

**EXPLORATORY STUDY TO ASSESS THE PREVELANCE AND
FACTORS INFLUENCING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG BOYS
STUDYING IN PROFESSIONAL COURSES AT SELECTED
COLLEGES, KARNATAKA.**

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ABSTRACT

Background of the study: Substance abuse is a major public health problem among the students worldwide especially in developing countries such as India. The accessibility, affordability and consumption of substances by students have increased in the recent years. The main aim of this study was to find out the prevalence rate of substance abuse among the students and the common factors which influence the student to take up substance abuse. **Objectives:** a) to assess the prevalence of substance abuse among boys studying in professional courses by structured questionnaire b) to find out the

factors influencing substance abuse among boys studying in professional courses. **Material and Methods:** Exploratory survey design was adopted for the study. 50 samples were selected by purposive sampling technique. Samples were the students studying in professional colleges at Kolar. The data was collected by using a multi-dimensional tool, self-reporting technique was used to collect the data and data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. **Results:** The majority 38 (76%) of the students were 18 years of age, 10 (20%) of the students admitted to currently abusing substances, the majority 5 (50%) of the students started to use substance while they were 17 years of age, many 8 (80%) of the students were using substances for more than a year and the most popular reason for first time substance abuse was experimentation 4 (40%).

KEYWORDS: Substance abuse, prevalence and factors influencing.

INTRODUCTION

Substance use refers to the use of any psycho active substances or drug including legal and illegal drugs, other than when medically indicated. Psycho active substances pose a threat to the health, socio and economic fabric of families, community and the Nation.^[1]

Substance abuse is a growing problem, consequences of substance dependence cost the community heavily and they form a major health problem. This habit not only affects health, education and occupational career, but it also incurs a huge financial and social burden on the society.^[2]

Adolescent drug abuse is a phenomenon which is determined by multiple factors. These Factors are imbedded in the cultural and social structures within communities. Family and Peer behavior and standards are for most youth the greatest sources of influence.^[3]

Epidemiological surveys which were carried out in the last three decades to assess the prevalence of alcohol and drug users in general population at India have revealed that 20-40% of the subjects were above 15years of age are current users of alcohol and 10% of them were regular or excessive users.^[4]

Many studies conducted on school students and medical students in the past few years, to determine the prevalence of substance use and its pattern; however a few studies exist on the substance use among the college students belonging to different academic backgrounds.^[5]

Also tobacco use in adolescents and young adults is reaching pandemic levels. The World Bank has reported that nearly 82,000-99,000 children and adults all over the world are beginning to smoke tobacco every day. About half of them would continue to smoke to adulthood. If the current trend continues, tobacco use will kill nearly 250,000,000 of today's children.

According to the recent Government of India's National Sample Survey data there are 184 million tobacco consumers in India. About 40% of them use smokeless tobacco, 20% consume cigarettes and another 40% consume beedies.^[6]

According to the World Health Organization, about 30% of India's population consumes alcohol regularly; it has also found out that alcohol consumption has risen by 55% over a period of 20 years.

The consequences of substance abuse and addiction can be enormous. Over the time the abuse of drugs or alcohol will start to harm your health in irreversible ways, it will also induce the neglect of your daily responsibilities. Finding time to handle everyday tasks like personal hygiene, studying and taking care of your family responsibilities can be very hard when most of your time and attention is focused on getting and abusing substances.^[7]

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Based on the objectives of the study a multidimensional, self-reporting tool was used to collect data. The tool consists of two Sections, Section A - consists of socio demographic data, Section B - Part I consists of questionnaire on prevalence of substance abuse; Part II consists of questionnaire on factors influencing substance abuse. The tool was validated by 8 researchers to check for comprehensiveness, adequacy and appropriateness. Permission was obtained from the Principal of the colleges to conduct the study and consent was obtained from 50 of the participating students who were selected by purposive sampling technique and fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Statistical data analysis

The collected data was compiled for data analysis by using descriptive statistics mean, frequency, and percentage.

