zealand females consume more than 40 millilitres per day. Alcohol abuse costs New Zealand in the order of nine hundred million dollars each year, according to a study completed for Alcohol and Liquor Advisory Council (ALAC, 1986).

It is imperative, however, to be aware that the effects of the misuse of alcohol extends far beyond the individual who abuses alcohol. For every alcohol misuser, it is estimated that

five other persons suffer directly (Paolino & McCrady, 1977), and of these five some are the nuclear family members, whose suffering may be indicated by elevated stress levels.

According to U.S. statistics, the alcoholic family member is affected socially and physically (Chafetz, 1971; World Health Organization, 1964; and Rothman & Keller, 1972). There is also an economic impact (Berry, Boland, Larson, Hayler, Sillman Fein & Feinstein, 1974) due to alcohol abuse. The continuing pattern of alcoholism in a family puts increasing demands and pressures on the marriage and the family system. Various early studies document the patterns of dissatisfaction in a marriage where one partner is an alcoholic. The general conclusions of many of these studies are that a balanced satisfying marriage and alcoholism are incompatible (Burgess & Cottrell, 1939; Dominian, 1972; Fox, 1956; Levinger, 1966; Straus, 1950; Terman, 1938). According to Paolino & McCrady (1977) alcoholics marry no less frequently than the non-alcoholic population but divorce and separate more frequently than the general population. The Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (1971) states that every alcoholic's marriage is dysfunctional because of the complex problems inherent in alcohol misuse.

High levels of conflict have frequently been noted in alcoholism-complicated marriages (Bullock and Mudd, 1959; Gorad, 1971), and various sources of 'hardship' or 'deviance' to which non-alcoholic spouses of alcoholics may be exposed have also been examined (Bailey et al., 1962; Jackson and Kogan, 1963). These

attention not only to environmental conditions (stimuli) or to organismic reactions (responses), but also to patterns of environment-organism transactions. The difficulties involved in attempting to provide a simple definition of psychological stress are formidable. For the purposes of this research, the terminology proposed by Lazarus (1966) will be adopted. Lazarus is recognized as developing a most influential and coherent treatment of the psychological stress concept.

In general terms, it may be said that conditions of psychological stress exist when an individual encounters environmental conditions which he appraises as threatening and, on the basis of a second appraisal process, engages in coping processes designed to reduce or eliminate the threat. The basic elements of the analysis of psychological stress (Lazarus, 1966) are outlined in TABLE 2.1.

TABLE 2.1

Environmental Conditions	Primary Appraisal Processes	Threat (Anticipation of Harm)	Secondary Appraisal Processes	Coping Processes
	1. Factors in the Environment		1. Degree of Threat	1. Direct Action Tendencies
	2. Factors in Psychological Structure of Individual		2. Factors in the Environment	2. Defensive Reappraisal
			3. Factors in Psychological Structure of Individual	

tend to be greatest when an individual evaluates a situation as one in which the power of the harm-producing stimulus outweighs his resources to avoid or weaken its impact. For example, anticipated travel on a crowded bus will be threatening to the individual without alternative means of transportation who finds the inevitable pushing and shoving extremely discomforting. Second, the imminence of the anticipated harm confrontation will determine degree of threat. As temporal nearness with the confrontation increases, threat will increase. The bus passenger will experience less threat six hours prior to travel than one hour prior to travel. Threat appraisal is also determined by a variety of factors in the psychological structure of the individual. For example, individuals with strong "privacy" needs will be more threatened by crowded buses than will those whose privacy needs are weaker. People who tend to view the environment as uncontrollable and hostile (Rotter, 1966) will tend to perceive more situations as threatening than those who take a more benign view of the environment. A person's intellectual ability, education and experience with a variety of environmental conditions will also influence the degree to which situations are perceived as threatening.

Once an individual has appraised environmental conditions as threatening, processes functioning to reduce or eliminate the anticipated harm (threat) are set into motion. These processes are called coping processes. The term "coping" refers to strategies for dealing with threat. Secondary appraisal concerns the process by which an individual "selects" coping strategies

through an evaluation of the probable consequences of available strategies. The two major categories of coping processes are direct-action tendencies and defensive reappraisal.

A person may deal directly with threatening environmental conditions by strengthening his resources against the harmful conditions or may attempt to eliminate threat by an avoidance strategy such as bypassing bus travel at rush hour or selecting alternate means of transportation. A third possible strategy involves assaulting the agent(s) perceived as harmful. For example, the aggressive pushing and shoving under crowded bus conditions may be regarded as relatively nonviolent attacks against the threatening masses of people. Finally, when an individual is totally resigned to the belief that there are no ways of preventing the harm, inaction or "freezing" in the face of threat may occur.

A second category of coping processes, known as defensive reappraisal, is found when an individual copes with environmental threats by deceiving himself about the actual conditions of threat. A variety of defense mechanisms including denial, isolation, and rationalization may be utilized to distort the reality of the situation and thus eliminate threat.

