

STUDY OF DRUG ADDICT ADOLESCENTS OF PUNJAB IN RELATION TO ADJUSTMENT, LOCALE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

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Introduction

Taking drugs is not a new phenomenon, we find in our religious literatures that the angels used to take “Som-Rasa” during ceremonial occasions. In “Shiv-Purana” it is written that Lord Shiva is known as “Bhang-User” which is a drug widely known today under the name of “Marijuana”. Cannabis was offered in temples on festivals to devotees. All drugs are not equally dangerous, but when taken without medical advice or purpose, they become potentially dangerous. Drugs can be dangerous when it poses risks to the physical, mental or social well being of user.

Defining drug McConnel (1983) has said, “A drug is a substance that can affect the structure and function of the body. It is a chemical which increases or decreases cellular activity somewhere in the body. It directly affects the brain and nervous system.” According to Dacey (1979) “Drug is any chemical that causes a physiological, emotional or behaviour change.” Drug as medicine are for saving human lives but drugs as narcotics destroy human lives. If a person takes unacceptable drugs and thinks that drug is necessary to maintain his/her normal sense of well being he/she became addicted to it. Julian (1983) defined drug addiction as “use of unacceptable drugs or excessive use of drugs so that physical, Psychological and social harm can result.”

This menace of drug addiction is spreading all over the world and has become one of the main social evil of the society. It has posed a threat to whole world including India. National Surveys reflected the incidents and prevalence of drug abuse in our society. Punjab, one of the wealthiest states of India only a decade ago, is now in the news for the wrong reasons. What has instead put Punjab in the national headlines is a drug epidemic that has swept across the state. Drug abuse is not new but matters have been getting worse in recent years as almost a whole generation of young people being lost to a menace that has literally shattered the physical and mental health of Punjab’s youth. The extent to which problem is

specific to the state can be seen from the fact that “roughly 60% of all illicit drugs confiscated in India are seized in Punjab.”

From heroin and opium to barbiturates, cough syrup and alcohol, there has been an alarming rise in the number of adolescents addicted to drugs which are freely available. According to a 2011 report on drug abuse and alcoholism in Punjab by the Ministry of youth affairs and sports, “40 % of Punjab youth in the age group of 15 to 25 years have fallen prey to drugs”. If we were to apply this statistics to the total youth population of Punjab, this would suggest a population of roughly 1.5 to 2million young Punjabis addicted to drugs.

One survey by the state’s department of Social security Development of Women and Children suggested that as many as 67% of rural households in Punjab had at least one drug addict in the family. Worse, there is a least one death due to drug over dose each week in the region. Such a sizable population of drug users could lead to, in the future, increasing level of crime, broken marriages, destroyed families and children who face psychological, emotional and development problem as a result of drug-addict parents, therefore this problem of drug addiction need to be tacked urgently on a war footing.

Present study was conducted on adolescents of Punjab who were in the habit of taking soft drugs like alcohol, tobacco, cocaine and Marijuana etc.

Significance of Study

An analysis of Punjab specific social and economic factors may help explain why and how so many of Punjab’s youth have gone down the path of drug addiction. The Present Study will be helpful to doctors, Jailors, drug counsellors, psychologists, Government, psychiatrist and also for parents and teachers to deal with the drug users. It will also be helpful to the young generation to become aware of the problems of drug users, causes behind it and its consequences on life.

Method

Survey Method was used for the present study.

Sample

Sample constitutes 80 drug addict adolescents taken from Drug De-addiction and Rehabilitation centres/hospitals/schools situated in TarnTaran district of Punjab.

Tools

1. To collect Demographic data Self-prepared questionnaire was used by the investigator.

2. Social Adjustment inventory by Dr. Roma Pal (1985)
3. Social-Economic status scale by Aggarwal (2005)

Statistical Techniques

Statistical Technique of percentage was used for the analysis of the data.

Findings

1. 48% drug addicts are from nuclear family, 28% from average family and 24% are from joint family.
2. 74% drug addicts have studied up to Secondary level, 26% have studied up to middle level.
3. Only 22% parents of drug addicts took keen interest in their study, 53% took normal interest and 25% parents were indifferent regarding their study.
4. Parents of 32% drug addicts were lenient in behaviour, 54% were moderate and 14% parents were strict towards addicts.
5. Grand Parents of 44% drug addicts, parents of 29% addicts and siblings of 31% drug addicts were in the habit of taking drugs occasionally.
6. Grand Parents of 20% drug addicts, Parents of 54% drug addicts and siblings of 26% drug addicts were in the habit of taking drugs frequently.
7. 19% drug addicts use drugs for the sake of enjoyment, 40% take it to satisfy their curiosity and due to peer pressure, 3% take it because of failure in exam or love, 12% take drugs due to frustration, 6% take these due to free supply.
8. Parents of 44% drug addicts ignore their drug taking, parents of 11% drug addicts beat them for taking drug and parents of 40% drug addicts scold them.
9. 52% drug addicts use alcohol only, 9% smoke tobacco, 4% take opium.
10. Drug addict adolescents show unsatisfactory adjustment in all areas of adjustment i.e. home, health, social, emotional adjustments and total adjustment.
11. Adolescents belonging to lower middle Socio-Economic Status are more inclined towards drug addiction.
12. In urban areas less drug addicted adolescents are found. In rural areas more drug addicted adolescents are found.

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