

A STUDY OF SOCIO- PSYCHOLOGICAL CORRELATES OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG DEGREE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Ms. Jyoti

Research Scholar

Department of Education

Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, the words drugs, drug – abuse, drug use and drug addiction are being heard a lot. Today almost every society is facing problem of drugs being abused by a large number of youths. The prevalence of drug abuse or drug habit is developing a particular type of culture in society which is known as ‘Drug Culture’. There is no denial that it is an individual behaviour of a person to take drugs but as it is having socio - cultural and generational implications, so its misuse or abuse is totally unacceptable in today’s society.

In contemporary society, the word drug has two connotations - - one positive explaining its crucial role in the medicine which properly used and managed can prove to do a cure for many diseases. On the other side, the word drug has negative reflection, reflecting not the natural and the synthetic make up of these chemicals but the self destructive and socially deleterious patterns of its misuse.

Addiction to drugs among young men and women is an acute social problem faced by most of the countries worldwide. Illegal trafficking of narcotics is on the increase in spite of vigilance on the part of governments. Heroin, cocaine, hashish, marijuana and other health damaging drugs are easily available today. This sordid commerce has resulted in young men and women easily obtaining and using drugs. They can be seen sprawled almost everywhere.

At first youngsters take drugs in small doses just for thrill gradually develop a compulsion to have it at intervals. Thus drug-taking becomes a habit from which there is no easy escape.

Drugs are harmful not just because of the addiction, but also because the addicts die young! The drug addicts become irresponsible in the behaviours. They talk of hallucinatory bliss and peace obtained from drugs; they may describe “the wonderful trip”.

But the fact remains that addiction causes lethal poisoning and brings physical problems which can lead to prolonged depression cycles, insanity, suicide and, in some cases, murder.

Many young people use drugs as an experiment or just for the “feel” of it, but they are not aware of the fact that they are destroying their physical and mental strength; they give up their precious lives that was gifted to them by God. Today you not only find drug addicts on roadside or footpaths but also in educational institutions. To be precise we have fallen down deep inside a “frightening pit” that there is no way out. Drug use is widespread worldwide even people who we say are our so called “protectors” are attracted to drugs i.e. our police and other law enforcing agencies.

The reason for the widespread use of narcotics by students and other young men and women is the indigenous culture enthusiastically hugged by them. The young men and women who are frustrated because of alienation from the family, a sense of loneliness and consequent disillusionment easily fall prey to this culture. Once they become part of this culture they find justification for their behavior in the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. Some find justification in back to nature cult.

Can anything be done to eradicate this evil of drug addiction? The first and foremost thing to do is for every nation is to see that the illicit traffic of narcotics is completely stopped. Every country should have laws or special police force for the abolishment of narcotics, this law should be made tougher and have strict punishments. No law can be effective without the firm public backing of police and prosecutors. This will require a massive

education program and dynamic leadership from the government. Parents, schools, colleges and universities too have a great responsibility. It's for them to be watchful and nip the evil in the bud. For example, if a student who has been doing so well in studies or in sports suddenly becomes a non achiever, see that he is given good counseling. Educational institutions should arrange special classes on the danger inherent in drug addiction. The media can play a pivotal role in this too.

Finally, it may be said we should tackle the problem of drug addiction on war-footing. We must fight the battle in all possible ways. Education is our great weapon, youngsters should be told about the dangers of taking drugs. If enough youngsters decide that the "in" thing to do is to leave drugs out of their lives, the epidemic will die of its own accord.

2.0 GENESIS OF THE PROBLEM IN INDIA

Before sixties, the problem of heroin did never exist in significant degree in India. Various evidences point out that only in recent past, the availability of the drugs has become quite easy. One major factor for it is the rapid industrial growth resulting in many socio-psychic impacts in the structure of productive force, so much so, that there is a constant tension in between the factors.

The Indian society have taken the biggest impact of the drugs due to general dissatisfaction in the youths who are disillusioned in many a ways and in their frustration and disillusionment they went out for the drugs. Besides it, India is itself a big producer and grower of poppy plant from which opium is derived. So, to understand the invent of the drugs it is necessary to understand the geographical and economical conditions involved with it in respect of India.

3.0 DRUG POLICY OF INDIA

At present, as the knowledge about the various types of drugs and their implications through out the world on the youths has come to light, every country has formulated a definite policy to combat drug menace. India is no exception to it. The government of India in 1976 appointed a committee to go into the problems of drug abuse; to find its prevalence and to check it. This committee was headed by Dr.C.Gopala the Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research. The committee submitted its report in 1977 and observed that drug abuse in India is very limited except alcohol and tobacco. However, the same report also reported some disturbing signs indicating deterioration in drug abuse scene.

The committee found that the drugs most frequently abused were alcohol, tobacco, opium, cannabis and psychotropic substances such as meprobamate, diazepam, methaqualone, Phenobarbital and dextrose amphetamine. Results of their enquiry showed that there was only a proportion of hard core addicts. Addiction was more common among men than women.

