
UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING DRUG ABUSE IN INDIA: THE ECLIPSED BATTLE

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ABSTRACT

“The fight against drug trafficking is a wildfire that threatens to consume those fundamental rights of the individual deliberately enshrined in our constitution.”

- Juan Gurerreo Burciaga

Drug Abuse is a pervasive and multifaceted global issue that poses significant challenges to public health and societal well-being. It is heart-wrenching to know the dreadful fact that in the Indian context, the problem of drug abuse has been steadily surging the graph, impacting individuals, families, and communities across the nation. This research paper envisages providing a comprehensive analysis of the various dimensions of drug abuse in India, including its prevalence, contributing factors, socio-economic implications, and existing interventions.

Drawing upon a synthesis of existing literature and statistical data, this paper examines the prevalence rates and patterns of drug abuse in India, highlighting the narcotic substances most commonly abused and the demographics most vulnerable to addiction. It explores the complex interplay of socio-economic factors, cultural influences, and the psychological dynamics that contribute to the initiation and perpetuation of drug abuse within the Indian context. Furthermore, this paper delves into the socio-economic ramifications of drug abuse in India, elucidating its impacts on individuals, families, and communities as well as its broader implications for public health, crime rates, and economic productivity. It also evaluates the effectiveness of current policies and interventions aimed at preventing and addressing drug abuse in India, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Through a nuanced examination of complexities surrounding drug abuse in India, this research paper strives to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the issue at hand and to showcase light on the development of evidence-

based strategies for prevention, intervention, and treatment. By addressing the multifaceted nature of drug abuse in India, this paper proposes strategy implications for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and community stakeholders.

Keywords: Drug Abuse, Public Health, Socio - Economic Implications, Narcotic Substances, Crime Rates, Economic Productivity

INTRODUCTION:

Drug Abuse is a pressing issue that transcends borders and affects individuals and societies worldwide. In India, a country known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse population, drug abuse presents a complex challenge with far-fetched consequences. As the world's second-most populous country, India grapples with a myriad of socio-economic factors that contribute to the prevalence of drug abuse and addiction. The landscape of drug abuse in India is multifaceted, influenced by factors such as socioeconomic disparities, urbanization, globalization, and cultural norms. While traditional substances like alcohol and tobacco have long been prevalent, the proliferation of synthetic drugs and opioids adds a new dimension to the problem.

Additionally, the intersection of drug abuse with issues such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to education and healthcare exacerbates its impact on the vulnerable population. Understanding the dynamics of drug abuse in India requires a holistic approach that takes into account various stakeholders, including government agencies, healthcare professionals, non-governmental organizations, and affected communities. Efforts to address this issue must encompass prevention, treatment rehabilitation, and harm reduction strategies tailored to the unique needs of diverse populations nationwide.

This paper delves into the intricacies of drug abuse in India, examining its prevalence, contributing factors, socio – economic implications, and the response of stakeholders at different levels. By shedding light on this complex issue, we aim to foster a better understanding of the challenges posed by drug abuse and identify avenues for effective intervention and policy development to mitigate its impact on individuals and society.

DRUGS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION:

A drug is a substance that, when administered into the body, alters the body's function either

physically or psychologically.

Furthermore, a drug is a chemical substance that produces a biological effect when administered to an organism. A drug can be broadly classified as:

- Legal (Alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco)
- Illegal (Cannabis, Ecstasy, Cocaine and Heroin)
- Psychoactive Drugs: This particular classification of drugs affects the central nervous system and alters a person's mood, thinking, and behavior.

This can be further classified as:

- Depressants
- Stimulants
- Hallucinogens
- Narcotics.
- Cocaine.

Drugs can be gathered and classified endlessly based on their ramifications on the human body or the human mind. These drugs are administered for medical purposes or legally to promote resilience. When it is used as per the addiction of the human mind then it broadly falls under the category of drug abuse.

ADDICTION OF DRUGS AND ITS REASONS:

Addiction, particularly drug abuse, is a pervasive issue that affects individuals across the globe. It is a complex condition that arises from various factors, and understanding its root causes is crucial for addressing and combating this pressing societal concern.

