

# Substance Induced High Risk Behaviours of Adolescent Boys in the Urban Poor Residential Neighbourhood Community

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**Abstract—** Crimes committed by Young Offenders are steadily increasing in India with a large impact on society. Young Offenders fall below the age of 18 years in India come under the Adolescent group. As per the amended Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 children under the age group of 16 to 18 involved in Heinous Crime can be tried as adults. Reasons for increase in crimes committed by youngsters and increased rate of young offenders are many. One of the major reasons for increasing rate of young offenders is Substance Use. Substance usage at adolescent phase is very much prevalent in India. Severe crimes arise as a result of increased substance usage (Shridar Shrama, 2016). Adolescents use substances by various influential factors and involve in high-risk behaviours which become detrimental to the development of adolescents and society at large. Adolescents involving in high-risk behaviours may not know the consequences of it and need awareness on various serious social problems that arise as a result of substance usage. Vulnerable adolescents fall prey for anti-social elements and get influenced to be anti-social. The present study is descriptive in nature with the objectives to study the prevalence of substance usage, influencing factors and high-risk behaviours of substance using adolescents' aims to suggest prevention strategies to be carried out community level to prevent substance usage and control vulnerable adolescents developing into young offenders. Major results of the study reveals that over forty-five per cent of the respondents use substances and over thirty-five per cent of substance using adolescent boys are involving in high behaviours such as Drunk and Drive, Stealing and selling illicit substances like Marijuana.

**Index Terms:** Substance Use, Adolescents, Urban Poor Residential Neighbourhood Communities and High-Risk Behaviours.

## INTRODUCTION

Substance Induced High Risk Behaviours of Adolescents is very much prevalent in India. Substance usage has seen a rapid growth in the nation and especially among adolescent which is detrimental to the development of adolescents and nation. Adolescents dwelling in urban poor residential neighbourhood community are vulnerable to substance usage and its induced high-risk behaviour because of various factors which are discussed in this paper. The high-risk behaviours of adolescents induced by substances may look harmless but these are the behaviours that form the root cause for various dangerous crimes. So, it is very important to identify the high-risk behaviours of substance induced adolescents and root out before they germinate.

## SUBSTANCE USE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Diagnosis of substance use disorder is based on evidence of impaired control, social impairment, risky use, and pharmacological criteria. It also classifies substances into eight groups ranging from alcohol to glue (Association, 2013). Adolescents use substances because of the availability of substances, experimental nature, parental model, peer pressure, recreational interests, and to gain social respect. Education of the respondents, education of the parents, substance use by parents and by peers is significantly associated with substance usage of adolescents (Kokiwar PR, 2011). Most commonly substances among adolescents of slums are smokeless and smoke forms of tobacco followed by alcohol and marijuana (Kamate R P, 2017). Prevalence of substance usage is high among slum dwelling adolescents and causes various problems in society. There is necessity for interventions to reduce

the burdens cause by substance usage among slum dwelling adolescents (Chaudhary, 2016).

### HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS

Adolescents who are using substances are also prone to deviant high-risk behaviours such as anti-social behaviours, delinquency and high-risk sexual behaviours (Erikson, 1968). Factors that influence high risk behaviours are substance use, peer group pressure, poor parental discipline and supervision, low family income, isolation from the society, poor housing, poor educational progress, availability of substances in the society, lack of social responsibility and opportunity for crime. The most common high-risk behaviours among adolescents are drunk and drive, stealing, involving in physical fights causing serious injuries, selling illicit substances like marijuana and travelling on foot boards in public transports. There is prevalence of risk behaviour associated to tobacco, alcohol and other substance use among adolescents (M, 2014). Effective parenting is the most powerful way to reduce adolescent problem behaviour (R, 2003 Jun-Jul;58(6-7))

### URBAN POOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY

Slums are called as Urban Poor Residential Neighbourhood Communities as slums primarily exist at large in urban areas with poorly developed or underdeveloped residential areas forming a community. Immigration and resettlement leads to overcrowding of slums in India. These poorly developed residential neighbourhoods are providing lot of exposures to adolescents to come in contact with substances, anti-social activities and various other high-risk behaviours as there is lack of knowledge, inadequate opportunities to education and employment, social neglect and stratification.

