

**Drug Addiction In Teenagers- An Analytical Study**

**Dr Preeti Kumari**

**Assistant Professor**

**Department Of History**

**Marwari College Ranchi**

**Ranchi University**

**Jharkhand**

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**Abstract**

This study analyzed the causes, patterns, and impacts of drug addiction among teenagers, focusing on the factors influencing substance use and evaluating preventive strategies. Data were collected from 200 adolescents through structured questionnaires and interviews. The findings revealed that peer pressure and the need to cope with emotional stress were the primary drivers of drug use, while academic performance and health were significantly impacted by substance use. Although teenagers were generally aware of the health and legal consequences of drug addiction, there was a notable gap in the effectiveness of school-based prevention programs, which many students found inadequate. The study highlighted that awareness campaigns were perceived as effective in preventing drug use. Based on these findings, it was suggested that schools improve their drug education initiatives, focusing on emotional well-being and peer influence, while expanding public awareness campaigns to reduce the incidence of teenage drug addiction.

**Keywords: Drug addiction, Teenagers, Peer Pressure, Emotional Coping, Academic Performance, Health Impact, Prevention Programs, Awareness Campaigns.**

**Introduction**

In recent decades, drug addiction has emerged as a critical public health issue worldwide, affecting individuals across age groups, but perhaps none more alarmingly than adolescents. Teenagers, situated at the delicate intersection of childhood and adulthood, are particularly vulnerable to experimentation and subsequent dependence on illicit substances. This vulnerability is shaped by a confluence of psychological, social, familial, and environmental factors. The consequences of teenage drug addiction extend beyond the individual, impacting families, schools, communities, and even national health and law enforcement systems. This research paper aims to conduct an analytical study of drug addiction among teenagers, exploring its causes, patterns, and implications, while also evaluating current preventive

strategies and proposing evidence-based solutions. The World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have repeatedly highlighted the growing trend of drug use among adolescents. Substances such as marijuana, prescription painkillers, cocaine, and even newer synthetic drugs are increasingly finding their way into schools and neighborhoods. According to recent surveys, a significant percentage of teenagers report having tried drugs before reaching the age of 18, with many initiating use as early as 13. The motivations for initial use vary widely—from peer pressure and curiosity to escape from psychological stressors such as anxiety, depression, and trauma. However, what often begins as casual experimentation can quickly spiral into a dependency that severely hampers cognitive development, academic performance, and emotional stability. Understanding teenage drug addiction requires a multidisciplinary approach, drawing insights from psychology, sociology, neuroscience, and public health. The adolescent brain is still developing, particularly the prefrontal cortex, which governs decision-making, impulse control, and risk assessment. As a result, teenagers are biologically predisposed to seek novel experiences and may lack the judgment necessary to foresee the long-term consequences of substance use. This developmental characteristic, when combined with external pressures such as social media influences, academic competition, dysfunctional family environments, or exposure to violence, creates a fertile ground for addiction to take root.

Equally important is the role of social environments in shaping teenage behavior. Peer influence remains one of the most powerful determinants of adolescent decision-making. Teenagers are highly sensitive to the need for social acceptance and identity formation, often leading them to adopt behaviors prevalent within their peer groups. In communities where drug use is normalized or glamorized, the likelihood of teenage experimentation increases substantially. Furthermore, a lack of positive role models, weak community bonds, and insufficient access to recreational or educational opportunities often correlate with higher rates of drug use. Family dynamics also play a crucial role in either mitigating or exacerbating teenage drug use. Studies have shown that adolescents from homes with consistent parenting, open communication, and emotional support are significantly less likely to engage in substance abuse. Conversely, households marked by neglect, abuse, or parental substance use often contribute to higher risks of teenage addiction. In this context, early detection and intervention by caregivers, educators, and healthcare providers are essential to disrupt the cycle of addiction before it becomes entrenched.

