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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON SUBSTANCE ABUSES AMONG THE STUDENTS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF IMPHAL EAST AND WEST DISTRICTS OF MANIPUR

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is the most vulnerable period to various forms of risk taking behaviours as it is the age of experimentation, adventure and expiration. We study on the substance abusers among the students of Higher Secondary Schools of Imphal East and West District of Manipur. Samples were collected from the class XI and XII students of Governments and Private schools in the Imphal West and East district of Manipur through a questionnaire package that ascertain reasons for substance abuse with reference to the relation between substance abuse and psychological factor, peer group pressure, joyfulness, tension remover, rebelliousness, curiosity, intercultural influence, climatic conditions, easy availability, future insecurity and modernisation. Chi square test showed the peer group pressure, tension, rebelliousness and curiosity as the main reason that influence significantly to take to substance abuse while the other parameters did not show any variations in the opinion among the students. No single measure would be effective to prevent the use of drugs until and unless parents, school and society all the three collectively and cooperatively tackle the problems of substances abuse from different angles. Parents can help through early education about psychoactive substances, open communications, good role modelling, and early recognition if problems are developing. Thus, further study covering large sample sizes is needed to come to a conclusive result about the substance abuse among the adolescent.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a stage in the life of man and women for trying new things. It is the age of experimentation, adventure and expiration. They prefer free life i.e., autonomous and independent from adult control which make it vulnerable to various forms of risk taking behaviours such as psychoactive substance abuse, premarital sexual activity and antisocial behaviours (Nair, 2011). Thus, it increases the use of addictive and psychoactive substances among the teenagers (Koshkina, 2003). The reasons may be many starting from curiosity, experimentation, psychological factor, peer groups, rebelliousness, intercultural influences, stress, future insecurity, physiological reasons, climatic condition, easy availability of drugs, to grown up (Felicia Ehbhayi, 2013). However, such substances remove psychological conflicts and maladjustment only for a short period of time. Unfortunately, teenagers often do not see the link between their actions today and the consequences tomorrow (AACAP, 2013). They also have a tendency to feel indestructible and immune to the problems that other experience (AACAP, 2013). So they try new things or substances that are harmful to them and altered their mood,

level of awareness or perception and sensations. Some of the substances that can be abusive are alcohol, marijuana, hallucinogens, amphetmines, barbituirates, narcotics, etc. Using such substances alter mind and affect brain function each time they are used, regardless of how much it is used (WHO, 2004). In the present day, people symbolised the used of substance abuse as a form of aristocracy, affluences, modern living, tension remover and has integrated as a part of everyday life for many people without knowing the effect of such substances (GES, 1995). Illegitimately and legitimately-substance use among adolescents remain high (Covington, 1997). The legality and social acceptance of a particular substance often depend on what it is used for, what its effect are and who is using it because many abused substances have legitimate medical uses such as marijuana (ganja) is used to treat nausea due to advanced cancer (Bar-Sela et al., 2013). Opioid, to relieve pain and provide anaesthesia (Jorgensen et al., 2000). However used of such substance for pleasure is illegal and dangerous. Further, the acceptance of this substances legally and socially often vary among different societies or countries.

Historically the abusing of substances is old as human civilization on earth. The first information about the use of drugs was recorded from Egyptians and Greeks (Rosso, 2010).

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In 1805, morphine was successfully isolated from opium by F. Serturmer (Aragon-Poce *et al.*, 2002) and in 1898 Germany's Bayer chemical company invented heroine an even stronger, semi-synthetic opium derivative, as a cough medication (Hickman, 2004). In India the use of drugs has been in practice from the time immemorial. The earliest references for the use of intoxicating drugs is found in the Rig-Veda (Saraf and Parihar, 2006). They used it with the belief that their life span would be lengthen and would also help in their meditation. In India cannabis has been part of the culture for centuries (Buha, 2011). These drugs were used in those times for the religious purposes and on ceremonial occasions by one and all alike. People of different socio-economic group have been using different kind of substances for a long time without proper prescription. Some of the substances are sometimes quite addictive in nature. Manipur has its own history of the use of psychoactive substances. The use of Ganja/Cannabis and homemade brew/alcohol since time immemorial for religious purposes was recorded and known (<http://epao.net>) which is still in practice till today. A survey conducted by the Indian Medical Association Manipur in 1988 highlights that 1,30,000 persons were addicted to alcohol, 13,000 to 45,000 to cough syrups, 600 to opium and 150 to morphine. In the present situation of Manipur, it is further assumed that the number of substance abusers might have increased as many adolescents are abusing pharmaceutical drugs as a new trend (Ningobam *et al.*, 2011). Even the cheap and easily available household substances such as aerosol sprays, cleaning fluids, glue, paint, paint thinner, nail polish remover, amyl nitrite and lighter fuel are widely abused by young ones through inhalation (Datta *et al.*, 2014; <http://www.drugfreeworld.org>).

