

Research Evidence of a Combined Approach in Treatments of Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder: A Narrative Review

A Review Article on Different Approach of Treatments in Prolonged Grief Disorder

Dr. Prajakta Badade
Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Homoeopathic
Materia Medica,
Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to Be University)
Homoeopathic Medical College
Pune, India

Prof Dr. Dolas Vaishali V. Md, Hod,
PG Guide, Department of Homoeopathic Materia Medica,
Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University)
Homoeopathic Medical College
Pune, India

Abstract:- Aim: Prolonged grief disorder (PGD), which is also known as persistent complex bereavement disorder, is a recently acknowledged mental health condition that affects 10% of adult bereaved individuals. Prolonged grief disorder is often overlooked, and there is a need for more comprehensive research and evaluation of prevention, early intervention, and treatment modalities and their suitable provision for individuals, families, or groups.

Therefore, the goal of our narrative review is to evaluate the effectiveness of various treatments and homoeopathic medications for prolong grief condition.

Method: To find clinical research publications, a thorough computerised literature search was performed. The Thieme-E-Journal of Homoeopathy, Wiley, Google Scholar, Medline, Research Gate, PubMed, Cochrane, and Science Direct were searched, and relevant publications were used for review. Only human subject' clinical studies were considered in this review. Experiments on animals and trials were not included. Complete research publications were found.

Results: A preliminary search yielded 20 articles, with 15 relevant research articles remaining after removing the duplicate ones. A total of seven articles were selected for the narrative review, which included homoeopathy, Cognitive behavioural therapy, and music therapy.

Conclusion: This review concluded that homoeopathic medicines and other alternative therapies are safe and effective for the cases of persistent complex bereavement disorder. To strengthen the evidence, more randomised placebo-controlled studies should be carried out.

Keywords:- Grief, Bereavement, Homoeopathy, Complementary Therapies, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Bereavement is the complex range of feelings that follow the loss of a loved one, including sadness, illogical protest, and grief with longing. Other losses, such those to one's health, house, nation, and safe places, can also cause grief.^[1]

Three phases of behaviour in response to loss are protest, despair, and detachment^[2].

Following symptoms are experienced to a disabling degree and have been present for at least 6 months: feeling emotionally numb, life is meaningless. Experiencing mistrust. Bitterness over the loss. Difficulty accepting loss. Identity confusion. Avoidance of the reality of the loss. Difficulty moving on with life^[3].

II. MOST OFTEN USED HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINES FOR GRIEF ARE:

When managing deep or prolonged grief reactions, the first medicines that homoeopaths look into are *ignatia* and *natrum muriaticum*. They have the following defining symptoms.:

A. *Ignatia*

An *Ignatia* state can be acquired by any constitutional type after a loss or being cut off from a loved one. The main characteristics include:

In a breakdown, *Ignatia's* personality will go into spasms, will be hysterical, and be unable to think or talk. He or she can't cry at the moment of shock, but they will go inside, shut the door, and cry afterward. He or she nearly passes out while sobbing or wailing. Continue brooding over the grief. Their despair leads them to a feeling that life is not worth living^[4].

She/He has a weeping spell, a headache, trembles, is anxious, and is sleepless. Unable to control her emotions, her loss had just broken her apart ^[5].

There is a changeable mood; it is not communicative. Melancholic. Sighing and sobbing ^[6].

B. *Natrum Muriaticum*

Natrum is very similar to Ignatia. Natrum also has a tendency to suffer a lot when they lose a loved one, either by separation or death. The principal features are:

Very sensitive people create a wall of invulnerability, and they would rather keep control over their feelings or situation ^[4].

There is a hysterical condition of the mind and body, weeping alternates with laughing. Benumbed to impressions, she easily takes on grief, brooding over grief. A headache comes on with this melancholy. Cannot bring herself or himself to a state of joy ^[5].

Consolation aggravates her complaints. wants to be alone to cry ^[6].

Fig 1- Table of included studies.

TABLE 1: TABLE OF INCLUDED STUDIES

The table of studies included is given below.

III. DISCUSSION

➤ *Homoeopathic and Psychiatric Perspectives on Grief*

The article analyses the possibility of homoeopathy as a complementary method of treating mental health issues, concentrating particularly on how well it handles grief. Homoeopathic treatment was shown to be as helpful in treating grief compared to conventional treatment in 1998 comparative research including 24 individuals. In the homoeopathic medical system, symptoms that a substance might produce on healthy individual are treated using greatly diluted medicine of the material. It is regarded as safe, non-toxic, and free of any known adverse effects. The symptoms of mourning can be effectively treated with homoeopathic medications like Ignatia, Natrum Muriaticum, and Phosphoricum Acid. The results of the study show that homoeopathy has the potential to be a useful resource for medical professionals working in mental health. To fully explore its potential and its safe and efficient usage in treating mental health illnesses, more research is required ^[7].

➤ *Study Among Youth of Indian Culture with Psychiatry Symptoms as Well as Suicide Ideas and Homoeopathic Management-A Hospital Based Study*

The article describes a study on the application of homoeopathy as an additional or alternative treatment for emotional disorders like bereavement and anxiety. Thirty patients participated in the trial, and each one was given an

individualised homoeopathic remedy based on their symptoms and general constitution. The patients were followed up for three months, and the symptoms were tracked using standardised assessment methods. Results revealed significant reductions in symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and anxiousness, as well as enhancements in sleep and general wellbeing. Throughout the follow-up period, the improvements persisted. The study shows that homoeopathic treatment is effective in treating emotional disorders including grief and anxiety, indicating its potential as an alternative or supplemental therapy. To understand the workings of homoeopathy and create specific treatment plans for various populations, additional research is required ^[8].

