

## CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*Drug addiction cannot simply be regarded as a result of weak willpower or moral failure; rather, it is a complex health disorder that requires consistent and long-term treatment similar to other chronic illnesses. For individuals who have never experienced substance abuse, it is often difficult to comprehend why someone would intentionally expose themselves to harmful substances. However, there are multiple underlying factors that push individuals toward drug use, and the consequences are often devastating, leading to severe social, psychological, and physical damage. Substance abuse has emerged as one of the leading causes of preventable deaths, illnesses, and disabilities worldwide. In this context, the present study seeks to explore the major factors contributing to drug addiction and to highlight possible measures that can safeguard the future of Pakistan's youth.*

### INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2008) substance abuse is exacerbated by complex socioeconomic issues such as poverty, unemployment and general crime. Many people's lives are being ruined by societal issues. South Africa is currently undergoing a global drug invasion. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2008) drug dealers target kids with the hope that they will experiment with drugs and then urge their peers to do the same. It would imply that a big proportion of today's youth regard drug use as a normal, even desirable part of growing up. According to Madu and Matla (2003) the negative repercussions of substance abuse are overlooked. There are numerous hypotheses that attempt to explain why certain people use drugs and alcohol. Disease or biomedical theories, economics, psychology, symbolic interaction, social control and availability are some examples (Crain, 2004).

Substance abuse among teenagers wastes a significant amount of money each year. Massive sums of money are being allocated to treatment and prevention centers as proof of this. Because poverty is a factor in substance abuse this will have far-reaching consequences for the country as a whole. The funds could have gone to programs that help people get out of poverty. A variety of organizations work to restrict drug access and discourage young people from using them. SA Police Services, Alcoholics Anonymous, the South African Narcotic Bureau and various government and non-government agencies are examples of these organizations (Department of Social Development, 2006). Despite their best efforts teenagers' substance abuse is still on the rise according to recent national survey data because of the seriousness of the issues surrounding adolescent substance abuse and misuse, legislators, educators, parents and

communities are compelled to act. As a result, we must find better ways to prevent it based on evidence substance abuse has become the most widespread social ill in modern times, affecting people worldwide (Poor et al., 2004) Drug addiction is defined by a dysfunctional pattern of drug use that manifests in a variety of negative ways (Madadi et al., 2004). Iran has a particularly high level of contamination due to its unique human and geographical characteristics (Jahangiri et al., 2002).

According to a 2005 World Health Organization report, there are approximately 200 million sedative addicts worldwide with the highest prevalence in Iran and the highest recurrence in the long-term age group (Abbasi et al., 2016).

Drugs which are not foods can alter the body's physiological processes by inhaling, injecting, smoking, consuming, applying through a skin patch or dissolving under the tongue. The medication used to be simple, but there are now complications. Modern medicine like atomic energy, has the potential to do both great good and great harm. Even in countries with cutting-edge medical technology, drug-related death and iatrogenic disorders are common. This is quite high due to a lack of professional skills and responsibilities in our own environment (Shumaila et al., 2016).

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section focuses on research on adolescent substance misuse. A literature review will be conducted to explain the research problem, set the stage for the study, generate new research ideas, and identify discrepancies or gaps in the current literature. There has been a great deal of research into the causes and risk factors of teenage substance abuse. To determine the causes of teenage drug abuse, we will look at previous research findings. The literature review will include several theoretical perspectives on the motivations for substance use, the prevalence of substance misuse among male adolescents, the many types of abused substances, and the health, economic, and societal implications of substance abuse. In addition to exposing readers to the teenagers who live at the study's location, the essay delves into their socioeconomic status.

Qidwai et al. (2010) investigated that the "Adolescent Life Style and Behavior" will be used to track changes in behavior. Who created survey research questions for a student population in Pakistan spanning from 15 to 24 years old? Common health issues, physical activity, lifestyle, and habits will be covered (recreational drug use, leisure activities, internet use etc.).

Saleem et al. (2010) reported that age, spending habits, post-purchase regret, the want to spend excessively, attitudes about shopping and spending, and dysfunctional spending all had an impact on Pakistani teenagers' compulsive buying behavior. The questionnaire that was distributed in Bahawalpur, Lahore, and Islamabad provided the majority of the study's data. The investigation was conducted using a convenience sample of 371 individuals. Statistical methods for correlation and regression were used to analyze the data. The statistics show that compulsive buying behavior and age have a strong but unfavorable relationship. However, the traits of a want to spend, a compulsive spending drive, sentiments about shopping and spending, dysfunctional spending, and post-purchase regret are all positively correlated with compulsive buying behavior.

