

**Drug Addiction In India: Consequences And Effective Measures****Dr. Vikram Singh****Assistant Professor (Sociology)****PSR Govt. College****Bajnath (H.P.)****Email: [phd vikram@gmail.com](mailto:phd vikram@gmail.com)****(Received:16April2024/Revised:8May2024/Accepted:10May12024/Published:14May2024)****Abstract**

Drug abuse is a major social issue. Today there is no part of the world which is free from drug abuse. India is also caught in this vicious problem of drug abuse. The impact of drug is realized in workplace, family and the society. Drug addiction causes a huge cost on human resources as well as it promotes illegal production and distribution of drugs. Drug abuse has a direct impact on social and economic aspect of the nation. It results in violence at home and gang wars in cities, increase crimes and even stresses the public health system and we find young mass addicted to drugs. It leads to unsafe life. Drug addiction not only breaks the family harmony but also puts high economic burden on the society. The use, production and marketing of drugs, emergence of a class of drug consumer is a huge challenge for mankind. It ultimately leads to unemployment, weak human resources, weak brain power, unhealthy society and increasing crime at large. The present study aims to study the distinctive causes and consequences behind the problem of drug addiction which impacts the masses physically, psychologically, economically and socially. It also manifests some possible solutions that could be taken by family, community, friends and society to eradicate this problem.

**Keywords: Drug Abuse, Illegal Production, Human Resources, Family Harmony, Drug Consumer.**

**Introduction**

Drug Addiction is a very severe problem in India which is affecting all aspects of the society. It has received greater attention in recent times due to the proliferating magnitude of the problem and the changing trends in usage of drugs particularly among youth. Of course, it has been existing in human society from times immemorial. However, today it has become a severe problem worldwide. Majority of young generation fall prey to different types of drugs and stimulating medicines. Various types of drugs are used in various forms and make the drug addict drug-dependent. There is variety of drugs that the people of different ages abuse. Such drugs

abused have been classified into different categories. There are: drugs including narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and cannabis cocaine, meth, marijuana, crack, heroin, opium, morphine, bhang, hashish, LSD, mescaline, khat, codeine, tobacco, gutkha and liquor. They are all available throughout the globe. Out of these drugs like heroin, LSD, morphine, cocaine, etc. are very costly and cannot be afforded by every common person. Some drugs like bhang, hashish, tobacco and liquor are comparatively cheaper and are taken by low-income group people. All of these drugs are equally harmful for the human body and dangerous for future of the youths. Once our body becomes dependent on them, it stops functioning in natural course which leads to loss of health. For example, the overdose of alcohol in our blood leads to the loss of vision, hearing, smell, taste and muscle coordination. Heroin is perhaps one of the most dangerous drugs that affect our heart and brain's work leading to the ultimate destruction of our life. Today, there is no part of the world that is free from the curse of drug trafficking and drug addiction. Drug Addiction is not confined to a single person or region. Its number could be varied and found in any age, gender, ethnicity, social class or religion. As a matter of fact, the tentacles of drug addiction have spread world widely covering every country in the world. The present study will make attempts to discover the answers to the following research questions:

- What is drug and drug abuse?
- What are the influencing factors for the people to the drug abuse?
- What types of drugs have been mostly used by the drug users?
- What are the various consequences of the drug abuse among the drug users?
- What could be remedial measures on drugs abuse?

### **Objectives Of The Study**

In the light of the above research questions, the present study has been carried out with the following objectives:-

- I) To identify the factors that draw people towards the use of drugs.
- II) To examine the consequences of drug abuse among the drug users.
- III) To suggest remedial measures on drugs addiction.

### **Research Methodology**

The study is based on secondary data. Relevant data are availed from various sources of information such as Research Papers, Reports, Books, and Websites etc.

### **Concept Of Drug And Drug Abuse**

Drugs are like any chemical substance, associated with distinct physical or psychological effects which alter a person's normal bodily functions, mood or consciousness. The term 'Drug' means not only medicine, but fatal narcotics with various specifications having evil effects on mind, heart and body cells of the addicts. Initially drugs are taken voluntarily, but gradually the addict becomes so habitual and dependent on drug that he cannot imagine life without the use of the drug. It further leads to physical and psychological dependence on drugs with a tendency to take more and more drugs. People start using drugs to escape reality or to mask pain in life. However, as they go on taking drugs at regular intervals, the quantity increases and they feel need of more and more doses of drugs; they need drugs just to keep themselves normal. According to the World Health Organisation, drug abuse is a state of periodic, chronic intoxication, detriment to the individual and to the society, produced by repeated consumption of drugs either natural or synthetic. As Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines it, 'drug addict' means a 'person who cannot stop taking harmful drugs'