There are several reasons why individuals may turn to drugs and subsequently become addicted. Firstly, many people use drugs as a means of coping with stress, trauma, or underlying

mental health issues. Drugs offer a temporary escape from reality and provide relief from emotional pain or discomfort. However, this temporary relief often leads to a cycle of dependence and addiction as individuals become reliant on substances to manage their emotions.

Moreover, environmental factors play a significant role in drug abuse. Peer pressure, exposure to drug use within the community, and socioeconomic factors can all influence an individual's likelihood of engaging in substance abuse. In environments where drug use is normalized or readily accessible, individuals may be more inclined to experiment with drugs and develop addictive behaviors.

Genetic predisposition also contributes to the risk of addiction. Research has shown that certain genetic factors can increase susceptibility to substance use disorders. Individuals with a family history of addiction are at higher risk of developing addiction themselves, highlighting the role of genetics in shaping addictive behaviors.

The consequences of drug abuse are far-reaching and profound. At the individual level, addiction can lead to physical and mental health problems, including liver disease, respiratory issues, cognitive impairment, and co-occurring psychiatric disorders. Substance abuse also increases the risk of accidents, injuries, and overdose deaths, posing a significant threat to life and well-being.

Furthermore, addiction takes a toll on interpersonal relationships and social functioning. Family dynamics may be strained as a result of substance abuse, leading to conflict, dysfunction, and breakdown of familial bonds.

Children of parents with addiction are particularly vulnerable, facing increased risk of neglect, abuse, and developmental difficulties. Moreover, addiction often leads to social isolation, alienation, and stigmatization, exacerbating feelings of shame and guilt among affected individuals.

In conclusion, addiction is a complex issue with multifaceted causes and consequences. Understanding the underlying reasons for drug abuse is essential for developing effective prevention and treatment strategies. By addressing the biological, psychological, and social

determinants of addiction, we can work towards mitigating the impact of drug abuse and promoting the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

RISE IN CRIME DUE TO DRUGS:

Drugs and crime are two different factors but both are interrelated. The drug abuse and the crime rate are directly proportional to each other. This is because the population that engages in drug abuse are the youth from age 21- 35 who amounts to 64% of the total population. This raises the youth getting involved in criminal activities. This is a multifaceted and complex issue.

The various impacts and causes are discussed below:

1. *Distribution and Trafficking of Drugs:*

There is a significant rise in the crime rate due to the illicit drug trafficking. In illicit drug trafficking organized trafficking groups are involved in criminal activities to build their drug empire or to earn more profit out of this drug trade. The profit motive here and to expand their drug empire these people engage in criminal activities.

1. *Addiction to Drugs:*

Addiction to drugs causes the crime rate to rise. Those people who are addicted to drugs can survive without drugs. There are cases where drug abusers kill their family members due to their addiction to drugs. To the addiction, the abusers cannot differentiate people which can be harmful to the close ones of those abusers. These abusers struggling with addiction will engage themselves in activities like murder, and theft as they won't have enough money to buy drugs.

3. *Drug guild and Drug Mafia:*

Drug guilds are those groups that carry out drug trade. There are many drug groups which leads to competition between them. This competition encourages them to be involved in activities like gang wars, shooting, and other acts. The drug mafia through money corrupts the system of government through which they engage in criminal activities.

There are various other factors like the extreme profit of drug trade which attract people into this business they can earn a lot of money in a short duration of time which increases the crime rates as motivated by profit individuals engage in criminal activities. This problem can be handled by the government by implementing effective drug policies and strict laws that will prevent individuals and groups from engaging in similar activities. The government should arrange de-addiction centers for those individuals who suffer from withdrawal difficulties. This can help to some extent in reducing the crime rates due to drugs.

To address this issue, we need a comprehensive approach that considers both the supply and demand sides of the issue also with the economic and social factors that contribute to drug-related crime.