RESULTS

1. The socio-demographic information of the students who participated in the study is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of students according to their socio demographic variables.

n=50

Sl. No.	Socio demographic variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age in years		
	1.1)17	9	18
	1.2)18	38	76
	1.3)19	3	6
2.	Family Monthly Income		
	2.1) Less than 10,000	22	44
	2.2) 10,001-20,000	17	34
	2.3) 20,001-30,000	11	22
3.	Religion		
	3.1) Hindu	35	70
	3.2) Christian	7	14
	3.3) Muslim	8	16

4.	Place of residence		
	4.1) Urban	20	40
	4.2) Rural	30	60
5.	Number of members in the family		
	5.1) 3	3	6
	5.2) 4	31	62
	5.3) 5	10	20
	5.4) 6	5	10
	5.5) 7	1	2
6.	Type of family		
	6.1) Joint	3	6
	6.2) Nuclear	47	94
7.	Number of siblings		
	7.1) 0	3	6
	7.2) 1	23	46
	7.3) 2	16	32
	7.3) 3	6	12
	7.4) 4	2	4
8.	Your birth order		
	8.1) 1	22	44
	8.2) 2	23	46
	8.3) 3	5	10
9.	Occupational status of father		
	9.1) Business	12	24
	9.2) Conductor	1	2
	9.3) Driver	2	4
	9.4) Farmer	30	60
	9.5) Government driver	1	2
	9.6) Lab technician	1	2
	9.7) Shopkeeper	1	2
	9.8) Teacher	2	4
10.	Occupational status of mother		
	10.1) Housewife	48	96
	10.2) Teacher	2	4
11.	Educational status of father		
	11.1) Higher secondary	6	12
	11.2) High school	28	56
	11.3) Pre-university and degree	15	30
12.	Educational status of mother		
	12.1) Higher secondary	5	10
	12.2) High school	27	54

Table 1 shows that the majority of the students 38 (76%) were in the age group of 18 years, 22 (44%) of the students had a family monthly income of less than 10,000 rupees, 35 (70%) of the students were of Hindu religion, 30 (60%) of the students were from rural areas, 47 (94%) of the students had nuclear family, 23 (46%) of the student's birth order was second, 30 (60%) of the student's fathers occupation was farming, 48 (96%) of the student's mothers

was housewives, 28 (56%) of the student's father had high school education, 27 (54%) of the student's mother had high school education, 19 (38%) of the students were pursuing B.Sc. Horticulture and 10 (20%) of the students were abusing substances.

2. Findings related to prevalence of substance abuse are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of substance abuse.

n=10

Sl. No.		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age of first use		
	1.1) 16	4	40
	1.2) 17	5	50
	1.3) 18	1	10
2.	Using from		
	2.1) Last year	2	20
	2.2) More than a year	8	80
3.	Students who consume tobacco	8	80
4.	Students who consume alcohol	6	60
5.	Frequency of substance consumption		
	5.1) Tobacco users, everyday	8	80
	5.2) Alcohol users, more than once in 12 months	5	50
6.	Those who abuse more than 1 substance at a time, (tobacco and alcohol)	4	40
7.	Procuring the abused substance		
	Shops	10	100
8.	Students who have thought of stopping substance/drug consumption	3	30

Table 2 findings showed that 5 (50%) of the students started using at the age of 17 years, 8 (80%) of the students started using substances from the past year, 8 (80%) of the students were using tobacco, 6 (60%) of the students were using alcohol, 4 (40%) of the students admitted to abusing more than 1 substance at a time commonly alcohol and tobacco, 3 (30%) of the students thought of stopping the consumption of substances.

