A STUDY ON THE “DIFFICULTY OF LIFE” IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS OF ALCOHOLISM IN JAPAN

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Introduction. A true recovery from alcoholism involves not only abstinence but overcoming this difficulty of life. Our goal was to demonstrate the existence of “difficulty of life” by alcoholics and identify factors affecting the difficulty of life.

Methods. We conducted a self-administered questionnaire research, in which subjects were male alcoholics participating in alcoholism self-help groups in Japan. We also included healthy males as a control group. In order to elucidate factors associated with “difficulty of life” by alcoholics, we used t-test, Wilcoxon’s rank sum test and logistic regression analyses.

Results. Data were collected from 574 alcoholics (response rate 21.1%) and 512 healthy controls (33.1%). 54% of male alcoholics felt “difficulty of life”. About factors influencing difficulty of life, statistical significant differences between alcoholics and healthy controls were found in the items of building and maintaining human relations, satisfaction of life, self-efficacy, recognition of things, loneliness, empathic understanding, and acceptance of self, respectively.

Discussion. Our data indicate that the alcoholics were experiencing difficulty of life more than non-alcoholics. We also identified low empathic understanding, low acceptance of self, lack of loneliness, and deviation from the recognition of a situation as factors influencing the difficulty of life that are peculiar to alcoholics.