IMPACT OF DRUG ABUSE IN INDIA:

The impact of drug abuse can be qualitatively analyzed mainly in three different ways the economic impact, the social impact, and the political impact due to drugs.

Economic impacts:

The impact of drugs on the economy can be seen in two different aspects. The long-term and the short-term impact. The traders and the countries that earn through illicit drug trade can earn profit in the short term but when it comes to the long term it will surely affect the economy. This is the short-term satisfaction. The population that takes drugs is the youth of the nation. These youth have to work and support the nation's economy. If the youth are drastically affected by the cause of drugs their working capability shrinks and their efficiency drops which directly affects the growth and development of the nation. The production of the nation is affected because of the drugs. As the working population engaged in drug-related activities the government will not be able to generate tax which directly affects the income of the government to a major extent as taxes are a vital source of income to the government. The long-term impact is the health care needs because drugs drastically affect the health of individuals in long term. So, the country needs to spend a lot on healthcare facilities and rehabs or deaddiction centers. As a lot of money is diverted into the health care centers the government will not be able to spend on other facilities required for development. The country which is a hub of drugs will lose tourism and foreign direct investments as the image of the country is damaged on the international stage foreign tourists will not be interested in visiting the country because it is not

safe and secure for them. This will stop foreign investors from investing in the country because the working population of the country is addicted to the drugs which will adversely affect the fiscal deficit of the country. This trend will lead to the economic crisis.

Social Impact:

Drug abuse in India has a profound impact on societal values and norms. Societal values are those in which an individual keeps a standard of behavior and norms are those which society expects as the standard of behavior. If an individual is under the influence of drugs, he won't be able to maintain societal values and his standard of behavior. This undermines the image of the individual in the society. The person loses his respect both in the society and in the family. This loss of respect will motivate the individual to take narcotic drugs. The impact of drugs and narcotic substances is seen in school, school children are exposed to drugs. The education system is affected because of substance use. This leads to a drop in the literacy rate in the society, the society becomes uneducated. If a society becomes uneducated the civil society will collapse.

If a married person is taking drugs, this family is affected as the income of the family reduces, and there will be a lot of tension in the marital relationship which finally will lead to domestic violence. The children are without parental love. The child will not have a good father or mother. Individuals suffering from drug abuse will face a lot of social discrimination and social stigmas. The person in drug influence will face rejection from his colleagues then the capacity individual to do work is affected he will lose his job. The social stigma will also affect the family of the individual the family also will have to face the rejection from the society.

The drugs affect the civil law and order of the society. The society becomes unsafe, the crime rates will shoot because of the drug trade. Drug abuse will act as a passage for contagious diseases like AIDS/HIV which will pass through repeated use of needles and injections.

Political Impact:

The narcotic drugs affect the political system of the society. Drug plays a huge role in politics, that is politics is done based on drug-related affairs. The recent arrest of Jaffer Sadiq led to a huge uproar in the political sphere of Indian politics. The NCB has titled Jaffer as the kingpin of drug-related trade in the India-Australia-New Zealand region. Mr. Sadiq has shipped more

than 3500kg of pseudoephedrine a narcotic drug. he had a total turnover of 3500 crores. It is learned that Mr. Sadiq belonged to a particular political party NRI wing as he was arrested near election time. This has turned into the talk of the town the issue will drastically affect the mentality of the voters. The political parties will try to use this issue in their favor. This is how drugs affect the Indian polity. The parties will promise to implement stringent drug laws to reduce substance use. The stand on Indian drugs and related and the action on controlling drugs can affect international relationships. To have good diplomatic relationships with other countries in the sphere the government will have to engage in cooperation and agreements with international agencies and will have to act accordingly such as United Nations drug conventions. The drug trade will happen illegally in India in increases corruption in the system, this corruption extends to political and law-enforcing spheres. Drugs pose a huge challenge to the government. The other political aspect of drugs is the coverage of media on the issues, the traditional media can be trusted over the modern form of media. The traditional media can only publish factual news but the modern media like social media can have both false and misinformation which can negatively influence the public. The media can show bias in conveying the news to the public due to political pressure faced by the media. Free press and press freedom are required in the country to counter the problem of drugs and to create awareness of drugs in the public.