3. Findings related to factors influencing substance abuse.

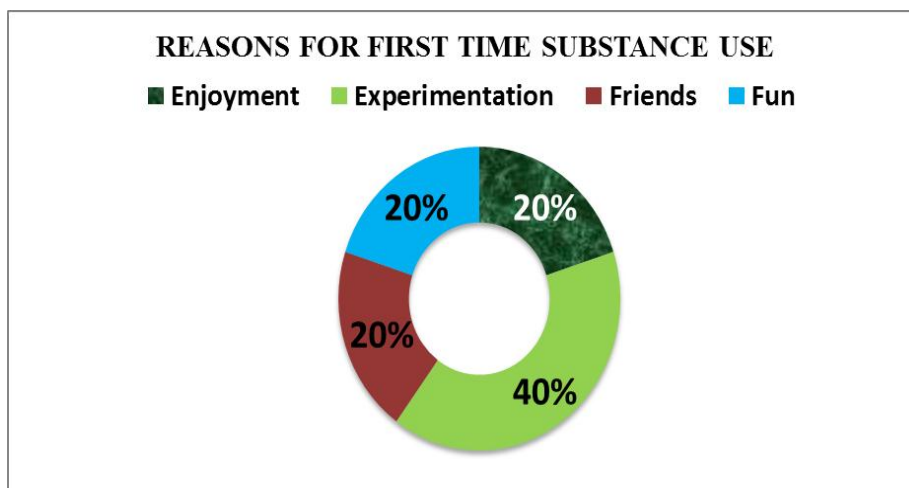


Figure 1: Doughnut Diagram showing the common reasons for first time substance abuse.

Figure 1 shows that the majority 4 (40%) started for experimentation, 2 (20%) for enjoyment, 2 (20%) for friends and 2 (20%) for the sake of fun.

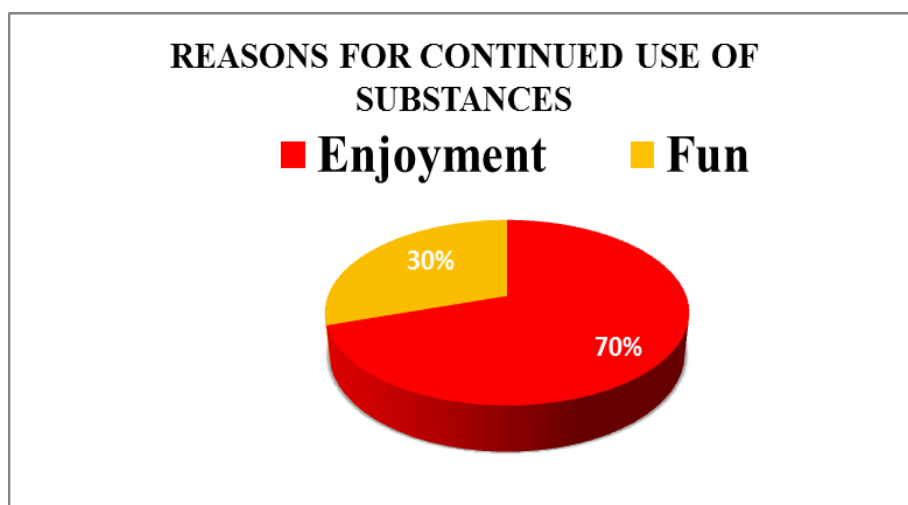


Figure 2: Pie diagram showing the reasons for continued use of substances.

Figure 2 shows that the majority 7 (70%) of them continued the use of substances for fun and the minority 3 (30%) of them continued the use for enjoyment.

