

Self-Esteem of Substance Abusers and Non Abusers Belonging To Public Schools of Delhi

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ABSTRACT: *The present investigation was conducted to gain an insight into the “Self Esteem of Substance Abusers and Non Abusers belonging to Public Schools of Delhi” The sample consisted of 100 adolescents with 50 abusers and 50 non abusers selected randomly. Sample was selected from public schools of east and south Delhi. Standardised tool of Self- esteem inventory by Coopersmith (2002) was used. Statistical analysis using descriptive statistics, percentages and t-test were done. Data collected only from abusers indicated that there was higher percentage of alcohol consumption by abuser’s family members. Abusers indulged more in hookah and the average age of initiation was 12 years. It was seen that non abusers had higher self- esteem as compared to abusers. Gender differences showed that girls had higher self- esteem than boy abusers.*

KEYWORDS: *Substance Abuse, Self Esteem*

I. INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse among youngsters is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It is not just a resultant of easy availability of drugs, peer pressures, caste, and religion but also an outcome of many other factors such as personality, parental attitudes, childhood experience, socio- Underage drinking and illicit drug use are major problems in today’s schools. Data from several student surveys indicate that approximately 80% of school students have tried alcohol. Loy and Norland (1981) report that peer group holds more sway during late adolescence. Similar hypothesis was explained by Wilks (1986) that adolescents give more importance to peers for taking opinions related to decisions. Alcohol, as it is a depressant drug, slows down a person’s reaction time and impairs co-ordination and judgment. Intoxication occurs at different rates for different individuals and is associated with an increase in accidents and impaired decision making (Ryder et al, 2001). Adolescents generally have a lower lean body mass and a shorter drinking history and are therefore more likely to be sensitive to the effects of ethanol than adults (National Health and Medical Research Council 2001).

Most drug users, especially the young people, say they use drugs to feel good, escape personal identity or to rebel against authority. However, recreational drug users get motivated to use drugs to relieve personal distress or cope with emotions like anger and loneliness or have poor self-esteem. Analysis showed that even though mother’s and father’s nurturance together were more strongly related to self-esteem during junior high school and college years, parental nurturance still remained a robust predictor of self-esteem during their later years.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study profile of substance abusers
- To compare self esteem of substance abusers and non abusers.
- To determine the gender difference in self esteem of abusers.

III. METHOD

Sample: The total sample consisted of 100 adolescents out of which 50 were substance abusers (25 boys & 25 girls) and 50 non abusers (25 boys & 25 girls).

Statistical Tools

- Frequency and percentage distribution was used to find out percentages of the profile of substance abusers.
- t-test was applied to examine the differences in self esteem of substance abusers and non substance abusers and also to find gender differences.

Data Collection: The sample was collected randomly from different schools of east & south Delhi belonging to age group of 14-16 years. Data sheet was prepared for substance abusers. It was aimed to understand the reason behind their indulgence in substance abuse. Self-esteem inventory (by Coopersmith) was administered on substance abusers and non abusers. The interview was conducted on individual basis.

Ethical issues considered: Data and time of the interview was decided as per their convenience. All the participants were ensured about confidentiality of the information.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The result has been discussed in two parts. The profile of abusers is discussed in the first part while the other part discusses self esteem of abusers and non abusers and also compares the gender differences between self esteem of adolescent substance abusers (boys and girls).