It is apparent that a person may cope with threatening environments in a variety of ways. The type of coping strategy utilized depends on the process of secondary appraisal, which is much like primary appraisal in that cognitive activities such as perception and judgement play an important role. A person's

"choice" of coping processes through secondary appraisal depends both upon characteristics of the environmental threat and upon factors in his own personality structure.

As the degree of environmental threat becomes extreme, a person's coping processes will become more primitive and less "action oriented." Thus, under conditions of severe threat, a person's tendency to become inactive or to engage in defensive reappraisal will increase. Such behaviours are frequently noted in studies of environmental disaster victims (earthquake, flood, tornado) (Grosser, Wechsler, and Greenblatt, 1964). In addition to the degree of threat, other factors in the stimulus configuration of the threatening environment will influence secondary appraisal. In order to take direct action (attack, avoidance) against harmful agents, one must be able to locate the threatening agents. Inability to identify specific sources of threat in large urban centers may lead to generalized (nonspecific) hostility and suspiciousness on the part of city residents (Glass and Singer, 1972; Milgram, 1970).

If an agent of threat has been identified, a person will attempt to cope with it through those strategies which seem to have the best chance of getting him out of jeopardy without leading to more severe threat.

Finally, people will tend to differ in their use of coping strategies due to differences in their psychological structure or personality. Some individuals are characteristically disposed to attack sources of threat, while others tend to avoid or escape

subsequently stimulated others to a renewed interest in family stress research and theory building (Hansen and Johnson, 1979; Boss et al., 1979). The strength of Burr's (1973) effort and its relationship to the Hill formulation is reflected in the replications and significance of the studies.

Other investigators in the 1970's have not been as interested as Burr in developing a deductive theory of stress, but more commonly concentrated their efforts on such salient issues as definition and measurement of variables. Family investigators appear to be plagued by conceptual and methodological difficulties. Investigations in which the stressors are not kept separate from the dependent variables of family responses and adjustments have been quite common. Family stress might refer to the family's response to events, which in many cases involves indices of the emotional state of family members; interpersonal conflict; or financial hardships (Simmons et al., 1973; Holroyd, 1974). The specific hardships associated with the stressor events (not part of the family's response) have been either ignored or obscured, so that it is not always clear whether the family's difficulties and hardships are part of the response or whether the hardships are an inherent part of the stressor. As a result, interpretations of the relationship of stressor to family adjustment tends to be tautological. Because the time dimension in family stress research is often ignored and investigators focus on families at a cross-section in time, (usually well after the initial impact of the stressor event) the distinction between stressor and family response is predictably

problem with the application of the stress hypothesis to his data. If level of stress is the explanatory variable, then level of symptomatology should differ according to the current drinking status. According to this hypothesis, a drinking alcoholic causes more stress for his non-alcoholic spouse than does an alcoholic who has been dry for more than six months. Yet Steinglass found no relationship between current drinking status (either current drinking phase or amount of alcohol consumed during the study) and level of symptomatology. Furthermore, it was not considered if these factors extended to the entire family or only applied to the wife.

Another view of the interactional model is that proposed by Davis et. al (1974). This view further conceptualizes the abuse of alcohol within the family as serving adaptive consequences (Davis, et. al, 1974).

Burton and Kopland (1968) in two studies reported on the effects of couples' treatment on alcoholism. They based their approach on the belief that alcoholism and marital conflict were interrelated. Burton & Kaplans 1968 studies represent one of the first systematic attempts to evaluate the value of couples therapy in the treatment of alcoholism.

In two uncontrolled clinical studies, Smith (1969) and Gallant, Rich, Bey, and Terranova (1970) reported on the degree of success of two group therapy programs which included spouses of alcoholics in treatment. Smith's work included having wives attend group therapy while their alcoholic husbands were in the

hospital which lead to a higher success rate than those couples that did not receive early therapeutic intervention.

Gallant et al. (1970) utilized group couples therapy for couples in which one partner had a drinking problem. They treated 118 couples, with goals of treatment being to lessen drinking denial and to help the couple improve the quality of their relationship. Their results were only moderately encouraging and indicated a serious loss of subjects in the follow up.

McCrary et al. (1976) found trends suggesting that involvement of the couple led to more successful treatment outcome in terms of drinking, but small sample size and large variability made their findings tentative rather than conclusive. They found no evidence of differential effectiveness of the treatments in the number of self-reported marital problems, experience of depression, anxiety, hostility, or degree of psychopathology at six-month follow-up.

In sum, the work of Burton and Kaplan (1968 a, b), Smith (1969), Gallant et al. (1970), Paolino and McCrary (1976), and McCrary et al. (1971) suggests that couples group therapy where alcoholism is a problem may lead to successful treatment outcome in greater than or equal to 45% of the cases treated. Since none of these groups utilized no-treatment controls, it is impossible to conclude whether such treatment increases, decreases, or has no effect on the overall success of treatment. Additionally, Cohen and Krause's (1971) results suggest that subjective data

may be highly dependent on the expectations of the treatment personnel.

