

**Prevalence of Drug Abuse in Haryana: Reasons and Remedies****Dr. Manju Panwar****Head, Dept of Social Work, B P S Mahila Vishwavidhalaya, Khanpur Kalan, Sonipat,  
Haryana, (First State Women's University in North India)****DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13376236>****Abstract:**

Drug addiction has affected every country of the World. Youth is considered the productive and creative age of the human life. It is a vital age for the development of any country. Today, there is no part of the world that is free from the curse of drug trafficking and drug obsession have engulfed the whole world because people in large numbers are addicted to drugs and living dismal lives. Use of alcohol and levels of drug abuse have increased extremely in Haryana since 1990s. Severity of substance abuse among adolescents is due to the venerable age and important developmental stage of life. Adolescence is the fragile age where there are high chances of starting substance use. The cost of drug use are complex because it not only destroy the health, education and occupation of the user but also has huge repercussion on financial loss and breaking down the structure of the society. Peer pressure and depression are the main causes of drug abuse among the youth. Under the pressure of friends, person comes in contact with drugs and later in life becomes addicted to drugs. Keeping the severity of problem, this paper highlights the magnitude of the drug abuse in Haryana. Drug treatment is not only important for the particular person and his/her family but it is also imperative in reducing crime rate in the society. Cognitive behavioral therapy, medications, or combination of both can be used in the treatment plan. This paper points out the main reasons of drug abuse and challenges for combating drug abuse in India. Efforts of



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government and suggestions for reducing the number of drug addicts are given in the last section of the paper.

**Key Words:** Youth, substance use, drug addiction, rehabilitation.

## 1. Introduction:

Drug (substance) abuse has developed a universal threat particularly to youth. It has become a grave concern which is disturbing the physical and socio-economic well-being of the country. It is more alarming among the youth in India. Under the influence of drugs, not only the individual but whole family and society has been affected. . The World Health Organization (WHO) defines youth in the age group from 15 to 24 years and lot of change with regard to physiological, psychological and behavioral occur in this age. Pattern in the social interactions and relationships also tend to change. According to the United Nations around 16% of the world's population consists of youth and this ratio is higher in countries with growing population like China and India. As per Census 2011, 19.1 per cent of India's population is in the age group of 15 to 24 years According to the National Mental Health Survey in India, 13.5% participants in the age group of 18 to 29 years reported substance use, out of which tobacco consumption is common. This share of substance use is higher in rural India. Tobacco, alcohol and drug use are more common in young men than women.

## 2. Magnitude of the problem:

Drug abuse is a disturbing danger to human life which is not affecting a particular individual but his/her friends, family, community and society at large are also in danger. As per the reports of NCRB, rates of adolescent delinquency has increased by 2% from 2018-19 which was 75.2 per cent in adolescents aged between 16 to 18 years. As per the National Crime Records Bureau, 2019 Delhi is the third major contributor of juvenile crime as compared to other states. (National Crime



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Records Bureau, 2019). Adults constitute 2/3rd of the population of the total population and they have a desire to try out with risk behavior. According to WHO around 70% of early deaths among adults are because of smoking, illicit drug use, irresponsible driving started during adolescence. According to the survey conducted by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2018 on drug use among the general population, it was revealed that the use of drugs remains higher among youngsters than older people. Research conducted in this field recommended that early age from 12 to 14 years old and then 15 to 17 years old is a critical age for the beginning of substance use and it may reach to its peak among youth around the age of 18 to 25 years. As per the report on the “National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India” (2019) released by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment’s highlights the severity of substance use where 16 crore people (14.6%) between the age of 10 and 75 years are using alcohol currently out of them 5.2 per cent are dependent on alcohol. The report also revealed that around 8.5 lakh people are injecting drugs.

Use of tobacco is the main reason of preventable deaths at global level. If we look at the international level, alcohol is widespread worldwide but in India tobacco is extremely common in India. India is the second largest tobacco buyer internationally and about one-fourth of adults in India consume tobacco (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2016). Among persons aged between 13 to 18 years, the incidence of tobacco users was 18.5% and about half started tobacco before the age of 10 (Government of India (Go), 2019a). Other studies showed that a majority of adults start substance use in their youth (Sharma and Tragi, 2016). Use of cannabis among youth has been gradually increasing and very few studies were conducted to evaluate the pattern and determinant (Kuiper et al., 2011). India is also trapped in the vicious circle of drug misuse and the figures of drug addicts are rising day by day. It is an important challenge faced by India is to protect the children from the widespread incidence of substance abuse. Research



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conducted in this area by government and private organizations state that there has been a significant increase in the occurrence of use and abuse of substances among young children.

