

RISK FACTORS FOR SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR IN ALCOHOL-DEPENDENT PATIENTS IN POLAND

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Aim of the study: Suicidal behavior has been recognized as an increasing problem among alcohol-dependent individuals in Poland. The risk for suicide attempts in alcohol dependence is as high as in affective disorders. Aim of the study was to identify risk factors for suicide attempts among a treated population of alcohol-dependent patients.

Methods: A total of 154 patients with alcohol dependence, consecutively-admitted to four addiction treatment facilities (2 outpatient and 2 residential) in Warsaw, Poland, participated in the study. Suicidal behavior was evaluated using structured questions from the MINI. Additionally, severity of alcohol dependence, psychopathology, impulsivity, depression, hopelessness, personality, family and child abuse history were assessed.

Results: Suicidal behavior was common in adults treated for alcohol dependence in Poland: 66 patients (43%) in the present sample reported an attempt at some point during their lifetime, 38 patients (25%) had suicidal ideation at time of assessment. More than 62% (n=41) of those with a lifetime suicide attempt reported making an impulsive attempt, and 44% (n=29) reported a violent suicide attempt. Men were more likely to make violent suicide attempts than women (p=0.043). Suicidal attempters in comparison to non-attempters were younger (p=0.009), more impulsive on several measures including NEO (p=0.0006), had higher levels of neuroticism (p=0.0002), earlier onset of alcohol problems (p=0.017), and more frequently experienced sexual (p=0.015) or physical abuse (p=0.004) in childhood. Patients with suicide attempts had more legal problems (p=0.0007) and more frequently reported a family history of suicide (p=0.0006) compared to subjects without attempts. Family history of suicidal behavior strongly predicted a suicide attempt history (OR=3.95, 95% C.I.=1.03-15.22, p=0.043) after adjusting for other measures of baseline psychopathology, depression, impulsivity, hopelessness, alcohol use severity, and history of childhood abuse.

Table 1. Selected characteristics in alcohol-dependent patients with and without past history of suicide attempts.

Variable	Suicide Attempts n = 66	No Suicide Attempts n = 88	t or χ^2 stats	p
Age (Mean $\pm$ SD)	41.40 $\pm$ 9.63	45.55 $\pm$ 9.47	2.62	0.009
Age at Onset of Problem Drinking (Mean $\pm$ SD)	20.34 $\pm$ 6.76	23.45 $\pm$ 8.58	2.41	0.017
Social Support (MOSSSS) (Mean $\pm$ SD)	57.76 $\pm$ 20.37	65.44 $\pm$ 17.79	2.22	0.027
Severity of General Psychopathology (GSI) (Mean $\pm$ SD)	52.9 $\pm$ 12.0	48.35 $\pm$ 11.58	-2.31	0.022
Childhood Sexual Abuse N (%)	10 (15.2)	4 (4.5)	5.81	0.015
Childhood Physical Abuse N (%)	31 (47.0)	24 (27.3)	8.21	0.004
Legal Problems N (%)	28 (42.4)	16 (18.2)	11.43	0.0007
Completed or Attempted Suicide in Family N (%)	17 (25.8)	8 (9.1)	11.64	0.0006
Impulsiveness (BIS) (Mean $\pm$ SD)	73.75 $\pm$ 11.41	70.24 $\pm$ 9.41	-2.04	0.042
Attentional Impulsiveness (Mean $\pm$ SD)	19.54 $\pm$ 3.72	18.27 $\pm$ 3.25	-2.20	0.029
Sleep Problems (AIS) (Mean $\pm$ SD)	10.21 $\pm$ 5.60	8.30 $\pm$ 4.93	-2.19	0.029
Severity of Depression (BDI-II) (Mean $\pm$ SD)	23.81 $\pm$ 12.47	17.15 $\pm$ 9.96	-3.61	0.0004

* bivariate statistics

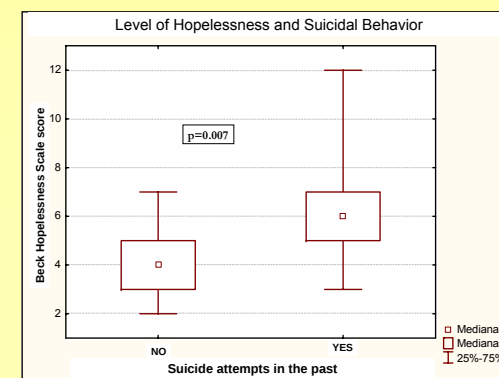
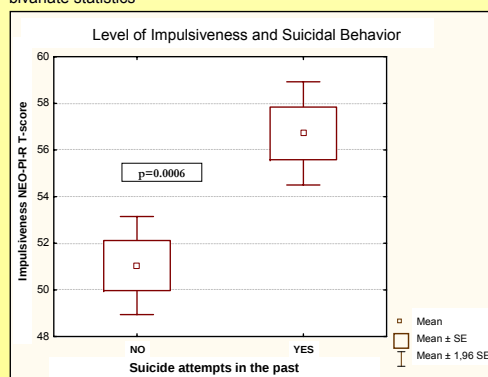


Table 2. Logistic regression analysis of predictors of suicide attempts in alcohol dependent patients

Risk factors of suicide attempts	OR	95% CI	p
Family History of Suicide Attempt	3.953	1.03 – 15.22	0.043
Impulsiveness (NEO-PI-R)	1.052	0.99 - 1.11	0.061
Neuroticism (NEO-FFI)	1.066	0.99 - 1.15	0.070
Childhood Physical Abuse	2.404	0.83 - 6.97	0.101
Childhood Sexual Abuse	4.291	0.62 - 29.9	0.136
Age	0.951	0.89 - 1.02	0.154
Depression (BDI-II)	1.055	0.96 - 1.15	0.229
Legal problems	2.058	0.62 - 6.80	0.237
Psychopathology (GSI)	0.978	0.92 - 1.04	0.438
Social Support (MOSSSS)	1.011	0.98 - 1.04	0.519
Impulsiveness (BIS-11)	0.942	0.77 - 1.14	0.546
Age at Onset of Drinking	0.991	0.93 - 1.06	0.778
Sleep problems (AIS)	0.996	0.88 - 1.13	0.946

Multiple Logistic Regression Model: $R^2=0.364$; $\chi^2 = 36.365$; $df = 13$; $p = 0.006$

Conclusions: Family history of suicide, which might reflect genetic susceptibility, should be considered as an important risk factor for suicidality among alcohol-dependent subjects.