The foregoing studies were based on the concept that involving the couple in treatment was important in changing drinking, but were not explicit in deriving their treatments and hypotheses from general systems theory. The first study which explicitly derived treatment from both systems theory and using the family unit was reported by Meeks and Kelly (1970). They treated five families in which either the husband (four families) or the wife (one family) had a drinking problem. They treated the family as a unit, with treatment focusing on helping the families to communicate openly and to understand interactional patterns. They found, of the five families whom they treated, that in two the drinking member remained abstinent, and in three there was a substantial improvement in the drinking. As with the other studies mentioned, there was no control group with which to compare these results, and the data gathered were subjective and impressionistic.

2.7 DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF INTERPERSONAL SYSTEMS INVOLVING ALCOHOLICS

Beginning in 1971, a group of researchers at the U. S. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and Georgetown University in Washington, D. C., U.S.A. began reporting on a series of studies based on actual observations of interactions within alcoholic families during periods of intoxication. This systems theory focus on family interactive behaviour rather than individual behaviour provided the framework for these studies.

The earliest studies of this group (Steinglass et al., 1971a, b; Weiner, Tamerin, Steinglass, & Mendelson, 1971) focused on father-son and brother-brother interactions. Although these were not direct studies of alcoholic marriages or families, this early work laid the groundwork for later study of alcoholic marriages and families.

Other systems concepts were described by Davis, Berenson, Steinglass, and Davis (1974) in a theoretical nonempirical article. In addition, these authors expanded their basic premissis to include learning concepts, asserting that alcohol abuse had adaptive consequences which were sufficiently reinforcing to maintain the drinking behaviour. The nature of the adaptive consequences varies from individual to individual, being potentially intrapsychic, intracouple, intrafamily, or larger systems maintenance. Davis et al. (1974) reported on four clinical ways in which alcohol abuse could be adaptive, citing (1) a wife's assertiveness when drunk, (2) the family's laughing and having a great deal of fun when the father got drunk, (3) a man in a therapy group whose speech became more audible, and who was attended to more fully when drunk than when sober, and (4) two brothers in which drinking allowed one of them to become aggressive, and the other one to come to his rescue and maintain their family relationship.

Thus, as observational data accumulated, this NIMH group began to conceptualize alcohol abuse from both a systems and behavioural viewpoint. The consequences of excessive alcohol

support the use of family therapy with alcoholics. However, these early studies are so limited in number, comparability, and methodological rigor that one cannot draw any firm conclusions about the effectiveness of family therapy with alcoholics. For example, outcome measures ranged from highly subjective measures such as social and marital satisfaction to measures of abstinence from alcohol. The use of abstinence as an outcome measure is especially controversial because of existing research which indicates that some alcoholics are able to drink socially after receiving treatment (Ewing, 1974; Pattison, 1968; Pattison et al., 1968).

The studies included in the Steinglass reviews are further limited by the nearly universal failure of the researchers to use comparison groups or to include many female alcoholics in their samples. The failure to include female alcoholics in outcome studies may introduce a bias that has serious implications for treatment. Meeks and Kelly (1970), for example, have argued that--

.....wives of alcoholics seemed better able to shift the focus to the family unit and to view their own behavior within the framework; husbands, with their masculinity and competence at stake, may have a greater need to keep the alcoholic wife in the sick role. When the husband is the alcoholic he may have less difficulty relinquishing the role of identified patient.

A large-scale study of family therapy outcomes supports the claims of sex differences in treatment for alcoholics. These differences were found by Williams (1972) in his evaluation of the Hospital Improvement Project at the Center for Alcoholics in Avon Park, Florida.

In that study, 44 percent of 647 patients offered family therapy chose to participate in that treatment. Only 17 percent of the total 647 completed the 4 sessions (initially in the office and later at the client's home) that were intended. Intact families were far more receptive to the treatment than other families; about three-fourths of the patients living with a spouse and children received the therapy. Also more likely to participate in the family therapy were patients of "middle class and above" social status.

Participation in family therapy appears to contribute to full-time employment and increases in attendance at Alcoholics Anonymous among patients at followup (i.e., 6 to 12 months after discharge); these findings were more characteristic of male than of female patients. The family therapy also seemed to influence the likelihood of abstinence at followup. At followup, a majority of the males showed significant changes in "gains in self-awareness"; these changes were not found in the majority of females, even though females were judged to have a "less severe" degree of impairment on psychiatric formulation measures at the time of intake.

Data from two small-scale studies raise the question of whether many alcoholics hold as positive a view of family therapy as professional proponents of the method.