The sense of pleasure of its use spread like wild fire among the youths, especially school going teens. Stealing from family, friends, neighbours and locality became regular features. Street crimes, gang fights and frequent cases of overdose and deaths were reported often. Even innocent children were kidnapped and killed to snatch their gold earrings. With the passage of time and changes in the society, the use and abuse of substances in its present form, among the youth, destroyed their moral in the society. Thus, the changing trend calls for urgent needs to take special attention specially the youth from this destructive abusive substances. Hence, keeping in view the importance of the younger generation in the progress of the present society, the study on the substance abusers was conducted among the students of Higher Secondary Schools of Imphal East and West District of Manipur. Further, the present study will add some data about the substance abuse among the youngsters of the state.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive survey method was used in the present study. We chose the Simple Random Sampling to study on the substance abuse among the students of Higher Secondary Schools of Imphal East and West District of Manipur for data collection. In the present study, only 160 students were selected randomly from eight (8) Higher Secondary Schools of Imphal East and West districts including four Government Higher Secondary Schools and four Private Higher Secondary Schools as the true

representative proportion of the population. The Higher Secondary Schools chosen for sampling were given in the Table 1. For the completion of the present study, we use a self-developed questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of selected 78 statements in five rating scales that is strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), uncertain or undecided (U), disagreed (D) and strongly disagreed (SD). The given statements, for ascertaining reasons of substance abuse were framed with reference to the relation between substance abuse and psychological factor, peer group pressure, joyfulness, tension remover, rebelliousness, curiosity, intercultural influence, climatic conditions, easy availability, future insecurity and modernisation. We first seek the permission of the Principal of Schools and discussed the need and importance of the present study, after having their permissions to collect the data, we then, went to administer the questionnaire randomly to both the students of class XI and class XII of any streams (both Science and Arts). In order to secure their cooperation, the purpose of the study was explained to them and they were assured that their views and personal information would be treated as confidential and were distributed to those students only who were willing to cooperative. Though this procedure was a little time consuming, it proved to be beneficial and useful, as all questionnaires were returned to the investigator immediately, as such, as the problem of unanswered or unreturned questionnaire was not faced by us. The total numbers of different rating scales were tallied on the chart. The same was put in tabular form to make the process of analysis easier and were analysed by Chi-square test of equality and percentage. MS-Excel software was used in all the statistical analyses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study parameters, the percentage of respondents to each parameters and the level of significance are presented in Table 2. Chi square test on the parameters did not show any significant variations in the opinion among the students except in the peer group pressure ($\chi^2=8.34$; $P<0.05$), tension remover ($\chi^2=9.77$; $P<0.02$), rebelliousness ($\chi^2=7.81$; $P<0.05$) and curiosity ($\chi^2=7.87$; $P<0.05$). In our study, 23.75% of student strongly agree to substance abuse under the influence of their close friends, 45% of students also agree about the involvement of their friends circle in indulging to drugs while 18.75% disagree with this view with 6.25% strongly disagreeing the concept that their nearby friends were responsible for their substance abuse. A review by Simons-Morton and Farhat (2010) on recently published articles addressing the adolescent smoking indicated the substantial peer group homogeneity of smoking behaviour, support for both socialization and selection effects, an interactive influence of best friends, peer groups and crowd affiliation and an indirect protective effect of parenting. The peer influence is notably most pronounced with regard to illicit drug use (Kandel, 1985). Even in early adolescence, parents' attitudes and behaviors have less impact than those of peers and older siblings (Needle, *et al.*, 1986). Ningombam *et al.* (2011) study on the prevalence and pattern of substance use among the higher secondary students of Imphal, Manipur revealed that out of the total numbers of students, more than half of them have reported substance use. Further, the friends were the key proximal determinant.

Table 1. Showing numbers of sample taken from each schools of Imphal East and West districts

Sl. No.	Government School	No. of respondent	Sl. No.	Private School	No. of respondent
1.	Churachand Singh Higher Secondary School	20	1.	Manipur Public School	20
2.	Ananda Singh Academy Higher Secondary School	20	2.	DAV Public Schools, Imphal	20
3.	Johnston Higher Secondary School	20	3.	International School of Resource	20
4.	The Tamphasana Girls Higher Secondary School	20	4.	Human Resource Development	20

Table 2. Showing the study parameters, number and percentages of students who Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree to the parameters, Chi square Value along with the significant levels

