

Knowledge and Perception of Drugs Use and Abuse among Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: Substance abuse is a challenging problem among adolescent age group in India. Even it is completely prohibited but this delinquent behaviour stems in our school.

Aim and objective: aim of study is to know level of knowledge and perception of drug abuse among high school children.

Material and Method: It is a cross sectional study conducted in high school of Patna, Bihar. Data was collected using a questionnaire and self-structured interview, which involve 280 high school students to access the knowledge and perception of drug abuse among students. Data were analysed using descriptive inferential statistics.

Results: Prevalence of drug abuse in surveyed students was 13.5% in which male is predominant. 34% of student believed that experimental curiosity is the most common cause of substance abuse. 41.8% of student heard about it from internet and most of them aware of ill effect of drug abuse.

Conclusion: The study revealed that peer pressure and easy availability of drug in community are chief contributory factors leads to substance abuse and experimental curiosity is most common cause. Prevention programme should be made to eradicate this ill behaviour from our community.

Keywords: Drugs abuse, Substance abuse, Secondary School Students

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period marked by substantial changes in physical

maturation, cognitive abilities and social interaction. It is a critical and transformative phase of life in which substance use now become a major public health problem. This public concern is studied extensively throughout the world ⁽¹⁾. Back in history drug was used to controlling and curing disease and relieving pain. Definition of drug according to WHO in (1967) is "Any substances which is taken by living organism and may modify the function of living organism" ⁽²⁾. Drug use is defined as consumption of illicit substances at least one in a lifetime ⁽³⁾. Substance abuse is overindulgence and dependence on addictive substances such as tobacco chewing, underage alcohol drinking or illicit and prescription drug ⁽⁴⁾. Drug use is also defined as self-admiration of substances to produce psychoactive affect despite knowledge of its potential adverse effect while drug misuse implies a drug that has proper medical use but being employed for incorrect purpose ⁽⁵⁾.

According to United Nation Office of drug and crime (2007) substance abuse is among adolescence is increasing globally which causes immense hardships to their life regarding to economic loss, mortality and morbidity ⁽⁶⁾. In 2005 Global school based health survey conducted by WHO 20.9% of 13-15 years old surveyed school children drank alcohol one or more time and 7.5% of them used drugs in their lifetime at least once ⁽³⁾. Several studies from other

countries reported that youth took drugs very early in their life i.e. from 11-14 years (7,8,9). Some researchers in Asia and UK also reported increased use of drug among adolescent making it a major public concern (10,11).

Peer pressure is a very important factors associated with drug abuse. Experimental curiosity, family influence, lack of parental supervision and personality problems are some other factors leads to drug abuse (12,13). Effective family socialization, communication with parents and some religious beliefs are some factors that have protective influence against drug abuse (6,14,15). Adolescent who are indulge in substance abuse may involve in a multitude of problems such as academics, health and peer relation (16). They can also suffer from accidental injury and overdose problem (12,13).

A limited number of studies are there in terms of knowledge and attitude towards drug misuse. So, my study aims at assessing the knowledge and perception about drug abuse and misuse in middle and high school children so it may provide a baseline data regarding level of knowledge and perception of drug abuse in our community.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

To assess the perception regarding drug abuse among secondary school student we adopt a cross sectional study. Self-administrated semi-structured questionnaire was used to access the perception of drug misuse among school students. The students were identified by their identity cards and they were selected randomly. 280 students were interviewed by a self-reporting questionnaire. The Questionnaire was divided in three sections. Section A contains demography section B contains Knowledge and practices regarding drug abuse and section C contains their attitude towards drug abuse. The participants were briefly given an overview of the questionnaire and asked to tick the answer according to their knowledge. The question was based on level

of knowledge about drugs abuse among the students and perception towards drug abuse. The study was carried out in various secondary schools of Patna, Bihar. The largest population of this project are school students from 12 to 18 years of age. The study subjects mainly comprised of student from grade 10 to 12.

Data, Collection, or Survey:

The study was conducted over a 60days from July 2019 to Aug 2019. 12 schools were visited by us and select the subjects to participate in the study. All respondents were given questionnaire to fill it. Questions were distributed to students are 60 min to them to fill questionnaire.

Data collection and analysis:

The filled questionnaire was checked to ensure completeness of the information. The Data were entered in excel 2010 and Data were analysed by using descriptive inferential statistics (percentage, mean etc). These statistics were used to summaries the data. Accesses to the participating schools were negotiated with school authorities. Written informed consent was taken from all the participants. The confidentiality of participant was assured. In addition, name and other identity of the participants were not required to ensure the confidentiality.