Addiction of drug is one of many problems that modern society is facing today. Intoxication caused due to taking drug can make people forget the sense of life, social and moral values. Overdose of the drug causes physical as well as psychological harm. The frequent use of drug like Cocaine, heroin, hashish, cannabis, steroids, ecstasy etc. is called the addiction of drug. Stimulants, depressants, opium related painkillers, hallucinogens, alcohol, sedatives, narcotics, nicotine etc. are different types of drugs. Drug addict person cannot live without drug and after taking drug it makes life critical. In India the abuse of drug is increased. Consumption of drug in India is immense. Most of the young girls, boys, old men and women are addict with a number of drug substances. This increasing habit of drug is making the condition worse in India. It is an immense urgent need to brood over it, feel the social sense and get inculcated moral and ethical values. It becomes the responsibility of those people who are far away from this worse habit of drug to look at these addict people as needy and help these needy understanding the exact situation and solution. The big step should be taken and make the government understand the great value of stopping the production of drug. Production of drug is root cause of the growth in addiction. Addict people may not try, but the people who are not addict, they have to take strong step in this direction.

Drug abuse or drug addiction is a situation when a person is addicted, he cannot control the situation of his drug use rather his nature of using drug gets control over him. In other terms,

when a drug abuser loses the capability to make a rational choice about whether or not to use drugs or alcohol, he or she is addicted. Drug addiction is a condition whereby a person experiences an overpowering thirst to look for and use drugs or alcohol regardless of the negative physical and mental consequences. Typically, drug abuse is accompanied by physical and psychological dependence on the drug and the person suffers withdrawal symptoms when the frequency or the content of the use of drug is rapidly decreased or stopped (Narconon 2016). Drug use is generally concerned with the use of drugs against certain illnesses. This may involve the drug being injected, inhaled, swallowed or as such. However, drug abuse may be considered as using the drugs for the purpose other than their intended use so that the negative consequences occur. It has been obvious that the drug abuse poses serious health risk to the abuser and may turn out to be fatal. In the mean time, the consequences leave impacts on the family members as well as the society or the community (Sussman and Ames 2001).

### **Review Of Literature**

There are many studies emerging in modern literature in explaining the causes of substance abuse, for instance, drug abuse and other deviant behaviours in different perspectives. Though, the validity of one study does not imply the inaccuracy of another. Each study deals with a portion of a large composite phenomenon. No single study could possibly explain everything that one might want to know about the phenomena. Many researches on drug abuse have been undertaken for a long time. A study of the available studies will identify the causative factors and analyse them in the preparation of other relevant studies and strategies. The degree, pattern and patterns of substance addiction among young generation in India have been examined in this article.

Werner (1991) is of the view that the higher prevalence of alcohol and substance abuse by adolescents poses a significant threat to the wellness of youth. Adolescents appear to use drugs for a variety of reasons. In addition to the multiple etiologic and risk factors present for substance abuse, there are many pathways teenagers may follow on their way to substance abuse. The epidemic prevalence of drug abuse in children has taken on troubling proportions in India. Cultures are shifting, the economic pressure is growing, poverty, ignorance, displacement and slavery (child labour) are promoted, which also contributes to drug misuse (Qadri, Goel, Singh, Ahluwalia, Pathak, & Bashir 2013). If we look at global trade and drug use figures, the picture is bleak. It is the third biggest company in the world with a turnover of about \$500 billion, next to

the petroleum and arms trade. One medicine or the other is used by around 190 million people around the world (Asha, 2003). According to the World Medicine Survey, figures of 322 billion dollars reflect the extent of drug trade and narcotics trafficking. The annual marketing value of Afgan Opium is \$61 billion. In Western Africa, the world demand for cocaine is about 85 million dollars. During the 2011 World Summit, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon, declared war on illegal drug trade to protect the stability of the world. It has stressed to create the awareness in people about the deadly drug they destroy societies (Ramesh, 2017). Physical pressures and worries, shivering, feeling discomfort and sleepy, the pace of breathing is decreased and heart rate is increased are the physical ill effects of opioid addiction youth. These kids suffer from absenteeism, dropping out of school, bad grades, violent behaviour, bullying, fighting, suppressed rage, disapproval, exclusion, alienation, cheating, stealing, deceit, truancy, low self-esteem, depression, shame, feelings of helplessness, fears of abandonment, and chronic depression manipulating become their usual defensive behaviors in school and at home (Millar & Stermac, 2000).

