

**“A STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF ADOLESCENT BOYS REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN SELECTED AREAS OF PALLITHOTTAM”****Sheeja S.*¹, Feby Fulgen², Jyothilakshmi³ and Mekha K. Gopinath⁴**

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ABSTRACT

Substance abuse is a complex phenomenon, which has various social, cultural, biological, geographical, historical and economic aspects. The researchers conducted a study to assess the knowledge and attitude of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse in selected community areas of Pallithottam in kollam district of kerala. The objectives of the study were to assess the knowledge of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse, to assess the attitude of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse and to find out the association between knowledge and selected socio demographic variables. Descriptive research design was used to conduct the study among 100 adolescents; selected by using convenient sampling method. Data was collected by using structured questionnaire for assessing knowledge and five point likert scale to assess the attitude of adolescents regarding substance abuse. The major findings of the study showed that out of 100 samples, 48% had poor knowledge about substance abuse, 47% had average knowledge about substance abuse and 05% had good knowledge about substance abuse with mean 10.29; 53% of the samples had unfavourable attitude and 47% had favourable attitude. All the demographic variables had significant association with the knowledge score.

KEYWORDS: various social, cultural, biological, geographical, historical and economic aspects.**INTRODUCTION**

“Adolescence refers to the period of human growth that occurs between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence begins at around age 10 and ends around age 21”.^[1]

Teenagers are vulnerable and can be easily swayed to the wrong side. Substance abuse is one of the biggest problems that parents of adolescents around the world have to deal with.^[2]

- Peer pressure is one of the significant factors that drive adolescents to take up smoking and drinking or to do drugs.
- The tendency to take risk encourages most teens to try smoking or drinking even before they are of legal age.
- What may start as a ‘thrill’, can become a habit if it remains unchecked.
- If there is somebody who smokes or drinks at home, they can become your teen’s role models.
- Poor self-esteem and the need to be ‘cool’ can push adolescents to smoke or drink.
- Easy access to substances like cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, and anabolic steroids may increase the temptation to try illicit substances.^[2]

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) substance abuse is persistent or sporadic drug use

inconsistent with or unrelated to acceptable medical practice.^[3]

Substance abuse is a complex phenomenon, which has various social, cultural, biological, geographical, historical and economic aspects. The disintegration of the old joint family system, absence of parental love and care in modern families where both parents are working, decline of old religious and moral values etc lead to a rise in the number of drug addicts who take drugs to escape hard realities of life. Substance use, misuse or abuse is also primarily due to the nature of the substance abused, the personality of the individual and the addict’s immediate environment. The processes of industrialization, urbanization and migration have led to loosening of the traditional methods of social control rendering an individual vulnerable to the stresses and strains of modern life.^[3]

Globally, the numbers of drug-related deaths among youth were 211,000 in 2011.^[4]

The incidence of drug abuse among children and adolescents is higher than the general population. This is notably because youth is a time for experimentation and identity forming. In Asia figures of drug abuse are hard to find but after cannabis, Amphetamine-type Stimulants (ATS) are the most commonly uses amongst children

and youth. There have been various studies carried out in the region regarding drug abuse.^[5]

In India an NGO survey revealed that 63.6% of patients coming in for treatment were introduced to drugs at a young age below 15 years. According to another report 13.1% of the people involved in drug and substance abuse in India, are below 20 years. Heroin, Opium, Alcohol, Cannabis and Propoxyphene are the five most common drugs being abused by children in India. A survey shows that of all alcohol, cannabis and opium users 21%, 3% and 0.1% are below the age of eighteen. An emerging trend about child drug abusers is the use of a cocktail of drugs through injection, and often sharing the same needle, which increases their risk of HIV infection. Overall 0.4% and 4.6% of total treatment seekers in various states were children.^[5]

A cross sectional study carried out in adolescents in Kerala to estimate the prevalence of tobacco, alcohol and drug use among adolescent high school students and to explore the associated factors revealed that majority (82%) reported no risk behaviours while 18% involved in one or more risk behaviours related to tobacco, alcohol and drug use. The protective factors were other student's behaviour being helpful, Parental understanding, Parental checking while logistic regression yielded low educational status of father, alcoholic father and close friends habit of smoking as risk factors.^[7]

