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REVIEW ARTICLE

ADOLESCENTS SUBSTANCE USAGE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY OF CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

Substance abuse or drug abuse is a patterned use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to themselves or others, and is a form of substance-related disorder. Most adolescents who use drugs do not progress to become drug abusers, or drug addicts in adulthood, drug use in adolescence are a very risky proposition. Typically, school and relationships, notably family relationships, are among the life areas that are most influenced by drug use and abuse. In terms of public health, adolescent substance use disorders have social and economic ramifications. The numerous adverse consequences associated with teenage drinking and substance use disorders include fatal and nonfatal injuries from alcohol- and drug-related motor vehicle accidents, suicides, homicides, violence, delinquency, psychiatric disorders, and risky sexual practices. Ahmad Nadeem (2009) study highlights the epidemic of substance abuse in young people has assumed alarming proportions in India. Changing cultural values, increasing economic stress and dwindling supportive bonds are leading to initiation into substance use. This study aims to investigating the frequency of habits, attitudes and practices related to substances and to determine the biological, psychological and socio economic characteristics of the adolescents by adopting descriptive research design through a Quantitative method and the primary data was collected through a semi structured interview schedule. The main focus of the study is to know the usage and its impact on individual, family and community at large and to suggest an appropriate social work intervention method for the adolescents to cope up their dependency on substance.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescent is a period of developmental task include identity, autonomy, sexuality, academic functioning and peer groups. Adolescent is more or less experimental stage they tend to experiment and experience more of risk taking behavior which in turn develops drug abuse. Use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances is a worldwide problem and affects many children and adolescents. Substance Abuse, although often regarded as a personality disorder, may also be seen as a worldwide epidemic with evolutionary genetic, physiological and environmental influences controlling this behavior. Substance Abuse among children has become an issue of concern throughout the world. Increasing substance abuse and its impact on physical and psychosocial health is a worldwide public health concern affecting the early youth and subsequently the whole life of the individuals. In India the epidemic of substance abuse in children has assumed alarming dimensions.

Changing cultures, increasing economic stress, dwindling supportive bonds, issues of poverty, ignorance, migration and exploitation are leading to initiation into substance abuse. Alcohol, tobacco, cannabis along with minor tranquilizers and analgesics are the common substances of abuse. During the past several years, there has been a renewed national concern about substance abuse culminating in the current War on drugs. Recently substance abuse has been increasing among children as sizeable proportions of children in many states of India experiment with drugs quite early in life. Among the youth, students are particularly involved due to increasing academic pressures, encouragement by peers, lure of popularity and easy availability of many such substances like alcohol, tobacco (cigarettes and gutka) and other drugs. Early initiation of substance abuse is usually associated with a poor prognosis and a lifelong pattern of deceit and irresponsible behavior. Knowledge with regard to the consequences of substance use among adolescents enough to prevent them from initiating and continuing its use. Many adolescent who use drug will also try many other risk behaviors and they are antisocial behavior, high sexual behavior and delinquency.

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Background of the Study: Adolescent are more vulnerable and prone to risky behavior.

Especially people in urban slums are very much prone to usage of substance abuse. Chetpet slum is one of the most dwelling areas for substance usage disorder where the Adolescent behaviour are controlled. The consequences of substance abuse among adolescent is very much enough to prevent them from initiating and continuing the usage the knowledge is yet to be clarified. Shaping the attitude of adolescents is one of the most important things to be done. Alcoholism and substance abuse among adolescents of Chetpet slum is a major threat to the development of adolescent and the society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A study Conducted by Ponnudurai in 1984, was designed to assess various factors pertaining to long abuse and alcohol among students with the help of youth survey questionnaire developed by WHO shows that males are mostly indulged in alcohol abuse at least once in 30 days. The explanation given by the participants are mostly for fun, curious and relief of stress. Friends and family have been the main source of information. Kumar, Ravindra, (2006) highlights his study in assessing the knowledge and attitude of students towards the effect of alcohol conducted in Bangalore by simple random sampling through semi structured questionnaire. Findings of the study showed that, participants knowledge about effect of alcohol is inadequate (33.2%), although the participants overall attitude towards effect of alcohol is found to be favourable (77.7%). So enhancement in knowledge about alcoholism aspect is very much required. Selvaraj, (2007) "Study on Alcoholism among Students" was a descriptive study conducted on alcoholism among college students in Salem, India with purposive sampling technique and data collection through structured questionnaire shows that students had only moderate awareness on alcoholism (68%) of total samples. So the result of the study reveals that students were moderately aware of the problems related to alcoholism.