The "Drug Abuse and Addiction", (2017) report discussed that the influence of the family, home environment, especially during childhood, is a very important factor. Parents or older family members who participate in drug abuse or who engage in illegal activity will easily raise the chances of children worsening an issue of substance abuse). Millar & Stermac (2000) published comparable findings that on family or parental substance abuse also has severe effects on children of substance abuse. An unprecedented 66% of children raised by abusive parents have been confirmed to have been physically assaulted or experienced family violence, and 26% of children from such households have been regularly sexually abused. It has been documented that physical or sexual assault happens daily in one third of intoxicated households. The unfavourable results on their off springs of the drug addicted parents originate from the womb of the woman. Pregnant women who have used alcohol during pregnancy can give birth to children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) (Heffner & Heffner, 2017). A study on alcoholism and opioid dependency by the National Council estimated that about 5000 babies are born per year with serious harm caused by foetal alcohol syndrome and another 35000 babies are born with milder types of foetal alcohol syndrome (Heffner & Heffner, 2017). Cocaine creates problems in the brain, genes and hereditary transfer.

Winslow A. Wood(1959) identified that morphine acts at two different receptor sites in a neuronal pathway. Collier H (1966) stated that different explanations for the development of tolerance and physical dependence. Chopra I (1971) stated that psychoactive ill effects of chronic drugs use are more difficult to assess with accuracy. Thacore etal (1971) studied that methaqualone is being used by a cross section of the population. Rao & Vasudevan (1980) their study shows that most of the drug addicts are addicted before the thirty yearsage. Margoob & Dutta (1993) stated that the most drug abusers are males and they are mostly taking cannabis followed by heroin., Fonseca (1996) stated that the drug abuse among people due to many factors existing in themidst like psychological, social, economic and other factors shared by the users., Sotto (1997) stated that the source of thedrugs was available with the help of friends, pushers, drugs stores, private houses and medical clinics. Siegel (1999)stated that the drug abuse among youth is a factor of prejudice, self-identity, low self-esteem, poor social andeconomic status. Tremble (2002) stated thatthe drug abuse and addiction is due to the socio-cultural factors. He found the majority of the youth addicts who jointhe drug culture. Drugs etal (2002) stated that the religion isplaying major role in change individual's existentialunderstanding the alcohol, cannabis, nicotine, opium andmushrooms have been used for rites in many cultures.Chuah etal (2003) stated that opium addiction is decreased incommon use but abuse of opioids like heroin, cannabis,marijuana, amphetamines and ecstasy are on the highlyincreased. Vinluan (2005) stated that drugs and substanceuse in any society is not a new phenomenon. It is verydifficult to explain the real factors for contributing to theepidemic experimentation and involvement with drugs.There are several pressures from associates, curiosity,priceless availability of drugs to the teenagers and youth withtheir parents. Agcaoli (2005) stated that the peer grouppressure influences on youth and not under estimated as oneamong the cause of drug abuse. Sudan (2007) studied thatthe youth are at the fore felt of many violent conflicts oftenfighting without a choice. Iruloh, B N (2008) StudiedPsychological perspective of drug abuse, prevention andtreatment. Nadeem etal (2009) stated that the changingcultural values increasing economists and dwindlingsupportive bonds are leading to initiation in to substanceuse. Hallev and Handley (2010) studied on adolescentsubstance use disorders. Harakeh & Vollebergh (2011)stated that the impact of peer group influence, young adult into the smoking. It stated that the effect of young adultsmoking rather than active per influence on passive peer group. Kushabik (2012) studied risk and protective factorsof drug abuse. Anand V (2012) studied on drug addiction

causes and the way out. Bhat Bilal A. et al (2016) A study on awareness of drug addiction. Onukwufur et al (2016) A study on relationship between parent's drug use, peer group influence and adolescent's addictive behaviour.

### **Causes Of Drugs Addiction**

The experts who study addiction and its effects say that drug addiction occurs from variety of factors that can make a person vulnerable. Following are some of the causes that lead a person towards addiction:-

**1. Family History:** The siblings whose parents are addicted to drugs are likely to get addicted too. The early exposure of drugs attracts children and contributes a lot to make them drug addicts. Their immature mind is not capable enough to think about negative effects of drug on their personality and future life. As their parents take the drug, they feel attracted to it and start taking it slowly in a very small quantity initially. However, by the time they understand its side effects on them, they are completely addicted to the drug and find themselves caught in its vicious trap.