### 3. Drug Abuse in Haryana:

Haryana is renowned for its strong healthy eating and the famous proverb 'deco main dish Haryana, java dud Dahl Ki Khanna' is now replaced as 'Chita and Heroin state because of the huge cases of drugs which keep on increasing day by day. As per the data from Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau (HSNCB), a total of 3,619 FIRs under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered in Haryana state from the month of January to November 30 of 2023 year. As per the data received from PGIMS Rohtak, most of those visiting the center for treatment of drug abuse are youngsters. In a period of around one year, a total of around 1,800 patients visited the center. All those who visited the center were between the age group of 20-30 years. Use of alcohol and levels of drug abuse have increased extremely in Haryana since 1990s. As per the survey conducted by the Institute for Development and Communication (IDC) revealed that more than 65 percent of families are affected by alcohol abuse (IDC 2003). It also found that that alcohol and drug abuse were the main causes of suicide by farmers. Current articles published in The Tribune newspaper that it is a matter of concern and fear that the use of alcohol and other drugs is a grave problem in Haryana and has been increasing in the past few years. Haryana is the second state in the alcohol consumption. It is a matter of great concern that illegal drugs is prevalent among teenagers while students in high schools use smack and alcohol. Unemployment, accessibility and availability of drugs lead to the rise of substance abuse in Haryana and other nearby states like Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Jammu division of J & K.

“Catch them young” is the rule that Haryana Police is practicing for preventing young generation towards drug abuse. In order to achieve this aim, the Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau (HSNCB) started a revolutionary project called ‘Chakravayuh: The escape room’ which is designed



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to face life's challenges in an effective learning setting. Situation is very alarming in Haryana with regard to drug abuse because the many cases of drug addicts and smuggling are increasing every day. If the situation is not controlled immediately, Haryana can become Punjab where majority of the people are addicted to drugs and ruin their and their family's life. Though it is a good sign that Haryana government is making efforts to make the people aware about the drug problem at right time and also implementing drug free programmers. For example, 'Operation Prahar' is a step towards this where drug, illegal liquor, gambling, drugs will be stopped with immediate effect. The drug problem is severe in Sirsa district of Haryana where it is prevalent both in rural and urban areas. It is widespread even in schoolchildren and pose a severe warning if not taken seriously, this problem may spread in other district of Haryana. As per the Haryana police website report, Around 2587 drug addict cases were reported in 2018 in the state which was 2247 in the year 2017. Reduced interest in studies, no communication with family, lack of physical and entertaining activities, regular tiredness, stealing money, loss of hunger, over-sleeping are some of the characteristics of drug addicts.

According to the NCRB report on Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India that there are more suicides in Haryana than Punjab because of the drug abuse and alcohol addiction. For instance in the year 2021, there were 89 including two women have died by suicide due to drug abuse in Haryana where as in Punjab the number was 78.

The main reason of rising drug abuse danger in Haryana is because of its proximity to Punjab state where prevalence of drug problem is widespread. Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh, recently did a survey on drugs.

**4. Reasons of Drug Abuse:**

Before proceeding further, it is pertinent to understand difference between substance use and abuse. Substance use includes the misuse of prescription drugs; the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs (i.e., cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, inhalants, hallucinogens or ecstasy); and the use of injection drugs (WHO, 2010; McLellan, 2017) whereas substance abuse refers to the use of drug, including licit and illegal drugs, other than when medically prescribed. It is a menace for the structure of the families, communities, societies and countries. It is dangerous use of substances in amounts such that it causes physical or mental harm (WHO, 2023a). In 2017, it was found that about 5.5% of the worldwide population aged between 15 to 64 had used substances, and around 35 million people were affected by substance use disorders. Internationally, half a million deaths yearly are responsible to substance use and add about 1.3% of the disease burden (WHO, 2023b).