As discussed in the literature review by new research is shedding light on why students use study drugs, which is great news for efforts to reduce their use (such as educational sessions during orientation weeks). Misinformation about the benefits of these drugs on health and academic performance, as well as their use as a crutch for more serious problems, play a significant role in their widespread use. Keep in mind that many students use these drugs for fun and have no problems; however, identifying this risk group is necessary in order to find effective solutions for individuals who do use.

In 2010 Drug addiction, also known as substance dependence or chemical dependency, is characterized by a destructive pattern of drug abuse. The disease causes significant problems with tolerance and withdrawal from the substance, as well as other issues that the user may face socially, at work or in school. Smith and Farah go over the narcotics in detail. Stimulants such as amphetamine, dextroamphetamine and methylphenidate

prevent the brain from reabsorbing dopamine and norepinephrine. These neurotransmitters are required for both pleasure and cognition in which a 3-year-old girl died as a result of her parents' drug abuse. The only reason she was taken to the hospital was for a minor burn (from the hot water). After receiving two doses of Dormicum separated by brief intervals, followed by a dose of Pavulon the girl became unconscious and died; however, the inquiry board did not investigate the rationale behind this injection because it was deemed unnecessary. This case not only brought attention to the other deaths caused by inappropriate and illogical drug use, but it was also the fatal case. According to the survey, it is the responsibility of drug regulatory authorities to ensure appropriate and reasonable treatment, and medical practitioners should exercise caution when prescribing medication. stated that the early antisocial behavior, anxiety, despair, socioeconomic position, scholastic failure, hyperactivity,

physical/sexual abuse and a family history of substance misuse are all risk factors.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in District Faisalabad with college students as the target population. A multistage sampling procedure was adopted for data collection. In the first stage, two tehsils were randomly selected from a total of six. In the second stage, four colleges were randomly chosen—two from each selected tehsil. In the final stage, a sample of 240 students was obtained, comprising 60 students from each college, through convenient sampling.

Data were gathered using a survey method with a structured interview schedule that was carefully developed in line with the study's objectives. This strategy ensured the accuracy, reliability, and relevance of the information collected to effectively address the research aims.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Regarding Residence**

Categories	Frequency
Own House	22
Rented	86
Hostel	32
Total	140

Table 1 illustrates the respondents' frequency and percentage regarding their residence. The majority (61.4%) of respondents lived in rented houses, 15.7% lived in their own homes, and 22.9% resided in hostels. These findings highlight housing as an important factor in the social context of drug addiction among students.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents Regarding Abuse of More Than One Drug at a Time**

Categories	Frequency
Often	94
Rare	27
Never	19
Total	140

Table 2 shows that a large number of respondents (67.1%) often abused more than one drug at a time, 19.3% rarely did so, while 13.6% reported never engaging in this behavior.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents Regarding Engagement in Illegal Activities**

Categories	Frequency
Yes	89
No	51
Total	140

Table 3 indicates that 63.6% of respondents reported engaging in illegal activities to obtain drugs, while 36.4% had not engaged in such activities. This highlights the strong association between drug abuse and involvement in unlawful practices among students.

## CONCLUSION

Drug misuse is often an unseen threat that gradually destroys lives before its victims even notice. What once seemed like harmless enjoyment can slowly take control, changing every aspect of daily living. Yet, falling into addiction does not mean life has to end in despair. The present moment is always the best time to seek recovery and make a commitment to sobriety. Although the journey away from drugs is challenging, every individual possesses the strength and resources to live a healthier, balanced life. Healing comes step by step, and progress is achieved by moving forward one day at a time. To truly address this crisis, joint efforts are required—governments, families, and communities must unite to protect the younger generation from substance dependence.

Adolescence is a sensitive stage of growth where young people face not only physical changes but also pressure from peers, families, and society at large. Influences from media and public figures can further shape their choices and behaviors. If these challenges feel too heavy, teenagers may experience confusion, stress, and frustration. In response, some may resort to experimenting with alcohol or drugs as a way to escape their problems, unknowingly exposing themselves and others to serious harm.

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