**2. Company Of Peers:** The company of peers also plays crucial role in making one drug addict, especially during adolescence. Peer pressure has been described as the major cause for initial and experimental drug abuse. Young children start taking it as fashion, out of curiosity, as a part of their adventurous behaviour and as something to do different from others. Drugs are taken for pleasure-seeking and to gratify some temporary fancies among adolescents.

Environmental issues also play significant role in taking a person to addiction. Neighbours, friends and socioeconomic forces, sexual abuse at early stage and lack of healthy parental guidance also caused drug abuse. There are more chances of being drug addicted if a person lacks in self-confidence. For example, as shown in the movie, Sanju, Sanju is tempted by a friend to take various drugs; and because he lacks self-confidence, he easily falls prey to it and starts drinking and taking drugs.

**3. Family Problems:** Family problems such as quarrels in family, early separations from one or both parents, occurrence of some tragic events in the family, strained family relations can also cause drug addiction among children. Broken family structure often brings frustration among adolescents compelling them to take drugs in various forms. They suffer from feelings of footlessness and seek for mind-altering source in drugs to escape from the critical circumstances.

**4. Health Related Issues:** people who have regular health problems are prone to be drug addicts. Particularly, the mental health issues compel the patients to have drugs and alcohol to help them tolerate hazardous pains.

**5. Frustration:** When a person finds that his capabilities and efficiencies are not well-paid and not well-rewarded, he gets frustrated and seeks solace in drugs. Unemployment, migration, poverty, social discrimination between haves and have-nots are some of the causes of drug addiction. Broken relationships, particularly, failure in love causes frustration leading to drug addiction. There are many more factors that lead a person towards drug addiction. Among these are- early use of drugs, regular company of an addict, neglection by family and friends, debts, tension, etc.

### **Consequences Of Drug Addiction**

Drug Addiction is a form of disease and as such it can pose a series of negative consequences on one's emotional well being, physical health and even on family life also. The impacts of drugs could be unpredictable, even opposite to what is expected and each form of addiction poses its own series of risks. These are main categories under which drugs impact one's life:-

**1. Physical Consequences:** Drug Addiction changes the way the brain functions and the way the body feels pleasure. These effects of addiction are because the drug repeatedly floods the brain with the chemicals dopamine and serotonin which effect on the entire body of the person. Physiological effects that cause due to drug consumption are irregular breathing, increase in heart rate and blood pressure, heart disease, arthritis and lung disease. He is more likely to experience physical injury or get involved in any accident. Sometime a person can also commit suicide or murder. Other Physical Effects of Drug Addiction include: Heart rate irregularities, heart attack or heart failure, Respiratory Problems like lung Cancer, Emphysema and breathing problems, Damage of kidney and liver, Changes in appetite, temperature and sleeping patterns, Nausea and Abdominal pain, a weakened immune system and increasing the risk of infection

**2. Psychological Consequences:** The psychological impacts of drug can alter one's mood. It can create stress or mental illness among the users. Drugs can also create many behavioral problems like aggressiveness, impaired judgment, mood swings, anxiety and even memory loss. It also surges the likelihood of violent behaviour. Long term use of drugs can have a large impact on the way one's brain works and also lead to increase in anxiety and stress level. An individual can also



feel low and depressed because of a drug usage. A continuous use of some drugs for a time interval can create mental problems such as schizophrenia etc.

**3. Economic Consequences:** Economic effects of drug addiction are harmful in the form of the health of the country, affecting families, communities and people of all ages. The cost of an addiction not only affects the sufferer but can also encompass family, friends and society as a whole. A further cost of drug addiction is the loss in productivity that can occur when drug users are under the influence of drugs. While in treatment or when incarcerated, drug addicts may be unable to participate in work that emerges economic loss.

**4. Social Consequences:** The effects of drug abuse can be felt on many levels on the society. Marriage relationships, home life, education, employment, personality and so on. Under the influence of addiction, family members sometimes experience feelings of abandonment, restlessness, fear, resentment, anxiety, humiliation or guilt. Family members often neglect or deduct relations with substance exploiter. The person who is addicted may change with an easy personality which appears in mood swings, violent explosions, secrecy and other forms of extreme behaviour. This creates difficulty for a partner to deal with and is even worse if there are children involved. It is both distressing and confusing for children to see one parent exhibit signs of their addiction.