Lisa Sarangi (2008) Study on Substance Abuse among Adolescents in Urban Slums of Sambalpur shows that significantly higher level of adolescents using drugs had an addicted peer group. The majority of substance abusers either never went to school (54.4%) or was school drop-outs (51.7%). The most common place for initiation of substance abuse was recreational avenues for males (49.7%) and home (36.6%) for females. A majority of the adolescents i.e., 150 (69.8%) purchase substances from their own pocket money. According to National Institute on Drug Abuse report, (2010) emphasis on school based prevention program for high school students with poor school achievement and a potential for not completing their education. Participants may also show signs of multiple problem behaviours, such as substance abuse, depression, aggression, or suicidal behaviours. Students are screened for eligibility and then invited to participate in the program. The main aim of the program was to reduce drug use, Skills to manage mood and emotions. The program influences positive peer bonding, skills training.

Sathish Kumar & Sathyamurthi (2018) the study was carried out in two areas (one urban slum chetpet and one Village Vengal) and finds that adolescents of the study areas are very much vulnerable to substance usage due to high availability of substance and varied influences and exposure to substance. It describes the physical, psychological and social issue comparison of the prevalence and consequences of substance use disorder among adolescents of an urban slum and a village.

Karthika Sethu & F.X. Lovelina Little Flower's (2014) study on "Substance Abuse among Adolescents" shows that 66.7% respondents are aged between 14 & 16 years. The results of the study also highlights that 63.3% respondents started abuse with tobacco, 80% respondents are cigarette smokers and 50% respondents have drug abusing friends.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the frequency of habits, attitudes and practices related to drug use among young people and to determine the biological, psychological and socio economic characteristics of the adolescents by adopting descriptive research design through a Quantitative method and the primary data was collected through a semi structured interview schedule. The main focus of the study is to know the usage and impacts of substance abuse by suggesting proper coping strategies to overcome these practices.

Major Findings

The major findings are

- Fifty four (54) per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 17 years.
- Forty (40) percent of the respondents are school dropouts.
- Half of the respondents are students.
- More than half (54 per cent) of the respondents there income is less than 5000.
- Vast majority (92 per cent) of the respondents have tried smoking.
- Majority (88 per cent) of the respondents was 16 years old when they tried smoking the whole cigarette.
- Vast majority (92 per cent) of the respondents have smoked cigarettes regularly.
- Vast majority (92 per cent) of the respondents were 16 years old and started smoking cigarettes regularly.
- Half of the respondents have smoked for the past all 30 days.
- More than one third (72 per cent) of the respondents will buy their own cigarette from a nearby shop.
- More than one third (72 per cent) of the respondents have not shown any proof of age while buying cigarettes.
- One third (38 per cent) of the respondents use both chew and snuff types of tobacco.
- More than one third (72 per cent) of the respondents have a habit of consuming alcohol.
- One third (38 per cent) of the respondents started consuming alcohol at the age of 15 years.
- Two third (66 per cent) of the respondents have not tried marijuana.
- Majority (86 per cent) of the respondents have not tried cocaine.
- Majority (74 per cent) of the respondents have not sniffed glue or spray cans.
- Vast Majority (94 percent) of the respondents have not used steroids.
- Majority (80 per cent) of the respondents have not used pills without doctor prescription.
- Almost all the respondents have not used needles to inject on their body.

- Majority (70 per cent) of the respondents said they cannot get through without using drugs.
- Majority (80 per cent) of the respondents feel bad about drug use.
- Two third (62 per cent) of the respondents said their parents have complained about their drug usage.
- Two third (66 per cent) of the respondents said drug usage has created problems at home.
- Vast Majority (90 per cent) of the respondents said they have not lost their friendship because of drug usage.
- Majority (78 per cent) of the respondents have not been neglected by their family.
- Half (54 per cent) of the respondents have not faced trouble in school because of drug usage.
- Majority (68 per cent) of the respondents have not got into a fight.
- Vast Majority (94 percent) of the respondents have not got arrested because of drug usage.
- Majority (70 per cent) of the respondents have tried stopping drug usage.
- Vast Majority (90 per cent) of the respondents have not got any withdrawal symptoms.
- Vast majority (86 per cent) of the respondents have not got help from anyone to overcome drug abuse.
- Majority (70 per cent) of the respondents said they wanted to get into treatment.

Suggestions

Adolescent drug usage is not because of single cause there are many dimension of causes. Adolescent stage stands as the starting point of drug usage and it develops and leads to addiction in their adulthood. Different pathways are involved in the development of drug usage. There are some processes involved to prevent adolescent drug usage and they are

- Proper parental supervision and monitoring.
- Interaction between parents and children should be frequent and friendly.
- Proper communication of drug usage and its consequences should be given by parents.
- Parents should be friendlier rather than being strict.
- Familial conflicts should be avoided in front of children.
- Parental drug usage should not influence child.

Conclusion

Alcohol and drug usage among adolescent has resulted in significant mortality and morbidity worldwide. Adolescent are losing lives to drug usage and alcohol which lead them to a frequent drug abuser. Even though there are large number of adolescent who can't escape from this social evil they can be helped by parents, community leaders and schools by involving early intervention process. Adolescent environment should be modified and intervened which is considered effective universally when compared to individual intervention alone in drug usage.

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