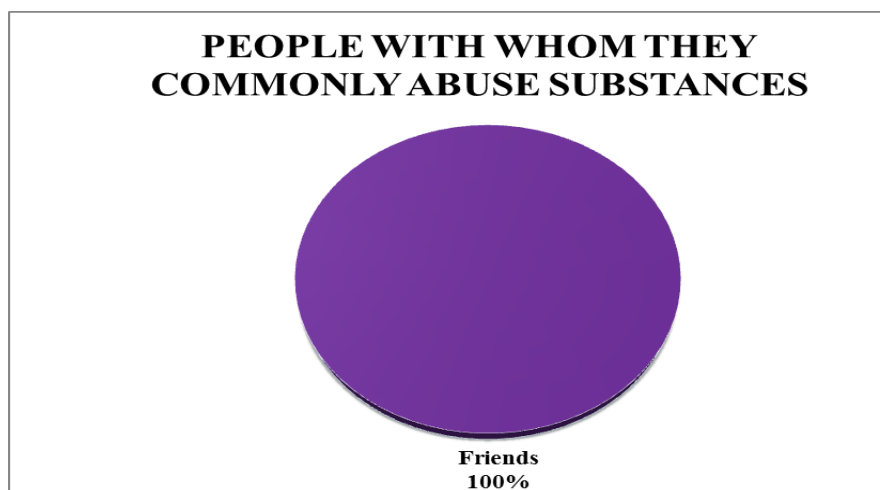


Figure 3: Doughnut diagram showing the people with whom the students commonly abuse substances.

Figure 3 shows that 10 (100%) of the students commonly abuse substances with their friends.

DISCUSSION

1. Findings related to socio demographic data

The majority 38 (76%) of the students were 18 years of age, maximum 22 (44%) of the student's family monthly income was less than 10,000 rupees, most 35 (70%) of the students were Hindu, majority 30 (60%) of the students were residing in rural areas, maximum 47 (94%) of the students belonged to nuclear family, many 23 (46%) of the students had one sibling and the majority 19 (38%) of the students were studying B.Sc. horticulture. Similarly a study conducted by A.Arora⁸ shows that out of 230 medical students 110 (47.8%) were males and 120 (52.2%) were females; majority being hostellers (212, 92.1%).

2. Findings related to prevalence of substance abuse

The majority 5 (50%) of the students started to use substances while they were 17 years of age, many 8 (80%) of the students were using substances for more than a year, the most commonly abused substance 8 (80%) was tobacco, in the 10 students who were abusing substances 4 (40%) of the students gave a history of abusing more than 1 substance at a time, it was tobacco and alcohol and only 3 (30%) of the students have expressed the thought of stopping their substance consumption. Similarly a study conducted by S. Kannan^[23] where the sample size was 200 shows that the use of various substances was seen in 47 (20.43%) students, the prevalence being significantly higher in males (33/110, 30%) as compared to females (14/120, 11.67%).

Findings related to factors influencing substance abuse

The most popular reason for first time substance abuse was experimentation 4 (40%), almost 9 (90%) of the students said that their friends make them hear and see what others are doing and make them voluntarily to fit into that group, many 7 (70%) of students said that their continued use of substances was for enjoyment and all the participants 10 (100%) said that they commonly abused substances with their friends. Similarly a study conducted by S.Choudhary^[24] on college going students who had substance abuse showed that the most common reason reported in their study for using such substances was relief from psychological stress (72.4%) and occasion celebration (72.4%) followed by to reduce tiredness (46.8%), peer pressure (42.6%), easy availability (42.6%), experimental use (36.2%) and community acceptance (34.1%). Of these, 28 (59.6%) made attempts to quit the use of concerned substance but had been unable to maintain abstinence. Also, 19 of 47 (40.4%) students said that they had experienced ill effects of substance use of which eight had physical complaints; five had problems with the family relationships and four had impaired academic performance.

Recommendations from the findings to reduce substance abuse

- 1) Selecting good peer group circle in your college.
- 2) Avoiding peer groups with members who have any form of substance abuse.
- 3) At an early age parents can talk openly to their children about substances which can cause harm and the numerous side effects of it.
- 4) The parents should prevent exposure of their children to family members who have a history of substance abuse.
- 5) Young adults should develop hobbies which will increase their intellectual abilities.
- 6) Parents should supervise their child's television and internet usage, preventing them from exposing themselves to substance abuse.
- 7) Young adults should develop positive coping mechanisms towards stress.
- 8) Regular meditation and yoga is known to reduce stress and calm the mind.
- 9) Physical activity and regular exercise will help the individual to cope with stressors.

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