**5. Educational Consequences:** Drug abusers are irregular in attending school, college and university. Students lose concentration and learning ability. Drugs negatively affect their performance in examination. It is generally believed that education and awareness is an important tool of intervention for prevention of drug abuse. To prevent the negative impact of drug abuse, preventative education should be provided at every level of educational system.

**6. Public Safety Consequences:** Drug abuse has direct effect on public health and safety. The safety of the society is negatively affected as drug abuse leads to crimes (as explained earlier). Even road safety is compromised due to addiction. Most of the road accidents occur due to consumption of alcohol and drugs. Drug consumers as drivers are a threat on the roads. Pedestrian drug consumers are also victims of accidents. In work place (i.e. factories, offices and hospitals etc.) drug abuse leads to accidents and other unfortunate incidents. Even in home an intoxicated person may cause fire and their action leads to accidents. All these involve a high cost for the individual, family, society and the State.

### **Ways To Treat Drugs Addiction**

The causes of drug addiction are in human behaviour, so are its remedies. If a person gets addicted due to any reason, the trap can be broken and he can be recovered from it. Of course, the willingness of the addicted person is necessary to get rid of this disastrous evil. The government has set many laws against taking drugs and drug trafficking. However, we need to change the mentality of addicts to help them live their normal life. We can also prevent or ward off from getting addicted by taking some steps towards their healthy upbringing. Here are some of the points suggesting effective remedies against drug addiction:-

**1. Strong Family Roots And Good Socialization:** Children learn and adopt many things at home. Parents should take care of their wards. They need to set ideal examples to keep them away from drugs and other such evil things. Parents can make them aware of the bad effects of drugs at home itself so that they would not be forced by any factor to take drugs. Children should be socialized properly. A strong and supportive environment at home prepares healthy children. For this the parents need to be morally strong and the family should be based on loyal and faithful relationships.

**2. Values Based Moral Education:** Indian education system is supposed to be the richest education system in the world in respect of moral values. Under the sugar-coat of professionalism, today we have no place for these values in our curriculum. The need is to once more enrich our school curriculum with value-based moral education so that moral values will be inculcated among young children to keep them away from such destructive addictions.

**3. Learning To Deal With Pressure:** Each human being is full of tension in today's hectic world. All are in search of some effective solutions to release the pressure. Many of us make mistakes by taking help of drugs to relieve the tension. Actually, there are some healthy pressure-releasing ways we can apply to handle stress. One can read good books, watch comedy serials on TV, or can have good habits such as painting, singing or playing or listening music, doing yoga activities.

**4. Treatment Through De-addiction Centre's:** The problem of drug addiction has become chronic in India to fight with this menace the role of De-addiction cells cannot be disregarded. As far as India is concerned, the Ministry of Social Justice and Employment has been implementing programmes for prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse. Under the scheme, grant-in-aid is provided to voluntary organizations for implementing community based programmes on awareness generation, preventive education, counselling, detoxification, and rehabilitation. It

is also true that numerous De-addiction centres have also been emerged in India also. Nonetheless, some efforts are still needed to drain this problem like availability of medicines, provision of doctors and counselors are required.

**5. Awareness Campaigns:** Awareness campaigns can serve the cause of preventing drug addiction in the society. The NGOs, Media, Self-help Groups and governmental agencies can play crucial role in changing mindset of the addicted people. There are many rehabilitation centres that can help the addicts combat drug addiction. Individual counselling can also be really effective to bring the addicts back to their normal life.

### **Conclusion**

It is disturbing to know that, drug abuse has reached an alarming proportion in the recent years particularly among the young. The reason of fast growing drug abuse may be attributed to curiosity and natural tendency to experiment with drugs, disturbed home environment, lack of communication between parents and children, ignorance and its ill after effects, lack of knowledge, early exposure etc. Other important reasons contributing to it may be as a result of escape phenomena from tension and frustrations like unemployment, failure in exams, impact of 'disco culture', electronic media, peer pressure or delinquency. If this issue is not timely addressed it will take the shape of the epidemic with its severe socio-economic and familial adverse consequences besides human resource depletion for the nation. Remember, drug addiction has no specifications as such, and anybody can be addicted to drugs anytime at any stage of his life. Therefore, 'Prevention is better than cure' an old idiom needs to be followed to keep our society healthy. By learning to stay away from temptations, we can avoid the entry of drugs in our lives.

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