



ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE AMONG YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

Background: Drug abuse continues to emerge as a strategy among youth to cope with the problems of unemployment, neglect, violence and sexual abuse. **Objective:** The present study was carried out to find out the prevalence and determinants of drug and alcohol abuse among youth of Ludhiana. **Methodology:** A cross sectional questionnaire study was done to assess alcohol and drug abuse among college students of Ludhiana. **Result:** The study revealed that 41.5% of total subjects consume alcohol and drugs whereas 4.9% have been users the past. Further, it has been observed that peer pressure and pleasure are the main factors for the youth getting indulge in drugs. **Conclusion:** Alcohol and Drug abuse constitute a major Public Health Problem in Ludhiana region. Steps need to be taken to control the problem of drug abuse with proper medication and guidance.

INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction is becoming more common among youth as a coping mechanism for issues such as unemployment, sexual abuse crime and neglect.^[1]

There is increase indulgence of the adverse habits among the youths. Tobacco and alcohol consumption are two of the most popular behaviours among teenagers.^[2] It is estimated that alcohol abuse results in 2.5 million deaths annually and that heroin, cocaine and other drugs are responsible for 0.1-0.2 million deaths annually.^[3]

As per National Crime records bureau, Amritsar was ranked on the top in no. of drug abuse cases in India.^[4] The prevalence of alcoholism in Kerala is 20%-30%. The state has the highest rate of alcohol consumption in the world. From 1980 to 2010, the consumption trend has been gradually increasing.^[5]

Alcohol and other drug use in the adolescent population carry high risk for many serious health related illnesses like cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer as well as social behavioural problems.^[2] There are several oral lesions and diseases linked to tobacco use.^[2] Smoking is thought to be responsible for half of all periodontal disease, 59 percent of oral cancer in women, and 91 percent of oral cancer in men.^[2]

Adolescence is a critical time for starting new things and experimenting with them. The problem of adolescent substance addiction is becoming a global health issue, and it is reaching an alarming level in India. So, the present study was carried out to find out the prevalence and determinants of drug and alcohol abuse among youth of Ludhiana.

METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional questionnaire study was done in college students of Ludhiana.

A pilot study was conducted on group of 10 students to validate the questionnaire to the study population. Based on the results of pilot study, modifications were done in final questionnaire. Final questionnaire consisted of 8 questions related to the topic of drug and alcohol abuse among youth.

The convenience sample of institutionalized male and female population visiting dental college during the month of May- Dec 2019 were included for the study. Questionnaire with incomplete answers were excluded from the study.

The data was entered in Microsoft excel 2016. A frequency descriptive was used. The data was analyzed using SPSS 22.

RESULT

Final sample consisted of 101 subjects out of which it was observed that 41.5% of the total subjects consume alcohol and drugs whereas 4.9% has been users in the past.[Table 1]

Furthermore, it is indicated that family plays an imperative role in preventing the indulgence in the same while lack of resources plays a minimum role. [Table 2]

The most prevalent age groups of initiating the habits, namely alcohol, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco

and drugs are 20-30 years followed by >30 years and <20 years respectively. Pleasure has been observed to be one of the main reasons to indulge in such activities while social media and concentration have been seen to have very little influence on such involvement. [Table 3]

Indulgence in such habits often leads to turning to criminal activities as well as plays a role on one's mental and physical health. About 36.17% subjects tried to quit their respective habits out of which 8 were successful and 7 were still trying hard. [Table 4 & 5]

Table 1: Distribution of study population based on drug consumption.

EVER CONSUMED DRUGS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	42	41.585%
NO	54	53.46%
PAST USERS	5	4.9%

Table 2 : List Of Factors For Not Gettinginvolved In Drugs.

Factors not to get involved in drugs	Number	Percentage
ROLE OF FAMILY	41	75.92%
ROLE OF FRIENDS	4	7.40%
LACK OF MONEY	6	11.11%
LACK OF RESOURCES	2	3.70%
ETHICAL REASON	11	20.37%
OTHERS	6	11.1%

Table 3: Factors Which Leads To Indulgence Of The Product.

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
DEPRESSION	4	8.51%
CURIOSITY	12	25.53%
PEER PRESSURE	10	21.27%
PLEASURE	21	44.68%
FAMILY CULTURE	10	21.97%
TO COPE WITH HOME PROBLEMS	5	10.63%
INFLUENCE OF TV, INTERNET	2	4.25%

Table 4: Showing Percentage Of People Who Tried To Quit The Habit.

YES	17	36.17%
NO	30	63.82%

Table 5: Showing Outcome Of Effort.

SUCCESSFUL	8	47.05%
UNSUCCESSFUL	2	11.76%
STILL TRYING	7	41.17%

DISCUSSION

Drug and alcohol abuse by adolescents is very common, and it can have serious consequences. Many of these children will die as a result of drugs and alcohol, and a large number of them will grow up to be problematic drug consumers. Identifying the prevalence and factors that influence the use of drug and alcohol may be a

useful tool for assisting adolescents in overcoming their substance abuse problems.

As a result, the current study was conducted to determine the prevalence and determinants of drug and alcohol dependence among Ludhiana's youth.

The reason for the youth to get easily involved in this is to cope up with various situations like boredom,

rebellion, lack of confidence, unemployment and to escape problems.

In the present study the results regarding ever use of substance and distribution among youth were analogous to the studies conducted by various other authors.

Some of the users reported trying to end the habit and expressed the desire to quit the habit. These views revealed that all users did not want to continue the habit and they held a positive attitude towards quitting. Therefore, motivation on the part of the family, friends and close ones could help the user to come out of this habit.

Easy availability of substances specially the licit ones has been the most common reason for continuation of drug, followed by relief from stress, acceptability among friends, pleasure and curiosity.^[5] These findings have also been seen in our studies that all of above mentioned factors are responsible for youth getting indulge in these habits.

According to our study, 44.68% subjects indulge in these habits for pleasure, 21.27% of the subjects due to peer pressure. However, a study in Assam revealed that 33% of the subjects gets indulge in drugs due to peer pressure and in Guwahati city 25% of the subjects indulge in drugs due to peer pressure.^[10]

The prevalence of drug abuse among Himachal youth is 29.3 percent,^[8] while our research found a high prevalence (41.585 percent) of substance abuse among Ludhiana youth.

According to our study cocaine and heroin are mostly consumed. This can be due to the fact that heroine is very easily available to youth especially due to Punjab's proximity to Afghanistan and Pakistan which serves as a major route in the lucrative drug smuggling trade.^[7]

Alcohol use, regular use and abuse were highly prevalent among Ludhiana youth. Most of the sample reported alcohol use at some point in their lifetime ranging from 80.8% for adolescents aged 20-30 years and 90.1% for adolescents aged <20years whereas a low prevalence (24.4%) was observed among youth of Himachal state.^[8]

By comparison, most adolescents reported once in a month alcohol use (48.9%) and nearly (25.5%) reported regular use. Since alcohol use is socially acceptable and even stimulated in most parts of India, the exposure of adolescents to it has been increasing, thus, there are bigger chances of involvement in risky situations.

The present study has certain limitations such as cross-sectional in nature, convenience and small sample size. So, there is need for longitudinal study with large sample size so that effective interventions can be designed to

overcome problem of alcohol and drug abuse among youth.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that 41.5% of study subjects consume alcohol and drugs. It has been observed that peer pressure and pleasure are the main factors for the youth getting indulge in drugs that resulted in significant morbidity and mortality among adolescents. Drug identification strategies, followed by effective interventions, help prevent further illicit drug use and delinquency.

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