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

*Social Learning Theory*—It affirms that experimental substance use among adolescents is induced by substance-specific attitudes of adolescents and behaviours of people around adolescents who act as role models (Bandura, Social learning theory, 1977).

*Social Cognitive Theory* – It instigates that adolescent who experiment substance usage acquire beliefs about substance use from their models, close friends and parents who use substances. It further says that exposure of adolescents to friends and family members using substances will induce him/her to experiment substance use to develop substance using attitudes. This theory also stresses on importance of self-efficacy to control or resist substance usage among adolescents (Bandura, Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory, 1986).

*Theory Of Planned Behaviour* – It states that self-efficacy plays a vital role in controlling behavioural intentions to get the approval of people. It explains that two important forms are important when it comes to Experimental Substance Use of adolescents which are use self-efficacy representing adolescent's beliefs in their abilities to successfully use substances and refusal self-efficacy representing adolescent's belief to resist social pressure to begin using substances (Ajzen, 1985).

Theories on Social Learning and Social Cognition insist that role models play a vital role in adolescents' experimental substance use and consequent behaviours. Adolescents with positive and conventional role models are less likely to indulge in experimenting substance use. Theory of Planned Behaviour asserts that adolescents' behaviour towards experimenting substance use and consequent behaviours shall be altered by strengthening self-efficacy of adolescents.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive Research design was adopted to describe the substance induced behaviours of adolescents in Perambakkam, which is one of the urban poor residential neighbourhood communities with its high prevalence of usage among adolescents. The objectives of the study are to study the demographic profile, history of substance usage in family, influencing factors to use substance, prevalence of substance use, substance induced high risk behaviours of the respondents and to suggest preventive measures to control substance usage and high-risk behaviours among adolescents. Census sampling procedure was adopted to study the substance usage and high-risk behaviour of 86

adolescent boys in the age group of 10 to 19 years. A structured interview schedule consists of socio demographic profile, family details, factor influencing the adolescent for substance usage and scales such as Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) of World Health Organisation, Fagerstrom Test for Nicotine Dependence (FTND) and Drug Use Questionnaire (DAST 20) was used and the data was analysed with SPSS version 20 based on the objectives of the study.

**MAJOR FINDINGS**

**EDUCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

S. NO	EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Elementary	12	13.95
2	High School	26	30.23
3	Higher Secondary	17	19.76
4	Polytechnic (ITI)	3	3.48
5	College	13	15.11
6	School Dropouts	11	12.79
7	College Dropouts	4	4.65
TOTAL		86	100

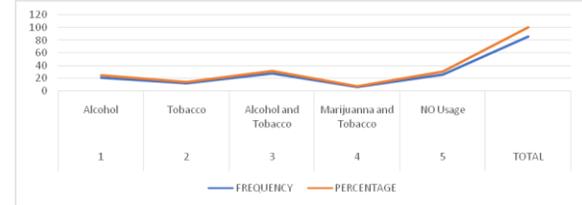
The above given table depicts that a total of 63.94 percent of the total respondents are attending school, 15.11 percent respondents are attending college, 3.38 percent respondents are attending polytechnic institutes while 12.79 percent and 4.65 percent constitute to school and college dropouts respectively.