Risk and protective factors can affect children at different stages of their lives. At each stage, risks occur that can be changed through prevention intervention. Early childhood risks, such as aggressive behaviour, can be changed or prevented with family, school, and community interventions that focus on helping children develop appropriate, positive behaviours. If not addressed, negative behaviours can lead to more risks, such as academic failure and social difficulties, which put children at further risk for later substance abuse.^[8]

Various studies conducted in different parts of Kerala indicated a risk of drug abuse among adolescent children. Many studies also indicated a strong association with the socioeconomic factors and familial factors. The researchers had many personal experiences related to risk for drug abuse among adolescence in their adopted community areas. Pallithottam is coastal area constituting of nine Nagars with a majority of fishermen community. Researchers also identified the use of many locally available substances by the adolescent population during their home visits. Since it is a fishermen community area, majority of the families had a trend of alcoholism due to their occupational nature. Hence the investigators strongly sensitized the risk for substance abuse in the adolescent population and decided to conduct the present study.

Statement of the problem

“A study to assess the knowledge and attitude of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse in selected areas of Pallithottam”.

Objectives

- To assess the knowledge of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse.
- To assess the attitude of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse.
- To find out the association between knowledge and selected socio demographic variables.

Assumptions

The samples may possess some knowledge regarding substance abuse.

Hypothesis

H₁: There is a significant association between knowledge and selected socio demographic variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive research design was used to conduct the study among adolescents in Century and Don Bosco Nagars under Bishop Benziger Community health centre, Pallithottam in Kollam district. Convenient sampling method was adopted to select 100 adolescents. Data was collected by using structured questionnaire for assessing knowledge and five point likert scale to assess the attitude of adolescents regarding substance abuse. Confidentiality of the study was assured to the respondents and the consent was obtained.

RESULTS

The researchers conducted the study in 100 samples.

Demographic characteristics

- 44% of the samples were in the age group of 14-15 years, 34% were in the age group of 16-17 years, 18% were in the age group of 18 years and 04% were in the age group of 12-13 years.
- 100% of the samples belong to Christian religion.
- 34% of the samples belong to Century Nagar, 20% each belongs to Don Bosco and Kaumudy Nagar, 08% each belong to Anugraha Nagar and Snehatheeram Nagar, 05% belongs to Anjali Nagar and 03% belongs to Velicham Nagar, 02% belongs to Galilio Nagar.
- 51% of the samples possessed High school level of education, 46% possessed Higher Secondary level of education, and 03% had primary level of education.
- 55% of the samples' father's had education up to high school, 16% of the samples' father's had higher secondary level of education, 14% of the samples' father's are illiterates, 13% of the samples father's education level have primary school and father's of 02% of the samples have educational level degree and above.
- 55% of the samples mother's education level had high school, 23% of the samples mother's education

level had higher secondary, 09% of the samples mother's are illiterates, 09% of the samples mother's education level had primary school and mother's of 04% of the samples had educational level degree and above.

- Out of 100 samples majority of samples are students (74%), 7% had occupation as fisherman, 5% had occupation as painting, 3% had occupation as coolie and unemployment, and 2% had occupation as plumbing, electrician and engaged in other works.
- Out of 100 samples 52% of samples father had job, 38% of samples -mother and father are employees, 10% of samples only mother have job.
- Out of 100 samples 74% of samples had monthly income 5000-10000, 12% of samples had monthly income 10001- 15000, 05% of samples had monthly income 15001- 20000.
- Out of 100 samples, 41% of samples use substances for abuse.

Knowledge

- Out of 100 samples, 48% had poor knowledge about substance abuse, 47% had average knowledge about substance abuse and 05% had good knowledge about substance abuse with mean 10.29 in the pre-test.

Attitude

- Out of 100 samples, 53% of the samples had unfavourable attitude and 47% had favourable attitude.

Association

- All the demographic variables had significant association with the knowledge score.