In a study by the Veterans Administration Hospital in Indianapolis, patients rated eight treatments they received on eight "helpfulness" dimensions; treatment included such interventions as group therapy, individual counseling, lectures, and family counseling. Of the treatments, family counseling received among the least favorable ratings on "worth," "therapeutic benefit," and "pleasantness" and was not ranked highly on the remaining five dimensions.

More favorable results have been reported by Hoffman et al. (1975-76). They compared attitudes toward treatment among two groups of male alcoholics who had previously completed a 6-week Alcoholics Anonymous oriented program where they received the six types of treatment. They rated family therapy as the most beneficial treatment received.

Recent research by Leipman et al. (1985) indicated that family participation in the rehabilitation process improves the prognosis for recovery. This study also indicates that if the family fails to accommodate the new behaviour patterns of the alcoholic it can precipitate a relapse.

The past two decades have provided a variety of family oriented research studies that provide a basis for further exploration of techniques to enhance the therapeutic process as well as influencing new directions in family research.

2.8 STRESS IN FAMILIES WHERE THERE IS AN ADULT ALCOHOLIC

A central concept of systems theory is that, in order to understand individual behaviour, it is essential to understand the significant group in which a person lives, the relationships within that group and the importance of any particular individual's behaviour to maintaining the group or system. Therefore, the target for change is the whole system not any individual member of a system. If stress theory is applied to this assumption then it becomes necessary to study the entire family rather than the individual in evaluating the stress levels of an alcoholic system. To research only the individual alcoholic would not present a large portion of the influential factors present in the lives of the individual or the family. Therefore, the focus of this research is on the entire family, rather than portions of the family system.

2.9 SUMMARY

Assessing the effects of stress on an entire family due to the behaviour of an alcoholic adult in the family has been a topic of interest for researchers over the past thirty years. Extensive research on the husband and wife relationship in an alcoholic marriage has been conducted but there is a dearth of research that encompasses the entire family of the alcoholic.

Stress levels in relationship to alcohol consumption has also been explored, however, most research was limited to the alcoholic individual and/or his spouse. Very little stress research has encompassed the entire family of the alcoholic and looked at a family stress pattern rather than an individual one.

SECTION 3

AIMS, HYPOTHESES AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

3.1 AIM

The first aim of this research study (Study I) is to explore the differences in stress levels between selected family subject groups of general population medical patients, a group of subjects selected from the general community population and a group of subjects selected from patients admitted to an alcohol unit for treatment of alcoholism and their families.

A second aim (Study II) of this research study is to evaluate the significance of a family oriented stress management follow up program with families when there is one alcoholic spouse who has recently sought treatment for alcoholism compared to another group of subject who have also recently had a male adult in treatment for alcoholism and who did not receive a stress management program in their follow up treatment.

For the purposes of clarity the two above sections of the study will henceforth be referred to as Study I and Study II. These two studies will be presented seperately and the data analysed for each study.

between the groups. A t Test was used to determine whether the means of the two groups were significantly different at selected probability levels (P < .05 and .10).

questionnaires distributed were returned.

The subjects for the Medical Group were selected by using the patients from two local General Practitioners. The doctors agreed to distribute the questionnaires to their patients that met the criteria for family selection. The criteria for selection was the same for all three groups. The Medical Group participants were given one questionnaire for each member of the family over eight years of age and under eighteen years of age to complete and mail in. No follow-up questionnaires were administered. Forty-five percent of the questionnaires distributed were returned.

Subjects for the Alcohol Group were selected from clients that approached an Alcohol Rehabilitation Facility in the New Plymouth or Stratford areas. Criteria for selection was that the male adult in the family was seeking rehabilitation for an alcohol problem and that the family composition met the general requirements stated above. Participants were apprised of the general purpose of the study and that participation would entail further questionnaires and cooperation. Participation in the study was voluntary and not presented as a part of the rehabilitation program. Seventy-eight percent of the questionnaires were returned.

4.3 INSTRUMENTS USED

DEVELOPMENT AND CHOICE OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS - PILOT STUDY

Research instruments for this study were the Demographic

anxiety measure - a AN scale) the N.S.Q. also assesses three other aspects of personality.

4.3.3 GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

A number of studies have shown that general health is related to stress therefore it was felt that a stress related health measure should be incorporated into the questionnaire. The health measure selected was the General Health Questionnaire, henceforth referred to as G.H.Q., which was originally devised by Goldberg (1972) for detecting minor psychiatric disorders in a community setting. A shortened version used here has recently been standardised for use in occupational studies by Banks et. al. (1980) on a large sample of employees in engineering as well as unemployed men and school leavers in the United Kingdom.

Two other measures were used that were originally developed by Voges et. al. (1982) at Massey University, specifically to indicate physical health and/or ill health characteristics by a self report method. These two items, a 15 item medical check list (M.V.C.L.) and a 19 item symptom check list (S.C.L.) were derived from a health survey reported by Zaleznik, Kets de Vries, and Howard (1977).