RESULTS

Out of 280 selected students from secondary school of Patna, 86.1 % were males and 43.9 % were females. There were 34.2 % students of age group 12-15 years and 65.8 % students of age group 16-18 years. Project was carried out in total 280 students and the data were analysed in three different themes.

1. Demographic profile
2. Factors affecting the substance abuse in these students.
3. Perception awareness of adolescents towards drug abuse and harm associated with it.

Demographic information of students includes 65.8% of student were in

age group of 16 –18-year while 34.2% of students were in age group of 12-15 year. Regarding to sex 43.9% of precipitants were female. Majority of students taking part in our study were of class eleventh and twelfth. Prevalence of drug abuse in two genders in 280 surveyed students were 13.5% in which 65.7% was male and 34.3% were female

Factors affecting the substance abuse in these students:

Fig.1 shows age of debut of substance abuse in participants. Maximum participants were used drug at age of 15-16 years.

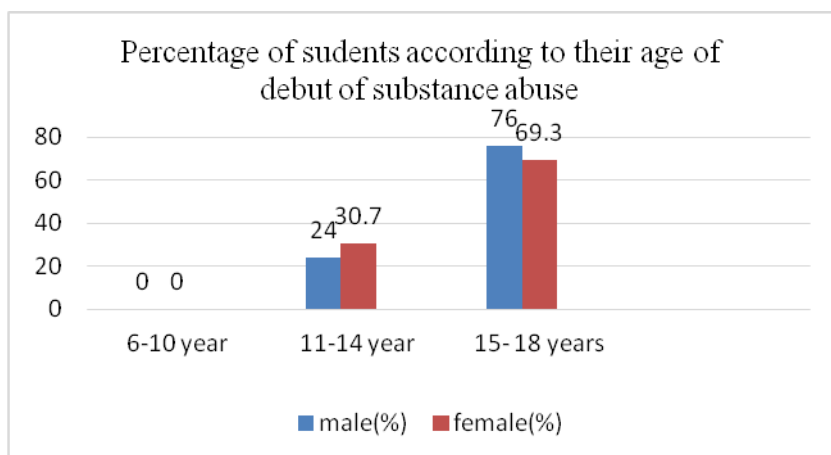


Table1: shows distribution of possible factors contributing to drug abuse:

Characteristics	Response	Number(n=38)	Percentage
Mothers education	Illiterate	12	31.5
	literate	26	68.5
Relation with parents	Good	24	63.1
	Not good	14	36.9
Relation between parents	Good	26	68.4
	Not good	12	31.6
Substance user in family	Present	03	7.8
	Not Present	35	92.2
Friends use drug	Yes	16	42.1
	No	22	57.9
Drug easily available in community	Yes	24	63.1
	No	14	36.9

Table 1 shows possible factors leading to drug abuse. In 26(68.5%) children mother was illiterate. In 57% of student friend used drug who introduce them to drugs. In 63% of children drugs were easily available in community.

Table2: Distribution of knowledge of participant about probable cause of substance abuse.

Causes	Number	Percentage
Curiosity	84	30
Peer Pressure	67	23.9
For feeling happiness and joy	41	14.6
Family dispute	32	11.4
Psychological disease	27	9.6
Improvement of memory	13	4.6
To win sports coemption	12	4.2
For giving public lecture	04	1.4

Table 2 indicates possible causes of substance abuse according to student’s knowledge.84 (34%) surveyed young adults believed curiosity is the main culprit while 67(23.9%) of young adult in survey says it is peer pressure that is main cause. Only 4(1.4%) of participants believe that substance abuse can be done for giving public lecture.

c. Perception awareness of adolescents towards drug abuse and harm associated with it

Table 3 shows (n=117, 41.8%) of students heard about drug addiction from internet followed by mass media (25.7%), friends (18.6), and school (13.9%). Majority

(94.2%) of them were of belief that drug abuse is bad for health and all of them said that it is a bad habit and not acceptable in society.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to knowledge regarding drug abuse

Characteristics	Response	Number	Percentage
Where did you heard about drug addiction	Friends	52	18.6
	Media	72	25.7
	Internet	117	41.8
	School	39	13.9
Is drug addiction bad for health	Correct	264	94.2
	Incorrect	16	5.8
Is drug addiction is perceived as bad habit in your community	Correct	274	97.8
	Incorrect	06	2.2
What is drug addiction in your opinion (bad)	Correct	280	100
	Incorrect	0	0

Table 4: Distribution of participants according to forms, symptoms and effect of drug abuse.