➤ *Will You Pass Me the Salt?*

According to Salvador S. Coelho, the homoeopathic state known as Natrum Muriaticum can be brought on by grief. The homoeopathic medication Natrum Mur, which is derived from sodium chloride, is said to treat both the physical and emotional signs of mourning. Grief is a normal reaction to loss that affects both physical and emotional health. Sleep issues, exhaustion, and intestinal issues are some of the symptoms. By prescribing individualised cures based on particular symptoms and emotional conditions, homoeopathy offers distinctive method. For symptoms like dry eyes and headaches, as well as extreme melancholy and isolation, Natrum mur may be advised. Homoeopathy should not, however, take the place of traditional medical treatment for bereavement. It is essential to seek out medical assistance, which may include counselling, therapy, or medication. Homoeopathy should be viewed as complementary to other treatments because grief profoundly affects general health ^[9].

➤ *Treating Prolonged Grief Disorder: A Randomized Clinical Trail*

About 10% of people who experience loss suffer from prolonged grieving disorder (PGD), which can be quite devastating. The use of exposure therapy is debatable, however grief-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) has been beneficial. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of CBT alone versus CBT alongside with exposure therapy for PGD. The results indicate that for the best reduction in PGD severity, exposure therapy should be included to help with the emotional processing of death-related memories. Reducing symptoms and altering assessments are two outcomes of addressing emotional reactions to the loss. Further development of comprehensive treatment strategies for PGD is necessary apart from conventional methods ^[10].

➤ *CBT For Prolonged Grief In Children and Adolescents: A Randomised Clinical Trial*

This study included 134 bereaved individuals who fulfilled the diagnostic criteria for prolonged grief disorder (PGD). Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or no treatment (waitlist control) was randomly allocated to them. The CBT strategy consisted of 16 weekly sessions that targeted maladaptive thoughts and behaviours associated with the loss. In comparison to the control group, the

findings showed that participants who received CBT significantly improved their symptoms. In particular, the CBT group reported less intense longing, less preoccupation with the deceased, and greater acceptance of the loss. Additionally, the CBT group showed improvements in psychological functioning generally as well as in depressive and anxiety symptoms. These results highlight the value of addressing symptoms associated with grieving as well as the effectiveness of CBT in the management of PGD. Cognitive Behavioral therapies may be the potential approach for people experiencing prolonged grief. To fully understand the mechanisms underlying CBT's success and to create individual therapies for specific populations, more research is needed^[11].

➤ *Treating Prolonged Grief Disorder with Prolonged Grief-Specific Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: Study Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial*

The research comprised 204 individuals who satisfied the requirements for prolonged grief disorder. They were randomly assigned either PG-CBT or supportive counselling.

Participants were followed up at 3, 6, and 12 months after both therapies, which each included 16 weekly sessions. According to the findings, supportive counselling as well as PG-CBT significantly reduced the symptoms of prolonged grieving.

The two therapies' results did not, however, significantly differ from one another. Both groups reported improved general functioning and quality of life, along with decreased levels of grieving feelings such as yearning, disbelief, and rage. The results indicate that PG-CBT is a successful treatment for prolonged grief, but it is not significantly more effective than supportive counselling. The study emphasizes the need to offer assistance and intervention to people going through prolonged grieving because both strategies were successful in reducing symptoms, but further study is required to understand the underlying mechanisms and create appropriate therapy plans^[12].

➤ *Music Therapy for End-of-Life Care*

The study evaluated 52 studies, including 1,891 people who received music therapy treatments for a variety of illnesses, including cancer, dementia, and end-of-life care. The results showed that music therapy helped people who had experienced loss cope with their grief and depression. Additionally, music therapy proved particularly effective in reducing anxiety, boosting mood, and increasing quality of life in settings for palliative care. The study also emphasized how effective music therapy is at reducing the psychological effects of grief, such as intrusive ideas and avoidance behaviours. These results suggest that music therapy is a useful complementary treatment for depression and bereavement symptoms. Particularly in palliative care settings, it provides a minimally invasive and cost-effective therapeutic alternative. Generally speaking, music therapy gives people a unique way to express their feelings and deal with sadness. To find the best music therapy approaches for

various individuals and conditions, however, more study is required^[13].

IV. CONCLUSION

The most widely used method for treatment in cases of persistent complex bereavement disorder is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and occasionally mild anxiolytic or hypnotic treatment for short-term use. Though CBT is of great effectiveness in treating the condition, other alternative approaches should be studied and applied for the treatment. Homoeopathy is a form of alternative medicine that follows the idea that "like cures like" and uses very diluted, potentized medicines to promote the body's natural healing process. Some advocates of homoeopathy think that it can help people cope with the emotional and psychological components of grief. It is crucial to remember that there is limited and conflicting scientific data to support homoeopathy's efficacy in treating grief. Numerous systematic reviews and meta-analyses have found that the present homoeopathy studies have methodological flaws, such as small sample sizes and inadequate study designs, which make it challenging to draw accurate conclusions. The scientific and medical fields usually agree that there isn't sufficient evidence currently available to justify using homoeopathy as an independent treatment for grief. Psychotherapy, support groups, and other evidence-based interventions that focus on emotional processing, coping mechanisms, and social support are frequently used in traditional methods of bereavement treatment.

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