4.3.4 LEVEL OF CURRENT DRINKING QUESTIONNAIRE (INCLUDES SHORT FORM MICHIGAN ALCOHOLISM SCREENING TEST)

For this study the short form of the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test, henceforth referred to as S.M.A.S.T., was used. The reliability of the thirteen item S.M.A.S.T. is almost as high as that of the twenty-four item self-administered M.A.S.T. It

would be justified to suggest that for most purposes the S.M.A.S.T. will do as well as the M.A.S.T. as a screening test for alcoholism (Vinokur & Rooijen, 1975).

In studies by Moore (1972), seventy percent correct predictions of alcoholism were made from M.A.S.T. patient scores with errors in the direction of false positives rather than false negatives. When patient problem lists were used as validating criteria the predictive ability of the M.A.S.T. is enhanced. Due to the ease of the administration and scoring as well as its high value in detecting drinking problems, it is suggested that the M.A.S.T. is an effective method for detecting alcohol problems.

4.3.5 MASSEY UNIVERSITY LIFE EVENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

The instrument used in the overall measure is the Massey adaptation of the Holmes and Rahe's social readjustment rating scale. Although the Holmes and Rahe's original scale was established on heterogeneous American populations, the scale used in this research has been adapted at Massey University as a more applicable measure for New Zealand populations. Had there not been an adaptation of the Holmes and Rahe's scale revised at Massey University, it is entirely possible that the Tennant and Andrews (1976) Stress of Life Events Scale that was developed and validated on an Australian population, might have been used for the purposes of this research. However the Massey version of the Holmes and Rahe's was selected after consideration.

4.6.1

STUDY I
ANOVA - FATHERS'
STRESS ITEM ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.1

CATEGORY	df	MEAN	ST. DEV.	SUM OF SQUARES	F=	PR>F	P < .05 SIGNI- FICANCE	P < .10 SIGNI- FICANCE
NSQ - SENSITIVITY	2/96	4.31	1.85	335.29	2.46	0.09	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - DEPRESSION	2/96	6.28	2.23	478.08	1.21	0.30	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - SUBMISSIVENESS	2/96	6.34	2.59	44.32	1.02	0.37	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - ANXIETY	2/96	6.07	2.20	466.51	10.86	0.00	*	*
NSQ - TOTAL SCORE	2/96	5.86	2.02	392.02	2.17	0.12	n.s.	n.s.
GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE	2/96	22.91	5.85	3286.18	1.64	0.20	n.s.	n.s.
MEDICAL SYMPTOMS	2/96	3.19	3.03	881.35	11.57	0.00	*	*
MEDICAL VISIT CHECKLIST	2/96	1.74	2.08	416.69	2.40	0.10	n.s.	n.s.
M.A.S.T.	2/96	2.73	3.30	1047.17	69.3	0.00	*	*
ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION	2/96	7.27	8.70	4703.01	4.28	0.01	*	*
LIFE STRESS	2/96	6.62	4.90	1913.00	1.27	0.73	n.s.	n.s.

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS = 96

n.s. = not significant
* = significant

Data analysis at the $P < .05$ level indicates that there was a significant difference in the level of anxiety for the fathers as well as a significant difference in the number of visits to medical facilities or to medical doctors. An additional item, labeled the M.A.S.T., also indicates a significant difference between the groups. On all three items where there was a significant difference at the .05 level subsequent analysis indicated that the mean scores for the group of alcoholic fathers had the greatest deviation. The variation in the means scores may indicate that the alcoholic fathers have a higher anxiety level, and that their medical symptomatology is different from non-alcoholic men.

Although the total score on the NSQ does not show a significant difference, one out of the four sub-scores registers a significant difference. The overall indication is that four scores out of nine on the fathers stress item analysis do indicate a significant difference. Although some of the differences would be expected, i.e. the M.A.S.T. when one group is designated alcoholic, other differences such as the Medical Symptoms and Medical Visit Checklist are not found in previous research.

In the analysis of the data (ANOVA) for the mother's stress items from the M.U.S.Q. at the $P < .05$ a significant difference is indicated on six variables. The variables that show a significant difference are General Health Questionnaire, Medical Symptoms, Medical Visit Checklist, Alcohol Consumption, Husband Problems, Life Stress and Family Stress. There were no significant differences in any of the NSQ scores. The areas of health all indicate significant differences which implies that one of the three groups has more health problems than the others. Further analysis of the means of the groups indicates that on the Medical Symptoms and Medical Visit Checklist it is the mean of the alcohol group which shows the greatest deviation. Again, this indicates the possibility that the alcohol group manifests the greatest number of health problems and makes the greatest number of visits to a medical facility or medical doctor.