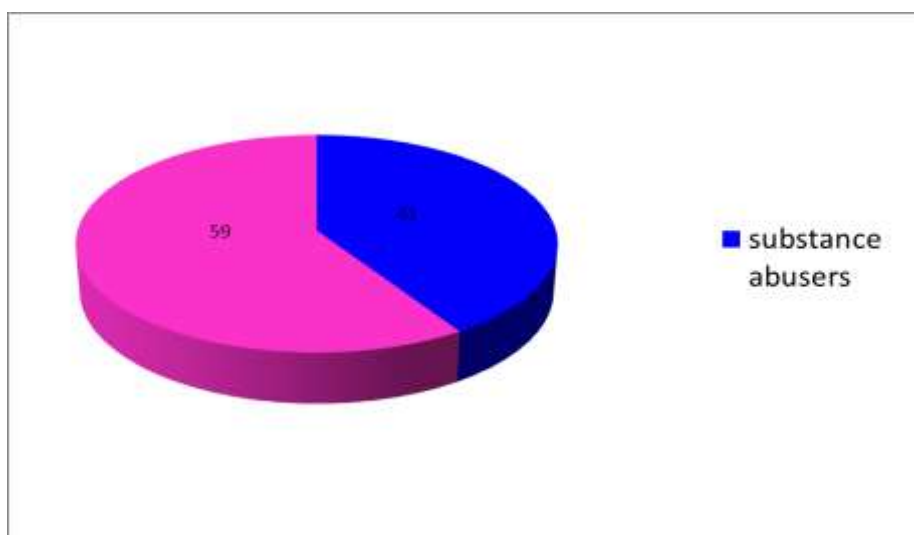


Fig. 1: Shows the Percentage distribution of sample according to abuse of any substance.

Out of 100 samples, 41% of samples use substances for abuse.

Section B: Frequency and percentage distribution of samples according to the level of knowledge

(N =100)

Table 1: Shows the Frequency and percentage distribution of sample according to the level of Knowledge.

SI NO	KNOWLEDGE LEVEL	NO OF SAMPLE	PERCENTAGE	MEAN
1	1-10(poor)	48	48	
2	11-15(average)	47	47	10.29
3	16-20(good)	5	5	

Out of 100 samples, 48% had poor knowledge about substance abuse, 47% had average knowledge about substance abuse and 05% had good level of knowledge about substance abuse with a mean score of 10.29 in the pre-test.

Section C: Frequency and percentage distribution of sample according to their attitude

(N =100)

SI NO	Attitude	No of sample	Percentage
1	Favourable	47	47
2	Unfavourable	53	53

Table 2: Shows the Frequency and percentage distribution of sample according to their attitude.

Out of 100 samples, 47% had favourable and 53% had unfavourable attitude towards substance abuse.

DISCUSSION

The Present study adopted a descriptive research design to assess the knowledge and attitude of adolescents regarding substance abuse. Convenient sampling technique was used to select 100 adolescent boys in age group of 12 – 18 years in selected Nagars of community area, Pallithottam, Kollam. Findings of the study showed that, 41% of samples were substance abusers, Out of 100 samples, 48% had poor knowledge, 47% had average knowledge and 05% had good knowledge about substance abuse with a mean score of 10.29 and Out of 100 samples, 53% of the samples had unfavourable attitude and 47% had favourable attitude. The study also found significant association between knowledge and demographic variables.

A similar single-stage cross-sectional epidemiological survey was conducted in 7560 students from classes 8, 10 and 12, within the age group of 12-19 yr, across 73 schools using Cluster random sampling in Ernakulum district of Kerala.

Findings of the study showed that the mean age of onset of tobacco use was 14.0 ± 2.2 yr and the prevalence was higher among students from urban backgrounds, lower socio-economic status and those with part-time jobs.

CONCLUSION

The researchers conducted a study to assess the knowledge and attitude of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse since it was identified as a felt need of adolescents in the adopted Nagars of Bishop Benziger Community Health Centre. The researchers also planned and conducted various health awareness campaigns in various Nagars of pallithottam community area in order to prevent substance abuse, considering the findings of the study.

Ethical considerations

Obtained ethical clearance from institutional ethics committee. Consent was obtained from the participants and confidentiality was assured.

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