(A) Clinical profile of the substance abusers

Table-1: Clinical profile of substance abusers

Abusers (N= 50)		Male N (%)	Female N (%)
Does Anyone in family use drugs	Yes	8(32.0)	14(56.0)
	No	17(68.0)	11(44.0)
No. of family members using drugs	One Member	8(32.0)	14(56.0)
	Two Members	17(68.0)	11(44.0)
Family members using drug	Brother	3(12.0)	2(8.0)
	Father	10(40.0)	13(52.0)
	Mother	3(12.0)	2(8.0)
	Grandparents	3(12.0)	4(16.00)
	Any other	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
	No one	15(60.0)	11(44.0)
Drug used by family members	Alcohol	5(20.0)	13(52.0)
	Smoking	10(40.0)	9(36.0)
	Any other	0	1(4.0)
	No drug	15(60.0)	10(40.0)
Do you feel it is affecting your family environment	Yes	10(40.0)	8(32)
	No	15(60.0)	17(68.0)
Are your parents aware that you are taking drugs	Yes	5(20.0)	3(12.0)
	No	20(80.0)	22(88.0)
Drugs used	Alcohol	13(52.0)	7(28.0)
	Smoking	9(36.0)	29(8.0)
	Hookah	8(32.0)	17(68.0)
Age of onset of substance use	Less than12	1(4.0)	1(4.0)
	14	5(20.0)	6(24.0)
	15	12(48.0)	7(28.0)
	16	7(28.0)	11(44.0)
	6Month	10(40.0)	12(48.0)
	One year	10(40.0)	10(40.0)
	More than one year	5(20.0)	3(12.0)
Reason for drug usage	peer pressure	6(24.0)	11(44.0)
	Escape from home	3(12.0)	1(4.0)
	Get rid of stress	1(4.0)	3(12.0)
	To relax	9(36.0)	2(8.0)
	To control anger	1(4.0)	0(0.0)
	Parental use	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
	curiosity	5(20.0)	13(52.0)
	To be social	0(0.0)	2(8.0)
	Desertion of boys	1(4.0)	0(0.0)
	Girl friend	1(4.0)	0(0.0)
Any other	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	
With whom do you share your feelings	Parents	1(4.0)	2(8.0)
	Friends	15(60.0)	17(68.0)
	All	4(16.0)	3(12.0)
	None	4(16.0)	3(12.0)
	Sibling	2(8.0)	1(4.0)
	Boyfriend	0(0.0)	1(4.0)
Do you feel is it affecting your health	Yes	8(32.0)	3(12.0)
	No	17(68.0)	12(88.0)
Do you want to stop using it?	Yes	10(40.0)	3(12.0)
	No	15(60.0)	21(88.0)

Major Highlights

- Maximum numbers of abusers boys and girls have started taking drugs due to peer pressure and curiosity.
- The other reason revealed from the above findings was that many amongst them indulged in drug intake as their family members already were into this habit.
- The above results revealed that increasing percentage of girls in drug abuse is due to peer pressure and curiosity as compared to boys.

(B) t- Ratios for finding difference between mean of self –esteem of abusers and non abusers

Table-2: Self –esteem between abuser’s and non abuser’s

Self-esteem	Abusers		Non Abusers		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
GEN	5.2	2.5	6.1	1.4	2.09*
SCO	5.0	1.9	6.5	1.3	4.60**
H	4.9	1.8	6.1	1.6	3.59**
SCH	6.0	1.8	7.3	1.4	4.02**
Total	66.3	11.7	72.7	10.4	2.09*

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

- GEN-GENERAL SELF
- SCO-SOCIAL SELF-PEERS
- H-HOME-PARENTS
- SCH-SCHOOL ACADEMIC

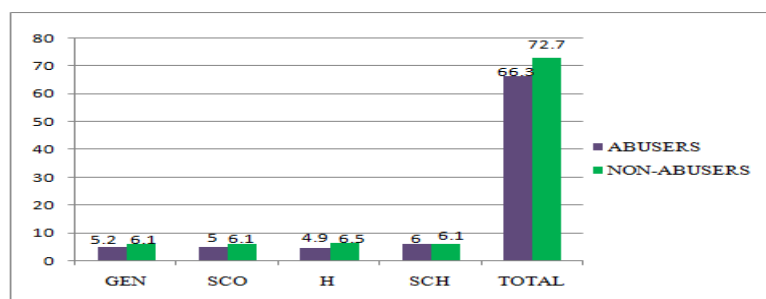


Fig 1.level of Self –esteem among abuser’s and non abuser’s

Analysis of data was carried out to examine the differences in the self- esteem of abusers and non abusers. The mean scores in the above table show that non abuser’s have higher self-esteem as compared to abuser’s. As depicted in the above table that non abusers are high in all the sub variables of self-esteem. As seen from the table there is significant difference in the self –esteem of abusers and non abusers at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

Non -abusers reported higher total self –esteem at (M=72.7) as compared to abusers (M=66.3) at 0.05 level of significance. The reason for this variance may be due to family issues, poor peer adjustment, personality issues, and lack of parental and teacher support, poor school environment etc. This is due to the fact that they are addicts and lag behind in all the areas of academic and social relationships.

Gender difference in self-esteem and attachment of adolescent substance abusers

Table-3:t-Ratio for significance of difference between means of self esteem of adolescents substance abusers

Self-esteem	Boys		Girls		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
GEN	5.6	1.6	6.8	1.8	2.713**
SCO	5.1	1.7	6.4	1.9	2.534*
H	4.7	1.5	6.2	1.9	2.977**
SCH	5.2	1.8	6.8	1.4	3.480**
Total	62.5	11.4	70.1	10.9	2.41*

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

GEN-GENERAL SELF

SCO-SOCIAL SELF-PEERS

H-HOME-PARENTS

SCH-SCHOOL ACADEMIC

Analysis of data was carried out to examine the differences in the self-esteem of abusers girls and boys. The mean scores of girls and boys in the above table show significant difference between self-esteem of girls than boys. ($t=10.9$, $p<0.001$).