Characteristics	Response	Number	Percentage
Age group venerable for substance abuse (15-18 years)	Correct	174	62.1
	Incorrect	106	37.9
Cause of substance abuse (stress, family problem, peer pressure, joy seeking)	Correct	194	69.2
	Incorrect	86	30.8
What forms are available (sniff, smoke, injection, tablet, drinking)	Correct	184	65.7
	Incorrect	96	34.3
Symptoms of drug addicting people (toxication)	Correct	128	45.7
	Incorrect	152	54.3
What is effect of drug in his or her life (Deterioration of physical and mental health, lack of interest in work)	Correct	206	73.5
	Incorrect	74	26.5
Effect of drug on family (Financial burden, quarrels, fights)	Correct	193	68.9
	Incorrect	87	31.1

Table 4 shows that (62.1% n= 174) students said that most vulnerable age group for substance abuse is 15 – 18 years. They also said that important causes for drug addiction are stress, family problem and peer pressure. (n=128, 45.7%) of them knows symptom of intoxication and (n=206, 73.5%) students were aware of drug abuse causes deterioration of their physical and mental health

DISCUSSION

In my study out of 280 students 38 are substance abuser, out of which 15.9% were male and 10.59% were female. With respect of substance misuse researcher usually focus on certain social group such as adolescent and male gender (17-22). Usually these are the groups which encounter very challenging and demanding lifestyle, expectation from parents and biological impulses. These factors trigger some experimentation which leads to drug abuse (23-24). My study is similar to study conducted in Botswana in which they found more male drug user than female (25-26). A

study done in Nigeria concluded non statistically significant gender difference among secondary school children (26). In this study age of debut of substance use is 15-18 years. This finding is similar to finding of studies in south America and Nigeria (19,28).

Possible factors which contribute to drug abuse among participants include mother education, relation with or between parents and opportunity risk. In my study 63.1% of students believed that easy availability of drug in community are most common factor for drug abuse. A study done by Riva et al shows likelihood of drug abuse increases to 3.5 times when it is easily available (29). A study done in Botswana concluded that adult population found easy availability of alcohol including home brewed alcohol and its use in community leads to increased incidence of alcohol abuse (25,26,30,31).

63.1% of secondary school students said that relation with parents may be contributing factor for substance use. Several studies positively correlate adolescent drinking with decrease incidence

of drug abuse ⁽³²⁻³⁴⁾. Some studies also show parents play an important role in prevention of drug abuse act as protective factors. They increase parent children discussion and disclosure of drug abuse ⁽³⁵⁻³⁷⁾.

Possible causes of drug abuse in my study may be teenager curiosity, joy seeking, psychological disorder, peer pressure or little knowledge about complication of drug addiction. These reasons are cited by other studies also ⁽³⁸⁾. So cause of substance abuse is complex array of factors, such as peer pressure, family bonding, school environment and community. In my study 23.9% of students believed that peer pressure is very important cause of substance abuse. This finding is in association with finding of many researchers ⁽³⁹⁻⁴⁰⁾. These researchers also find that drug abuser seek the approval of friend and consider it as a symbol of group unity ⁽⁴¹⁻⁴²⁾. So, this finding can be implemented in prevention programme against substance abuse.

In my study 73.5% of students were aware of effect of drug abuse in life and 68.9% of students know about effect of drug on family i.e., financial burden, quarrels, fights. These finding is similar with the study conducted by Billali SF participants have good knowledge about drug abuse and 35% have inadequate knowledge ⁽²⁹⁾. The study conducted in schools of west Bengal showed that students were very much acquainted with term drug abuse and its ill effect (84.6% in urban and 61.5% in rural area) ⁽⁴³⁾. Another study in Jordan adolescent group reported that students have adequate knowledge about harmful effect of drug on body and society and they know that frequent use of even cigarette is extremely harmful to body. They also take substance abuse as big problem. ⁽⁴⁴⁾

In my study 41.8% of students said that source of information was from internet and 25.7% heard about this problem from media. A study in west Bengal school showed that most students heard about substance abuse from media. ⁽⁴³⁾

So, study shows that knowledge regarding drug abuse is significantly associated with education level, peer pressure, experimental curiosity and parental relation with child.

CONCLUSION

This study increases our knowledge about perception of drug abuse in our community. As easy availability of drug in our community is an important contributory factor for substance abuse. So, some intervention should be done for reducing availability of drug. This study provides a baseline data about prevalence of drug abuse in our community. If the drug abuse among our youth is increasing, it not only affects the physical and mental health of individual involved but it can impede the nation's economic, educational and social growth. So, policy makers, health workers, teachers, parents and social workers must collaborate to build awareness programme against drug abuse so that problem could not get worse in future.

Ethical Permission:

This study was approved by Institutional Review Board Research Ethics Committee of IGIMS, Patna letter no 947/IEC/2019/IGIMS. It has been performed in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest

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Limitation: - The study involves only 280 students from only twelve schools of Patna district. So, generalization of result is not possible.

Abbreviation

WHO: world health organization

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