Although there is a significant difference in the alcohol level for mothers, the Community Group mean shows the highest score of the three group means. In the areas of Husband Problems, Life Stress and Family Stress the alcohol mothers group has by far the greatest deviation of the three group means. The score is not only deviant, in some cases it is several times higher than the means of the other two groups. This indicates a high degree of family and stress problems in families where there is an alcoholic male adult.

At the $P < .10$ level the only additional significant score is that for the NSQ - Depression which indicates a difference between the three group means but no mean is an extreme variant

4.6.3

STUDY I
ANOVA - TEENS'
STRESS ITEM ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.3

CATEGORY	df	MEAN	ST. DEV.	SUM OF SQUARES	F=	PR>F	p<.05 SIGNI- FICANCE	p<.10 SIGNI- FICANCE
NSQ - SENSITIVITY	2/85	4.27	2.19	399.45	1.53	0.22	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - DEPRESSION	2/85	4.64	2.41	492.36	0.23	0.80	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - SUBMISSIVENESS	2/85	5.51	2.24	427.99	2.91	0.06	*	*
NSQ - ANXIETY	2/85	6.88	1.53	199.63	0.61	0.54	n.s.	n.s.
NSQ - TOTAL SCORE	2/85	5.10	1.85	290.08	0.30	0.74	n.s.	n.s.
GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE	2/85	20.69	6.88	4020.72	1.75	0.18	n.s.	n.s.
MEDICAL SYMPTOMS	2/85	3.22	2.61	578.90	2.77	0.07	n.s.	*
MEDICAL VISIT CHECKLIST	2/85	1.58	2.86	693.44	1.13	0.33	n.s.	n.s.
M.A.S.T.	2/85	1.48	1.01	85.95	2.92	0.06	n.s.	*
ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION	2/85	2.15	3.62	1111.08	3.01	0.05	*	*
LIFE STRESS	2/85	10.80	7.60	4912.32	2.14	0.12	n.s.	n.s.

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS = 87

n.s. = not significant

* = significant

In the analysis of the Teens groups ANOVA at the $P < .05$ level, there are two scores which reveal significant differences. The first is for the NSQ - Submissiveness and the second is for the Alcohol Consumption category. Only the Alcohol Consumption Category shows an elevated mean and this is for the alcohol group. This indicates that the Alcohol Group scores were higher in the area of Alcohol Consumption than the other two groups which may indicate that teenagers from families where there is an alcoholic adult consume more alcohol than comparable groups of teenagers.

When the data is analysed at the $P < .10$ level, two more scores show a significant difference. These are the Medical Symptoms category and the M.A.S.T. category.

STUDY I
ANOVA - CHILDREN
STRESS ITEM ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.4

CATEGORY	df	MEAN	ST. DEV.	SUM OF SQUARES	F=	PR>F	p<.05 SIGNI- FICANCE	p<.10 SIGNI- FICANCE
MEDICAL SYMPTOMS	2/90	4.74	3.64	1189.81	13.70	0.00	*	*

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS = 90

n.s. = not significant
* = significant

For the childrens groups the ANOVA analysis of the one category indicates it is significant at both the $P < .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. Further analysis of the individual means indicates that the children of the designated Alcohol Group have a severely elevated mean as compared to the other two groups. This indicates that the children from the Alcohol Group make far more visits to a medical facility or to their medical doctor than do the children from the other two groups.

4.7 CONCLUSIONS

A substantial body of research findings indicates that in families where there is an alcoholic adult scores on the M.A.S.T. and Alcohol Consumption questionnaires would be elevated both for the alcoholic member of the family and children in the family. These findings are substantiated in this study.

Initially it was hypothesised that there would be differences in stress levels in families where there is a male alcoholic adult as compared to families from the general community population and a medical community population. The analysis of the data for the three groups supports these differences on five variables from the fathers' data, eight variables from the mothers' data, four variables from the teens' data and from the one variable in the childrens' data. The number of significant differences on this number of variables indicates that there are differences in the stress levels and health states of the three groups. As a previous body of research findings would indicate differences in stress levels between alcoholic families and other family groups, the findings from this study simply support prior research. However, the repeated significant difference on health measures in alcoholic families as compared to other groups was unexpected. The high degree of mean variation for each of the family categories, i.e. fathers, mothers, teens and children was also not anticipated.

This may indicate that due to the high number of medical

visits by members of families where there is an alcohol problem that medical personnel could be instrumental in the detection of families where there is an alcoholic adult. The pattern of repeated visits by the various family members could serve as a detection instrument.

Although a definitive pattern of differences in stress levels on the NSQ was anticipated, such a pattern did not emerge as a significant difference among the three groups. By far the more powerful statement of differences emerged from health issues on the questionnaire.

In the data from the mothers groups a pattern of family problems was indicated by the means of scores on the variables of Husband Problems, Life Stress and Family Stress. This data indicates that in families where there is an alcoholic adult male the spouse perceives the family as having multiple family problems and stress. Prior research in the field of alcohol would substantiate this finding.