Substance use can result to the harmful effects of physical, mental and cognitive development which may increase the risk of upcoming substance use turmoil and related problems like lack of interest in educational performance (Balyakina et al., 2014; Baingana et al., 2015) Substance abuse poses not only individual risks but also lead to public health issues, which require strategies to deal with the societal impacts (Tsering et al., 2010; Mogan et al., 2020).

The numbers of drug abuse among children and adolescents is upper than the general population because it is the age of experimentation and forming their own individuality. Culture and lifestyle are the main reasons for youth falling in the trap of drug abuse in the developed countries. A survey was conducted among the senior secondary schools in Imphal where it was found that substance use was very widespread and revealed that one or more substances have been used by more than 50 per cent of the students. Tobacco and alcohol were the most frequent substances used among youth. The survey also revealed that substance use was found more among those males



whose father or any other member of the family used substances. A bulk of the students opined that substance abuse was started by their friends.

One of the most general reason found for high prevalence of substance abuse is the influence of friends. Friends may make the substance abuse available for people and persuade them to consume for physiological pleasure. Depression is another reason because of which majority of youth end their life by consuming drugs. Due to unhealthy competition, high expectations from family and society, unemployment, comparing life with others, youth feels frustrated and start taking drugs in order to get fleeting happiness. This becomes a habit and youth ruin their life.

A study carry out by Professor Ranjit Singh Ghuman, Dr Gurinder Kaur and Dr Jatinder Singh for the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) also shared the finding that more than 50 per cent of the drug users belong to rural areas. There is so much frustration among youth due to unemployment which is one of the main reasons for drug addiction. Juvenile delinquency and drug abuse are the important factors including familial, social, psychological, environmental and economic factors (Jenkins & Zunguze, 1998; Noyori-Corbett & Moon, 2010). Family and environment play an important role in escalating the use of drugs. Family constitution, absence of interpersonal relations in the family, no proper guidance, economic insecurity, access and availability of substance abuse, emotional cruelty and peer pressure are responsible for juvenile delinquency (Bachman, Wadsworth, O'Malley, Johnston, & Schulenberg, 1997). In addition to this, high amount of stress, depression, anxiety are some of the mental causes that may lead to habit of substances use.

### **5. Challenges for controlling drug in India:**

There is a shortage of trained personnel, specialized equipment, and proper infrastructure to effectively combat drug trafficking and abuse. New psychoactive substances are increasing in India which are not covered under the current drug control laws which becomes challenging



for law enforcement agencies to control them efficiently. Illegal drugs is also rising. There is not much awareness about the risk of drug abuse particularly in rural areas. Despite of high prevalence of drugs among youth in India, still in Indian society, it is stigmatized which is very challenging for people to get help and treatment. Research shows that state where there is a availability of treatment facilities, but still the number is very less in getting treatment because due to the stigma and lack of awareness.

#### **6. Govt efforts in combating drug abuse:**

The Government is making constant efforts for combating the problem of substance abuse among the youth. This includes:

- i. Induction of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) in more than 300 vulnerable districts where volunteers reach to the community people. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has started this movement in order to create awareness about harmful effects of substance abuse among the youth, particularly in universities, colleges, schools and communities. Community participation and cooperation are given upmost importance in the decrease of substances abuse. Government, non- government organization, community based organizations like groups of anganwadi, ASHA Workers, ANMs, Mahila Mandals & SHGs are also engaged in combating this menace. Apart from using digital media like face book, twitter and instagram, documentary movies are also shown to sensitize the public at large.
- ii. Maintaining of Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for Addicts (IRCAs) for treating the victims of drugs. These centres also provide preventive education services encompassing awareness generation, counseling, and detoxification and bring them back in normal routine of life after proper treatment.





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- iii. Setting up of Community based Peer led Intervention (CPLI) Centres where vulnerable groups like children and adolescents are made aware about the ill effects of drugs and they are engaged in life skill activities through peer educators.
- iv. Establishing and maintaining Outreach and Drop In Centres (ODICs) where a safe and protected space is being provided to the substance users. Facilities like screening, review and therapy are given to the drug addicts and later they are provided medical treatment and rehabilitation services.