Sl. No.	Study Parameters	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Undecided (U)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Total respondents	Chi-value	Sig. level
1	Psychological factor	39(24.37%)	65(40.62%)	17(10.62%)	26(16.25%)	13(8.12%)	160	3.24	P>0.05
2	Peer group pressure	38(23.75%)	72(45%)	10(6.25%)	30(18.75%)	10(6.25%)	160	8.37	P<0.05
3	Joyfulness	41(25.62%)	66(41.25%)	18(11.25%)	17(10.62%)	18(11.25%)	160	5.73	P>0.05
4	Tension remover	35(21.87%)	54(33.75%)	18(11.25%)	28(17.5%)	25(15.62%)	160	9.77	P<0.02
5	Rebelliousness	42(26.25%)	49(30.62%)	31(19.37%)	29(18.12%)	9(5.62%)	160	7.81	P<0.05
6	Curiosity	36(22.5%)	72(45%)	15(9.37%)	14(8.75%)	23(14.37%)	160	7.87	P<0.05
7	Intercultural influences	26(16.25%)	56(35%)	19(11.87%)	38(23.75%)	21(13.12%)	160	6.75	P>0.05
8	Climatic conditions	29(18.12%)	61(38.12%)	15(9.37%)	32(20%)	23(14.37%)	160	1.05	P>0.05
9	Easy availability	28(17.5%)	72(45%)	16(10%)	15(9.37%)	29(18.12%)	160	6.57	P>0.05
10	Future insecurity	34(21.25%)	65(40.62%)	13(8.12%)	23(14.37%)	25(15.62%)	160	4.59	P>0.05
11	Modernization	31(19.37%)	69(43.12%)	20(12.5%)	27(16.87%)	13(8.12%)	160	3.92	P>0.05

Most of the students become substance abuser as they start taking psychoactive substances by the influence of peer group pressure, emotional disturbances, rebelliousness and as a curiosity.

Among ever users, tobacco (46%) was used most commonly, followed by alcohol (29%), cannabis (14%) and opiates (12%). The substance use was significantly higher among boys whose father or sibling used substances. It was significantly lower among children of Hindu/Jain religion. Most of the students agree (54%) that substance abuse act as a tension remover in our study. Various studies support the positive relationship between stress and substance abuses like problematic drinking in students (Brown *et al.*, 1990; Cammatta and Nagoshi, 1995; Ham and Hope, 2003). According to a study by O'Hare and Sherrer (2000) a moderate level of stress have greater chances of increase in problem drinking than the less stress student. The alcoholic consumption as the tension remover were found to be strongest than any of the social and physical pleasure (Brown, 1985; O'Hare, 1990). Thus, students having greater levels of expectancies for tension reduction and social assertiveness were more likely to have psychological problems related to negative affect and neuroticism (O'Hare and Sherrer, 1997). However, Rohsenow (1982) did not find any significant relationship between stress and drinking rates. The life and the nature of behavior of the students are greatly influenced by the parents. Thus parenting is a most challenging yet rewarding experience (Sarac, 2001). Many studies have shown a correlation between parenting styles and behavior of

the students in delinquency, rebellion, violence, sexual activity, antisocial behavior, alcohol and substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and self-perception (Sarac, 2001). In our study 49 % of the student agree the linkage between the rebellion and the substance abuse while 42% strongly agree to this view. It was observed that risky, rebellious behaviors often earn teens acceptance and respect from their peers (DiClemente, 1996). Most of the child rebel and reacts to the limitation of the freedom which they wanted. It may also be a defense against the fear of parents and other persons or to test or to see whether they are what they fears them to be in their imagination (Kahn, 1957). Further, in a different study by Singh and Singh (1980) on the extent of drug, its frequency, age of onset and other causative factors of drug abuse among the students of Punjab, it was found that most of the students who were living away from home were abusing alcohol and tobacco commonly. Adolescent is the age of curiosity, thinking of testing and knowing what is available there in nearby surrounding. Our study on the high school student observed that 45% agree with the idea of curiosity in substance abuse and 36% strongly agreeing. A study by Goreishi and Shajari (2013) among the students of Zanjan's Universities of Iran on the various motivating factors, pain relief (32.7%), pleasure (13.3%), and curiosity (9.3%) were observed to be the three most common reasons for the substance abuse. Almost

similar was observed in a study on the female students in Tehran University (Rezvanian, 1999). The main motivating factors for substance abuse were found to be anxiety, pleasure, curious, and pain relief among the student of ShahidBeheshti University (Bahreinian et al., 2014). A study by Padhy et al. (2014) on of substance abuse among the undergraduate medical students it was observed that, the main purpose for initiation of abuse was curiosity. The academic insecurity, peer pressure and family problems were also a major initiating factors in taking to drugs. Further, most of the students are aware of the adverse effects of the substance abuse but were still continuing the same.

The abuse and misuse of drugs is one of the world's most critical and widespread problems now-a-days. Medical along with the psychological treatments has been our main answer to date. No single measure would be effective to prevent the use of drugs until and unless home, school and society all the three collectively and cooperatively tackle the problems of substances abuse from different angles. Parents can help through early education about psychoactive substances, open communications, good role modelling, and early recognition if problems are developing. Thus, further study cover large sample sizes are needed to come to a conclusive result about the substance abuse among the adolescent.

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