EXISTING DRUG LAWS:

The drug laws in India have evolved a lot from the pre-colonial era to this modern drug policy.

The drug law in the pre-colonial era was the opium act through which the colonial government regulated the trade of opium. This was the first introduction of drug law in India following this act dangerous act was enacted in 1930 the ambit was more than opium it regulated drugs like cocaine and morphine moreover this act was aimed at regulating importing and exporting of drugs through the ports of India. After Independence the law enacted specifically for drugs Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1985 (NDPS Act) this act governs drug-related offenses in the country. This act holds the ambit of psychotropic substances narcotic drugs and controlled substances. This act primarily focuses on the classification of substances into various categories. Those are substances for abuse and medical use. This Act lists out offenses like possession cultivation manufacture production sale and consumption of narcotics except for scientific and medical purposes. This act also levied down the penalties for this

offence which can be fine and imprisonment. Specific licenses can be obtained for using of drugs for scientific and medical purposes under this NDPS act. A new law enforcement agency known as the Narcotic Control Bureau NCB was introduced under the provision of this act, the NCB will look after offenses that are related to the drugs and which are specified under this act.

This NDPS act after its enactment in 1985 was amended many times to address the modern challenges posed to the government due to drugs and to control the trade of drugs in the country. Section 2 of the NDPS act defines the psychotropic substance cocaine, manufacture of narcotics drugs illicit traffic and sale.

There are special courts for the offenses under the NDPS act and this court has specific power and procedure for drug-related cases which is given under section 4 subclass 4 of the NDPS act. Section 5 of the NDPS Act lays down the penalties for the cultivation of cannabis plants, coca plants, and opium poppy, and if it is in commercial quantity extra penalties will be levied. Section 7 of the NDPS Act lays down the punishment for the manufacture possession sale of drugs. Section 9 of this act includes punishment for abetment and attempts to commit offenses under the NDPS act that are within the scope. Abetment can be defined as instigating assisting or encouraging an offense while an attempt is an incomplete act. Section 10 holds the jurisdiction for offenses committed in foreign space or India. Through this section, we have facilities for the process of extradition and international cooperation for drug-related offenses that are committed outside the geographical borders of India. This act consists both of bailable and non-bailable offenses ultimately the decision about granting bail is decided by the court on the facts in circumstances of the case. As India lies in the region of Golden Crescent, we require frequent amendments in the sections mentioned under the NDPS act. As the offences related to drugs keep on modernizing there is a need for this law to keep in pace with the modernization.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF DRUG ABUSE:

This requires a multi-factorial approach that encompasses treatment harm reduction preventive and enforcement measures. The government must launch preventive programs aimed at educating the public mainly children and youth of this nation media play a vital role in educating the public. This requires cooperation from both the public and the government. Early

intervention can stop a person from getting addicted to drugs in this case the withdrawal is much easier this involves counseling, screening, and support.

Community support is those peer support groups transitional housing and rehabilitation centers that allow the addicted individual to integrate into this society again. The laws in existence must be made more stringent and stronger enough to handle modern drug-related issues which involve busting of drug gults and closing out their supply channels and also to ensure justice and treatment for addicted individuals. The government must invest in valuation research of the progress of drug abuse treatment and prevention programs and identify the emerging trends in society. The government collaborates and fosters NGOs and community organizations to approach drug abuse-related issues.

The government must formulate the drug-related policies after proper research and then implement the policies with proper infrastructure for the implementation of such policies without proper infrastructure a policy cannot be implemented properly. After the stage of implementation there must be drug-related policy education like awareness campaigns and rallies organized to educate the public on drug-related policies after proper education there comes the last stage of policy evaluation which is evaluating the effectiveness, adequacy, and efficiency of said policy. We require a comprehensive and impactful evaluation of the policy. This must be done by the government while making policy decisions and enforcing it on the public.