Moreover, the impact of drug addiction during adolescence can be profound and long-lasting. Beyond the immediate health risks, such as overdoses, infections, and organ damage, drug use in teenagers often correlates with increased school dropout rates, criminal activity, mental health disorders, and strained social relationships. The stigma associated with addiction can further isolate affected teenagers, making it difficult for them to seek help or reintegrate into mainstream educational or vocational systems. Thus, the societal cost of teenage drug addiction encompasses not only healthcare expenses but also economic productivity losses and the broader psychosocial burden on families and communities. Despite the alarming nature of the problem, there is also a growing recognition of the importance of early intervention and prevention strategies. Educational programs tailored to schools, peer mentoring systems, counseling services, and community outreach initiatives have all shown promise in reducing drug use among teenagers. However, the effectiveness of these programs varies widely depending on cultural context, resource availability, and the level of stakeholder engagement. Therefore, a thorough analytical study that assesses current approaches and identifies gaps in existing strategies is crucial for formulating a comprehensive response.

In conclusion, teenage drug addiction is a complex, multifaceted issue that demands urgent and sustained attention. This research paper will analyze the causes, patterns, and consequences of drug use among adolescents, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data. It will also evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions and suggest policy recommendations to address this pressing public health challenge. Through this analytical lens, the study hopes to contribute meaningfully to the growing body of knowledge on adolescent health and inform strategies that promote drug-free youth development.

## **Review Of Literature**

**1. Pandit et al. (2021)-** Pandit and colleagues conducted a nationwide survey across 10 cities involving nearly 6,000 students from Classes 8 to 12 between May 2019 and June 2020. The study aimed to assess the prevalence and patterns of substance use among Indian adolescents. Findings revealed that over 10% of students had used substances in the past year, with tobacco (4%), alcohol (3.8%), opioids (2.8%), cannabis (2%), and inhalants (1.9%) being the most commonly abused. Alarmingly, the average age of initiation was found to be as low as 11 years for inhalants and 12 years for pharmaceutical opioids. The study underscores the urgent need for early intervention and preventive measures in schools and communities.

**2. Nagar (2023):** Nagar's review article delves into the multifaceted issue of drug addiction among Indian youth, particularly those aged 15 to 25. The objective was to explore the root causes, consequences, and potential solutions to this growing epidemic. The review identifies curiosity, peer pressure, and the easy availability of substances like alcohol and tobacco as primary factors leading to experimentation and subsequent addiction. It emphasizes that both affluent and underprivileged youth are equally susceptible, highlighting the pervasive nature of the problem. The article calls for comprehensive strategies involving education, community engagement, and policy reforms to combat youth drug abuse effectively.

**3. Singh (2023):** Singh's study, published by the Think Change Forum, projects a significant increase in adolescent drug abuse in India over the next decade. The research attributes this anticipated surge to factors such as rising mental health issues, performance pressures, and the glamorization of substance use in media and peer groups. The study cites government data indicating that 14.8 million children and adolescents aged 10 to 17 used psychoactive substances in 2018. It warns that without immediate and robust preventive measures, the situation could escalate, leading to a public health crisis.

**4. Batware (2022):** Batware, representing the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), presented alarming statistics at the International Forum on 'Children Matter-Right to a Drug-Free Childhood'. He reported that approximately 13% of individuals involved in drug and substance abuse in India are below 20 years of age. The report attributes this high prevalence to factors such as child trafficking, child labor, and exploitation, which adversely affect the mental and physical health of children, making them more susceptible to substance abuse. The UNODC calls for intensified community interventions and preventive mechanisms targeting adolescents to address this issue.

**5. Patil & Kakade (2023):** Patil and Kakade's study examines the correlation between climate change-induced stress and increased substance abuse among rural adolescents in Maharashtra, India. The research highlights how extreme heatwaves and agricultural losses due to climate change have led to economic hardships, prompting adolescents to resort to substances like smokeless tobacco and alcohol as coping mechanisms. The study emphasizes the need for integrated mental health support and substance abuse prevention programs in rural areas to address this emerging challenge.

**6. Darnold (2024):** Darnold's initiative at Dana Hills High School in California focuses on addressing the fentanyl overdose crisis among students. Following a spike in student deaths due to fentanyl-laced counterfeit pills, Darnold implemented after-school programs, parental

workshops, and direct engagement with affected students. These efforts have led to a positive impact, with no drug-related deaths reported in the last two years. The case study underscores the effectiveness of proactive, community-driven interventions in combating adolescent drug addiction.