It was seen from the profile that male substance abusers had an earlier onset of drug taking as compared to females. This intake may have led to lower esteem as drug intake tends to affect other area of life e.g. academic area. If you do badly in the other areas your self esteem would get lower.

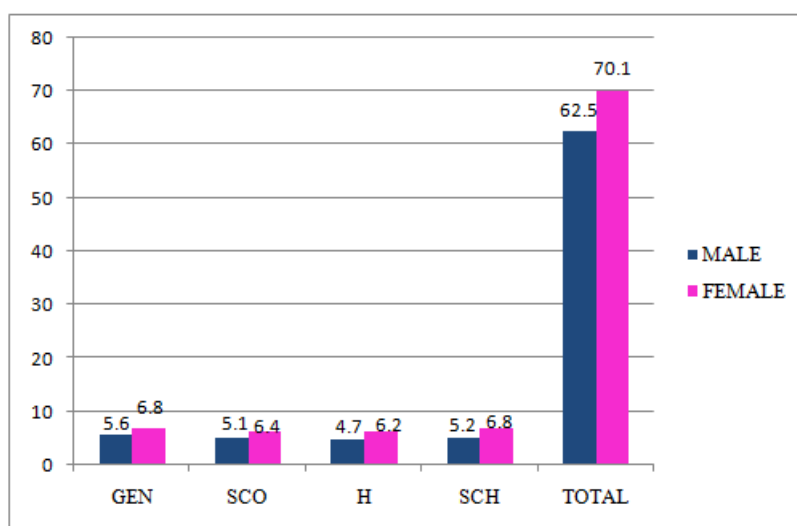


Fig 2: Self esteem between male and female for abusers.

The above results are supported by a research done by National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales/Ted Noffs Foundation, Sydney, Australia which states that in general population, males tend to (a) start drinking alcohol at an earlier age than females, and (b) be more likely than females to drink alcohol, to drink heavily and to experience alcohol-related problems. For example, a household survey of 1000 adolescents in Sydney found that males were twice as likely as females to be heavy drinkers and four times as likely to report cannabis use. Further, males are more likely to use illicit drugs, to engage in poly drug use, to use illicit drugs at an earlier age and to use drugs to deal with problems than females. The gender effect is probably the result of both genetic and environmental factors. The main treatment implication is the need to address gender-specific influences on alcohol and other drug use, particularly with males. The early intake leads to lower self-esteem in males as it affects his performance in other areas of life.

V. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the reason that most of the adolescents started taking drug was either due to curiosity or peer pressure. Non abusers had higher self esteem as compared to the users. In abuser adolescents girls had better self esteem than boys

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The present study focused on the prevalence and dimensions of substance abuse. It is suggested that life skill based intervention research and the effect of the intervention program should be studied.
- Research can be extended to study the prevalence of substance abuse on larger population to get a comprehensive view of status of substance abuse among urban adolescents of public schools.
- Research can be conducted to study the variation among urban and rural schools to check the trends and patterns of substance abuse among adolescent.
- Additional research can be carried out to understand other dimensions related to solitude which has been ignored by the present research work.

VII. IMPLICATION OF THE SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In the present study, substance abuse among public school going children was common and most of the respondents started substance abuse in early adolescence i.e. 14-16 years. Hookah and alcohol was commonly abused. It was observed that the usage of substance was due to experimentation under the influence of home or work environment and due to peers. Also substance abuse was associated with anti-social behavior. Intervention program should, thus, focus on support and opportunities related to positive development among the children like self efficacy, positive identity formation.

The results are beneficial for counselors who provide life skills training with a focus on general problem solving. Substance use prevention programs for adolescents should be directed not only towards them but also to the people who act as facilitators for substance use (Tsering & Pal, 2009). The self esteem of adolescents could be enhanced by them through various ways. Early onset of use of substance is associated with a clustering of health risk behavior in the future (Tsering & Pal, 2009). So, health professionals are required to assess and record substance usage regularly and also inform the people about its hazards. Health authorities can also help in formulating policies to control the importing and marketing of these substances (Mazahir, Malik, Masqood, Malik, Majeed, Fatmi, Khawaja & Ghaffar, 2006).

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