### 7. Suggestions for stopping drug abuse:

In order to reduce the impact of drugs on general population youth in particular, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been implementing the scheme of prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse through the National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction. It encompasses services like awareness generation, psychotherapy, treatment of drug addicts. The programme focus on the prevention based on community approach through educational programmes and services given to drug persons and their caretakers.

Research conducted in this field reveals that efforts have been made to prepare policies as per the age groups for the prevention of negative effects of substance use (Boys et al., 2001; Chandler et al., 2009; United States, 2016; Santangelo et al., 2022). It is in this regard primary health centers (PHCs) play a vital role in making the community aware about the leading healthcare team available for identifying and addressing substance use at the early stage. It not only helps in controlling the rising number of substance use but also diminish the load on advanced levels of healthcare.

Keeping the spirit of the United Nations Conventions and the existing Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and NDPS Policy, 2012, the Ministry has drafted a



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National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for 2018-2023, with the aim to focus on preventive education, awareness generation, counseling, rehabilitation of drug dependent persons. It also focuses on capacity building training along with the government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

June 26 is celebrated as International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking every year in order to make the world community aware and sensitize the people in general and the youth in particular regarding the to the risk of drugs.

### Following suggestions are given to stop this menace

1. Ban of substance use can be effective particularly in public places. seem to be effective and
2. Effective actions are required to target younger age and schools can be roped in the prevention of the commencement of substance use among adolescents.
3. Though under section 7 of the Tobacco Control Act, 2003 mentions that tobacco related products are harmful for health in order to sensitize and protect the common population from the use of tobacco but the need of the hour is to conduct awareness generation camps particularly in the villages through role play, poster making etc.
4. There is a need to create awareness and educate people about the harmful effects of substance abuse at all levels, be it individual, family, workplace and society as a whole.
5. Stigma and discrimination against people who were dependent on drugs need to be stopped and they should be accepted with dignity and respect in the society.
6. A lot more to be done towards strengthening research, building capacity of the human resource working in this field, documentation need to be done in order to achieve the objectives of Nasa Mukti movement.
7. Advocacy and networking are to be done at local, state, national and international levels.



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8. There is a need to strengthen the provisions of NDPS Act and PITNDPS Act by allocating financial resources and training to the law enforcement organizations.
9. Coordination between various organizations working for combating drug trafficking is required in order to keep a close watch on the activities of drug trafficking.
10. Availability, accessibility and affordability of the treatment and rehabilitation centres is the need of the hour for stopping the spread of drug addicts.
11. Farmers who are engaged in illegal farming should be given awareness about the other innovative livelihood programmes for their living and discouraged for illegal farming which is harmful for the development of our country. For example in Jharkhand state, different livelihood scheme was started for encouraging farmers to adopt innovative farming and cash incentives were given to them to uproot the illegal crops.
12. The need of the hour is to sensitize the children with regard to the harmful effects of drugs and develop resilience to keep the peer and social pressure at bay. For that, prevention and control programmes are needed not only in schools but awareness need to be created in school, colleges, community and society at large. School children must be encouraged to remain away from drugs and channelize their energy in sports, creative and innovative activities.
13. Schools are the important platform for prevention of substance use among adolescents. Training can be provided to the school staff to educate students and their parents about the health education programmes including providing healthy diet, harmful effects of taking drugs, life skills etc for the prevention of substance use among adolescents.
14. Parents should monitor the kind of friends of children and guide against bad company.



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### 8. Conclusion:

Research conducted in this field revealed that high occurrence of tobacco and inhalants use are found among adolescents particularly in Delhi. The beginning of substance use can be started as early as 13 years of age. Low educational position, less family members, peer friend pressure are the main reasons for starting substance use among adolescents. It has been observed and research studies also show that adolescents come in contact with substance use in early age. Factors such as low educational position, emergence of nuclear family, peer pressure, technology, and globalization are responsible for the increase of substance use. There is a need to spread awareness and parents must be made sensitized to spend quality time with their children and talk to them about the matters related to their life. A strong desire and will power are needed in order to give up habit of taking drug. In order to stop the widespread spread of drugs, it is important that apart from improving employment opportunities, there is a need to cut the supply chain from the root and severe punishments must be given to the dealers who are in the business of selling and buying of drugs. Important stakeholders including non government organizations, community based organizations, policy makers need to be roped in providing effective strategies for combating this menace from our society.

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