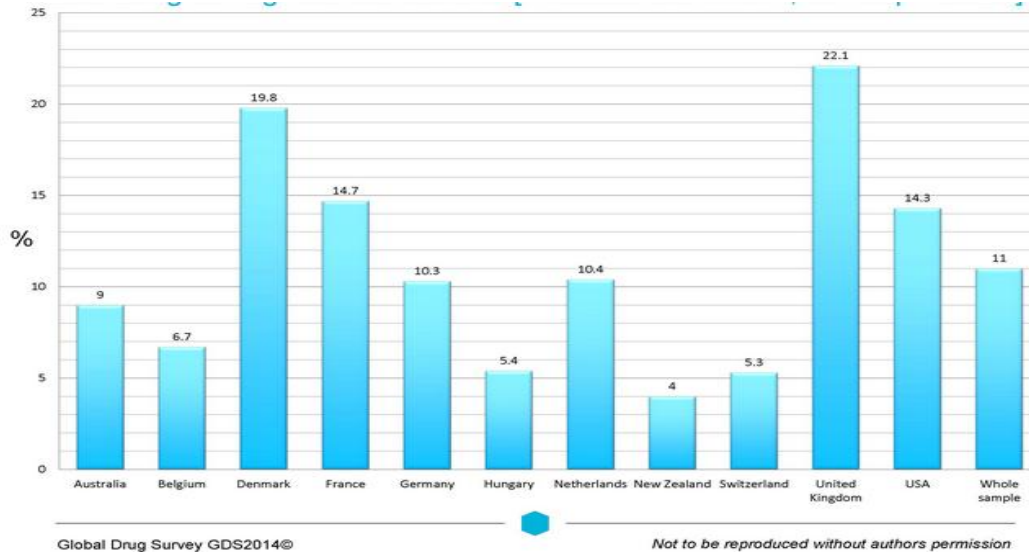
3.1 Their recommendations fell into three main categories:

- (1) The committee recommended among others, the establishment of a National Board of Drug Control, the enactment of a single law to deal with the problem in respect of all dependence producing substances (except alcohol which was the subject of a special proposal); more stringent penalties for violation of legal provisions particularly for export and import of drugs.
- (2) In the area of prevention, the committee was of opinion that awareness of the drug problem was necessary among all social groups. In this context, drug education programmes should be a part of health education at large.
- (3) A lasting and a long term solution of the problem, the committee thought, can only come "through a better upbringing of children and youth, strengthening of the family and the peer group, involving youth in challenging programmes and a social transformation which will reduce the need for using drugs."

In the World

The 2014 Global Drug Survey (GDS2014) conducted during November / December 2013 was the biggest survey of current drug use ever conducted. Published in 8 languages and promoted through media partners in 17 countries, it received almost 80,000 responses. The results from each participating country will be released exclusively through our media partners on April 14th 2014 along with some key global comparisons that our outlined here. Participating countries included USA, UK, Australia, Germany,

France, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark, New Zealand, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Mexico, Slovenia and Brazil.



4.0 SOCIO PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES ASSOCIATED WITH DRUG ABUSE

In the light of the studies referred so and consultation with experts in the fields of psychology, education, social work and medicine, it was felt that a majority of researchers had had taken only one or two aspects of drug abuse. To have a comprehensive view of drug abusers. The following five socio-psychological variables were identified --

4.1 Psychological Variables

- (1) Self concept
- (2) Neuroticism
- (3) Personality

4.2 Social Variables

- (1) Family Deprivation
- (2) Socio-economic Status

Besides these, sex of the drug abusers and non-abusers was also taken into consideration as an independent variable.

5.0 Importance of the Study

As discussed earlier the drug seen in India was quite dim up to 1977, according to the report of Dr.Gopalan. But after 14 years, in 1991 the drug menace had taken an alarming proportion. According to a rough estimate from the government run dead diction centres the drug addicts were 2,03,419 during 1991. This number is a shade of the total big population of drug addicts which either never reports or reports to the private dead diction centres where the data is not available. But it is clear that drug menace today in India is the biggest problem after the population explosion. It is this youth population whose average age ranges from 16 to 40 years, up to whom the hopes and the aspirations of the development of the country lie. In toto, they constitute the human capital and this capital is much stronger and valuable than physical capital.

However, due to the habit of drug abuse among these youths, the economy of the country is being wrecked because the economy is directly related to the healthy and vibrant society. The government of India every year spends hundreds of crores rupees on the education sector to make the country self-reliant. But if the countrymen on

whom this amount is being spent, turn on drug culture then it is for everyone to see the situation of the country as a whole and of the economy in particular.

So, to have a comprehensive view of the problem of drug abuse by degree college students, it is important to study the genesis of the problem of drug abuse and the factors associated with it. For this, one must look back at their personality make up, their demographic set up, their family ties and how they conceive of themselves and of others. To know all these things, it is necessary to understand the drug abuser's socio psychological traits. Keeping these factors in view, the following research problem was taken in hand.

6.0 References

1. Chein, I, The use of Narcotics As a Social And a Personal Problem.In D.M. Wilner and G.G. Kassebaum (Ed.) Narcotics. Mc Graw Hill, New York (1964) .
2. Dorus, W. , Seney, E.C., "Depression and Drug Abuse" --American Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 137(6), 1980 (Jan.), 699-704.
3. Frances, K. Kouchuba., "Substance Abuse -- Its Relationship to Self Concept and Happiness, Boston College, 1978.
4. Gupta, Pamela, and Nalwa, Veneeta., "Socio Psychological Factors in Heroin Addiction", Journal of Personality and Clinical Studies, Vol. 2 (1), 1986.
5. Krug, S.E., Henry/Thomas. J., Personality Motivation and Adolescent Drug Use Patterns", Journal of Counselling Psychology, Vol. 21 (5), 1974, 440-45
6. Oyefesso, A., "Personality Differences Among Five Categories of Student Cannabis Users", Indian Journal of Behaviour, Vol. 15(4), 1991 (Oct.).
7. Rosenberg, CM., "Young Drug Addicts : Addiction and its Consequences", Medical Journal of Australia, 1968.
8. Rehman, Anissur., "Drug Addiction : A Pilot Study in Dhaka City", Personality and Individual Differences Vol. 13(1), 1992 (Jan.).