

TO ASSESS THE AWARENESS ABOUT DRUG ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENT BOYS.

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ABSTRACT

Study was conducted in a government senior secondary school on a sample of 100 boys from class 9th to class 12th. Twenty-five students from each class were taken for study, who were in the age group of 13- 17 years. Demographic variables taken into consideration were age, family income, and education of parents, occupation of parents, source of information and area of residence (urban or rural).

Findings of the study reveal that majority of the students (48%) had average awareness regarding drug abuse, 24% had good awareness about the drugs and 26% of them had little awareness.

Significant association of level of awareness regarding drug abuse was found in relation to age, class of the boys, and education of father and area of residence (rural or urban). The level of awareness regarding drug abuse among adolescent boys in relation to family income, mother's education, occupation of parents was found to be insignificant.

Key Words: drug abuse, adolescent boys, drug abuse awareness.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and psychological human development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to adulthood. It offers opportunities for growth in competence, autonomy, self-esteem and intimacy. However, it also carries great risks. The risk factors for drug abuse by adolescents may be biological predisposition to drug abuse, personality traits and factors like lack of social bonding, low socio-economic status, poor family relationship and parental guidance and care, a history of being abused or neglected, emotional or psychiatric problems, stress, inadequate coping skills and social support, association with drug-using peers, rejection by peers due to poor communication skills, poor academic performance, particularly, failure in school, history of anti-social behaviour and delinquency. As the path to drug abuse is too complex, simple solutions to this problem are unlikely to be effective. (Sharma & Tyagi, 2019). There are many easily available narcotic substances, which the youth use to abuse their life. There is a need to create awareness among our youths about the side effects and consequences of substance abuse. On the other hand, there is also requirement to open counselling centres and run government and non-government programmes to end the menace of substance abuse

The abuse of alcohol and illegal prescription of narcotic drugs continues to be a major health problem internationally. According to a report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), approximately 5 per cent of the world's population used an illicit drug in 2010 and 27 million people, or 0.6 per cent of the world's adult population can be classified as problem drug users. It is estimated that alcohol abuse results in 2.5 million deaths every year and that heroin, cocaine and other such drugs are responsible for 0.1 to 0.2 million deaths per year. In addition to causing death, substance abuse is also responsible for significant morbidity and the treatment of drug addiction puts a tremendous burden on society. UNODC estimates that worldwide costs related to treating drug abuse ranges between \$200-\$250 billion, or 0.3-0.4 per cent of global GDP. It further estimated that only 20 per cent of drug users received treatment for their dependence in 2010

Prevention of substance abuse among adolescents requires awareness of health hazards that place youth at risk and addressing risk factors that are modifiable. Many studies have attempted to identify risk factors associated with adolescent drug and alcohol usage. In its 2010 report titled "Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents", NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse) lists several factors that can enhance or mitigate risk of adolescents falling prey to drug abuse or continuing with it. These factors include early and continued exposure to drugs, socio-economic status, quality of parenting, peer group influence and biological/inherent predisposition towards drug addiction. Awareness about these risk factors can enable families, health professionals, schools and other community workers to identify and eliminate or reduce the factors that put youth at risk of drug abuse through suitable prevention and treatment programmes. (Chakravarthy, Shah, & Lotfipour, 2013)

A young person who is taught to perceive drug abuse as dangerous and undesirable may be less likely to succumb to addiction. Those who are raised in a culture of acceptance and tolerance for substance abuse may be more likely to experiment with drugs.

According to Taylor (2018) a significant amount of illicit drug abuse starts in the early teens. Statistics show considerable first-time drug use among teens between the ages of 16 and 17 years. The age group with the second-highest rate of first-time drug use is the 18-20 demographic group. More than 10 percent of drug addictions begin before the age of 15

DISCUSSION

Majority of the boys i.e., 48% were found to be having average awareness about drug abuse. A study by Snehlata, Bhagyalakshmi & Hemlata (2017) also reveal similar results. The research which was conducted on a sample of 60 high school boys found that 40% of them had average knowledge about drug abuse and 25% were found to be having insufficient knowledge, while knowledge of 35% was above average. In present study 26% had above average awareness and 24% were found to be having inadequate awareness. The study concluded that the students had average knowledge and their attitude towards drug addiction was neutral. It is believed that less than 30 per cent of primary care providers perform screening for substance abuse and as many as 69 per cent do not offer any type of counselling. According to the findings of the study by Treveki & Devi (2016) students had average knowledge about drug abuse and neutral attitude. The study concluded that the students had average knowledge and their attitude towards drug addiction was neutral. It is believed that less than 30 per cent of primary care providers perform screening for substance abuse and as many as 69 per cent do not offer any type of counselling. The study concluded that the students had average knowledge and their attitude towards drug addiction was neutral. It is believed that less than 30 per cent of primary care providers perform screening for substance abuse and as many as 69 per cent do not offer any type of counselling. A study was conducted to evaluate the knowledge and attitude

of high school students towards addicting drugs. A cross sectional study was carried out in Isfahan province for collecting the data from 6998 students using an author- devised questionnaire. The result revealed that the knowledge level of high school students about addictive drugs is at a medium level (Nahid Germanian et al, 2012). The results of the present study had a slight increase in the level of knowledge regarding drug addiction.

Knowledge of substances and related consequences of use varied between groups but was compatible with participants' age and school years (Alhayas et al. 2015). It is similar to the findings of the present study which reveals significant association of level of awareness regarding drug abuse in relation to age and class of the boys. The study concluded that the students had average knowledge and their attitude towards drug addiction was neutral. It is believed that less than 30 per cent of primary care providers perform screening for substance abuse and as many as 69 per cent do not offer any type of counselling study was conducted to evaluate the knowledge and attitude of high school students towards addicting drugs. A cross sectional study was carried out in Isfahan province for collecting the data from 6998 students using an author- devised

questionnaire. The result revealed that the knowledge level of high school students about addictive drugs is at a medium level (Nahid Germanian et al, 2012). The results of the present study had a slight the level of awareness regarding drug abuse among adolescent boys in relation to family income, mother's education, occupation of parents was found to be insignificant in the present study, which is supported by the findings of a study carried out by Vijyan in 2018 who collected the data by administering the structured knowledge questionnaire ($r=0.82$) with 30 items. Majority (50%) of the adolescents had average knowledge and least 27 (7.5%) had poor knowledge. The mean knowledge score was 24.87 ± 6.435 , with a mean percentage of (50.75%) revealing that the overall knowledge of the adolescents regarding effects of substance abuse was good. The study found out that there was no significant association between demographic characteristics and knowledge of the samples at the significance level of zero.

Based on the findings; the following conclusions were drawn: Youth are in a very important developmental stage of their lives. They face physiological changes as well as pressures from their families and social environment. They are also vulnerable to environmental pressures from their peers, role model, and the media. If they were not prepared for these developmental changes and challenges of adolescence, they may become frustrated, confused and helpless in confronting the situation. In trying to cope with such challenges, youth may end up indulging in a variety of substances that endanger their own lives as well as the lives of other people

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