The area that indicates a need for further research is the significant finding that teenagers in alcoholic families consume higher quantities of alcohol than do teenagers from other family groups. This finding could lend support to the research data that there is an heredity link in alcoholism. However, the environmental exposure of teenagers in an alcoholic family to excessive alcohol consumption may also provide a role model that influences the behaviour of the teenager in relation to alcohol consumption. This should be explored further.

SECTION 5

STUDY II

5.1 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aim of research Study II is to evaluate the significance of a family oriented stress management follow up program with families when there is one alcoholic adult male who has recently sought treatment for alcoholism compared to a control group of alcoholic families who have also recently had a male adult in treatment for alcoholism and who did not receive a stress management program in their follow up treatment after the rehabilitation program.

5.2 SUBJECTS/SAMPLES

From the selected Alcohol participants for the study a division was made forming the forty families into two groups. The division was accomplished by designating every other selected incoming family to the rehabilitation program as a family that would receive the Stress Management Program. This group was designated Stress Management as opposed to the control group.

5.3 RESEARCH MEASURING INSTRUMENTS USED

The questionnaire used in this study was identical to the research questionnaire used in Study I (M.U.S.Q.) and composed of the same stress item measuring instruments. These were the NSQ (Sensitivity, Depression, Submissiveness, Anxiety and Total), the

General Health Questionnaire, the Medical Symptoms Checklist, the Medical Visit Checklist, the M.A.S.T., the Life Stress Events and in the mothers questionnaire a Husbands Problems Checklist and a Family Stress Index. For a complete format of the instruments, refer to instruments used in Study I.

5.4 PROCEDURES

The Stress Management Program was conducted at Taranaki Base Hospital and administered by a therapist. It consisted of six sessions with the entire families of the male alcoholic who had recently completed an alcohol rehabilitation program. The Stress Management participants were administered the original questionnaire upon the entrance of the male alcoholic adult into an Alcohol Rehabilitation Program and follow-up questionnaires at a six month interval from the date of the male alcoholic members release from the Alcohol Rehabilitation Program and an additional questionnaire at the one year follow-up date. For the entire Stress Management Program see Appendix A.

The designated Alcohol Group participants that were not selected for the Stress Management Program were also administered an original questionnaire upon entrance of the male alcoholic adult to the Alcohol Rehabilitation Program. These families also received a six month follow-up questionnaire and a one year follow-up questionnaire.

5.5 DATA AND RESULTS

The data were analysed by using a t test for the two groups of scores. The t test was conducted at the $P > .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. Results of the analysis are shown in the following tables.

TABLE 5.1

Significance of differences between scores on the NSQ-Sensitivity measure of Fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNIFICANCE $p < .05$	SIGNIFICANCE $p < .10$
initial	T	15	5.07	1.49	0.60	1.44	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	4.56	1.95	0.46			
6 months	T	13	5.08	2.36	0.68	0.69	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	4.50	1.76				
12 months	T	18	4.56	1.65	0.61	1.64	n.s.	n.s.
	C	21	4.00	2.14				

TABLE 5.2

Significance of differences between scores on the NSQ-Depression measure of Fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNIFICANCE $p < .05$	SIGNIFICANCE $p < .10$
initial	T	15	5.73	2.22	0.57	0.73	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	5.83	2.04	0.48			
6 months	T	13	5.54	2.47	0.69	0.37	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	5.94	1.95	0.46			
12 months	T	18	5.89	1.99	0.47	0.93	n.s.	n.s.
	C	21	6.05	1.96	0.43			

T = Treatment group
C = Control group

n.s. = not significant
* = significant

STUDY II
T-TEST TABLE - FATHERS CONTINUED

TABLE 5.3

Significance of differences between scores on the NSQ-Submissiveness measure of fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNI-FICANCE p < .05	SIGNI-FICANCE p < .10
initial	T	15	5.80	2.27	0.59	0.91	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	6.11	2.35	0.55			
6 months	T	13	6.15	2.44	0.68	0.92	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	5.33	2.40	0.57			
12 months	T	18	6.26	2.23	0.51	0.88	*	*
	C	21	5.81	2.20				

TABLE 5.4

Significance of differences between scores on the NSQ-Anxiety measure of Fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNI-FICANCE p < .05	SIGNI-FICANCE p < .10
initial	T	15	6.73	2.09	0.54	0.59	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	7.56	1.82	0.43			
6 months	T	13	6.08	2.47	0.68	0.27	n.s.	n.s.
	C	18	7.11	1.84	0.43			
12 months	T	18	7.17	2.07	0.49	0.60	n.s.	n.s.
	C	21	6.57	1.83	0.40			

T = Treatment group
C = Control group

n.s. = not significant
* = significant

STUDY II
T-TEST TABLE - FATHERS CONTINUED

TABLE 5.5

Significance of differences between scores on the NSQ-Total Score measures of Fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNIFICANCE p < .05	SIGNIFICANCE p < .10
initial	T	15	6.00	1.56	0.40	0.62	n.s.	n.s. df=14
	C	18	6.33	1.78	0.42			
6 months	T	13	5.69	2.06	0.57	0.26	n.s.	n.s. df=16
	C	18	5.67	1.53	0.36			
12 months	T	18	6.39	1.65	0.39	0.95	n.s.	n.s. df=19
	C	21	5.52	1.63	0.36			

TABLE 5.6

Significance of differences between scores on the GHQ of Fathers in the control and treatment groups.