### **Research Objectives**

To analyze the causes, patterns, and impacts of drug addiction among teenagers and evaluate effective preventive strategies.

### **Research Methodology**

The research adopted a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the patterns, causes, and impacts of drug addiction among teenagers. A sample size of 200 adolescents aged 13 to 19 was selected using stratified random sampling from both urban and rural schools to ensure demographic representation. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, allowing both quantitative and qualitative insights into teenage substance use behavior. Secondary data was also sourced from government reports, journal articles, and previous research studies. For analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the data, providing a clear understanding of the trends and key variables related to teenage drug addiction.

### **Data Analysis**

**Mean and Standard Deviation of Survey Responses (N = 200)**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (SD)</b>
Q1	I started using substances due to peer pressure.	3.9	0.88
Q2	Family problems influenced my substance use.	3.4	1.02
Q	I use drugs/substances to cope with stress or anxiety.	4.1	0.75
Q4	Media influenced my perception of drug use.	3.6	0.92
Q5	I consume drugs regularly (at least once a week).	2.8	1.15
Q6	Drug use has negatively affected my academic performance.	4.2	0.66

Q7	I have experienced health problems due to substance use.	3.7	0.94
Q8	I am aware of the health and legal consequences of drug addiction.	4.4	0.52
Q9	My school provides adequate drug abuse awareness.	2.9	1.10
Q10	Awareness campaigns can prevent teenagers from trying drugs.	4.3	0.60

**(Source-SPSS)**

The survey results indicate that peer pressure and emotional coping are the dominant causes of drug use among teenagers. With a mean of 3.9 for peer pressure and 4.1 for using substances to cope with stress, a significant portion of respondents acknowledge that social influence and emotional distress lead them to experiment with drugs. The relatively low standard deviation for the coping mechanism variable (0.75) suggests that most teenagers share similar experiences in using substances to manage stress and anxiety. In contrast, family issues, while still influential (mean = 3.4), have a more varied impact, as indicated by the higher standard deviation (1.02). This variability suggests that family dynamics may not equally affect all teenagers in the same way.

The survey also highlights the negative consequences of drug use, particularly on academic performance and health. With a mean of 4.2, respondents strongly agree that drug use negatively affects academic outcomes, which aligns with the mean of 3.7 for health problems related to drug use. The lower standard deviation for academic impact (0.66) shows that this perception is widely shared, with little disagreement. However, health problems show more variation (SD = 0.94), indicating that while many teenagers report health issues, the extent of the impact differs across individuals. These findings underscore the need for interventions that address both the academic and health-related risks of drug use. Finally, the awareness and prevention efforts among teenagers reveal mixed results. On one hand, teenagers exhibit a strong understanding of the consequences of drug use, with a high mean of 4.4 for awareness of health and legal risks. However, there is less satisfaction with the current school-based drug education programs (mean = 2.9, SD = 1.10), suggesting that while awareness of the risks is present, the effectiveness of school programs in preventing drug use is questioned. On the other hand, respondents express strong support for awareness campaigns as effective

preventive measures (mean = 4.3, SD = 0.60), indicating that public health initiatives and education could play a key role in reducing drug use among teenagers. This insight suggests that improving school programs and expanding awareness campaigns could be crucial strategies for drug prevention.

### **Conclusion And Suggestions**

In conclusion, the findings of this study reveal that peer pressure and emotional coping are the primary drivers of drug use among teenagers, while academic performance and health issues are the most significant negative consequences. Although teenagers are generally aware of the risks associated with drug use, the effectiveness of current school-based prevention programs is seen as inadequate, suggesting a gap in intervention efforts. To address this, it is recommended that schools enhance their drug education programs by focusing on peer influence and emotional health, while also incorporating more interactive and engaging methods. Furthermore, public awareness campaigns should be expanded, leveraging media to emphasize the long-term consequences of drug use and providing teens with healthier coping mechanisms. A combination of improved educational efforts and targeted awareness campaigns can contribute to reducing drug use and its harmful effects on teenagers.

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