ADMINI-STRATION	GROUP	NUMBER	MEAN	ST. DEV.	ST. ERR.	t value	SIGNIFICANCE p < .05	SIGNIFICANCE p < .10
initial	T	15	22.53	5.20	2.00	0.98	n.s.	n.s. df=14
	C	18	24.50	6.32				
6 months	T	13	23.31	4.98	1.76	0.00	*	* df=16
	C	18	20.28	4.64				
12 months	T	18	21.33	4.81	1.72	0.07	n.s.	n.s. df=19
	C	21	19.33	5.91				

T = Treatment group
C = Control group

n.s. = not significant
* = significant

medical doctor. This finding was significant at the $P < .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. During the rehabilitation phase of alcoholism medical needs that may have been neglected during the drinking phase are now addressed. This may account for the increased health problems in the men who did not receive stress management. However, this finding may also indicate that the stress management program successfully reduced stress and therefore it was not manifested as a medical illness or a doctors visit.

These results indicate that if a stress management program can prevent actual health deterioration or even redirect the focus on imagined or real health problems of the recovering alcoholic that the stress management program would be a valuable tool for all recovering alcoholics.

together during the random selection to cause significant differences among the scores can only be attributed to the random selection process.

The analysis of the variable of Alcohol Consumption indicates that there is a significant difference in alcohol consumption original administration and at the twelve month follow up period. This difference was significant at both the $P < .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. In each case, the women who did not receive stress management had the higher alcohol consumption level. Unfortunately, at the original administration the stress management program could not have been an influential factor on the women's alcohol consumption. Although it may account for the lack of significance at the six month level, it could have been directly responsible for the difference between the two groups at the twelve month level. This conclusion, however, is suspect due to the original administration scores. Perhaps the more interesting data from this variable is that wives of alcoholic men have a wide range of alcohol use including some that have a high alcohol consumption level.

The variable of Problems with Husband showed a significant difference only at original administration at both the $P < .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. This may be due to a variety of factors including reluctance to admit the severity of problems during the first administration.

The Life Stress Events variable showed significant differences at the six month and twelve month administrations at both the $P < .05$ and $P < .10$ levels. In both cases it was the

group of wives that did not receive stress management that had the higher Life Stress score. In fact, the mean was more than twice as high for the no group that was not given a stress management program. As there was no differences at the original administration between the two groups, this score may be the most indicative score for the positive results obtained from the administration of the stress management program. As the analysis of individual questions on the stress management questionnaire is beyond the scope of this study, no assumptions will be made as to the direct causes of the variation in scores. However, further research in the area of alcoholism and stress levels using this instrument is advocated.

From the data a trend can be identified that indicates a positive influence on the drinking behaviour and health symptomatology of those teenagers that received the stress management program.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

An overall trend in the data indicates that those families that received the Stress Management Program derived some benefits from the program in the areas of General Health, Medical Visits and Alcohol Consumption scores in all areas of the family. Although there were more variables between the two groups that did not show a significance, many areas need to be explored with further research. The area of medical facility and medical doctor visits is particularly pertinent as the results from this research indicate that there is a greater number of medical visits from the families in the control group as opposed to those who received the stress management program.

Although the null hypothesis (that stress levels are not reduced in families in which there is an alcoholic male adult if those families participate in a series of stress management sessions) can be rejected in this study due to a decrease in some of the stress level scores, the study more accurately indicates general trends in stress levels in alcoholic families rather than in specific areas.

APPENDIX A

STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

FOR ALCOHOLIC FAMILIES

completely, mentally say "two" and try to visualize the number 2 in your mind. Continue this exercise counting up to the number eight. When you have completed the count to eight repeat the sequence from 1 to 8.

SESSION VI

This final session should be a review of all the previous sessions. The therapist should once again check with all family members as to how they are now coping with stress situations as they arise in the family compared to how they coped at the beginning of the sessions. Communication skills should be reviewed and how they are being used in the family. Each family member will be asked to define a personal goal that will aid in stress reduction for the family. Long term and short term goals may be discussed. Areas where the family has shown positive progress should be pointed out and reinforced. Areas that are still weak or need further work are also designated at this final session. All of the exercises are to be reviewed and the family encouraged to continue doing the relaxation exercises on a daily basis.

APPENDIX B

MASSEY LIFE STRESS EVENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

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