**SUBSTANCE USAGE IN FAMILY OF THE RESPONDENTS**

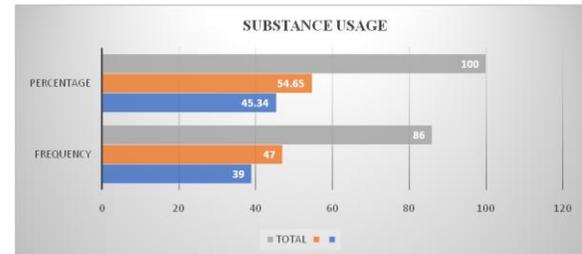
S. NO	SUBSTANCE USING FAMILY MEMBERS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Father	37	43.02
2	Mother	8	9.30
3	Brother	15	17.44
4	Non-Substance Users	26	30.23
TOTAL		86	100

The given table on the substance usage in family of the respondents reveal that 43.02 percent of fathers, 9.30 percent of mothers and 17.44 percent of brothers of respondents' families use substances and 30.23 of the respondents' family members are non-substance users.

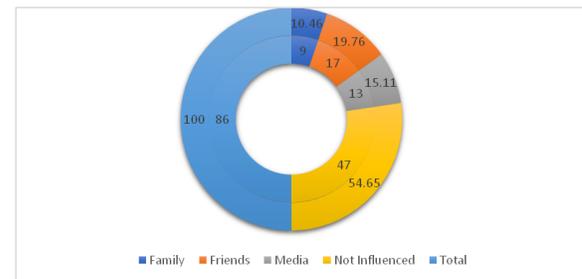
**SUBSTANCES USED BY FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE RESPONDENTS**



**SUBSTANCE USAGE AMONG REpondENTS**



**INFLUENCING FACTORS FOR RESPONDENTS TO USE SUBSTANCE**



Major findings of the study based on the objectives are as follows,

- Nearly two-thirds of the respondents are attending school.
- Close to one-fifth of the respondents are dropouts of from education.
- More than two-thirds of the respondents have substance using family members.
- Close to one-fifth of the respondents are buying substances for family members.
- Nearly one-fourth of the respondents are buying substances for others.
- Substance use is prevalent in more than two-fourths of the total respondents.
- Alcohol usage is found in more than one tenth of the respondents on a weekly basis.
- More than two-fourth of substance using respondents uses cigarette daily.
- Maava (Mixture of tobacco and areca nut) is found to be the predominantly used substance among the two-third of the substance using respondents.

- Marijuana usage is noted among few (three percent) of the respondents.
- The lowest age of initiation of substance usage is twelve years.
- The highest age of initiation of substance usage is sixteen years.
- Friends are found to be the preponderating influential factor to use substances for more than two-fifths of the substance using respondents followed by media (one-third), and family (more than one-fifth).
- More than one-third of substance using respondents use substances at school/college.
- Nearly twenty-five per cent respondents are spending over thousand rupees for substances per month.
- Nearly two-fifth of substance using respondents are stealing from their home to buy substances.
- Two per cent of substance respondents sell illicit substances like marijuana to buy substances.
- Over thirty-five per cent substance using respondents involve in physical fights while under the influence of substance.
- Almost thirty-seven per cent respondents ride motorcycles while under the influence of substances.
- Nearly fifty per cent substance using respondents travel on foot board in public transports while using substances.

#### DISCUSSION

Substance usage is very much prevalent among adolescent boys of the study area. As it is derived from theories, the factors inducing substance usage among the respondents are influential role models of substance using peers, parents and media promoting substance usage. Some of the respondents using substances out of their own interests and continues using substances. The study reveals that there is prevalence of high risk behaviour among adolescents which may lead to heinous crimes in future as it is evident from the study that some respondents are stealing from homes to buy substances, involving in physical fights while under the influence of substances, riding motorcycles under influence of substances, selling illicit substances to procure substance and travelling on foot boards in public

transports while under the influence of substance which are posing serious threats to adolescents and the society in which they dwell in.

#### SUGGESTIONS

As the study shows that there is a considerable level of prevalence of substance usage among adolescents who are also involved in high risk behaviours imposing a serious threat for personal and community development, interventions targeting the influencing factors and promoting positive self-efficacy through conventional frame work for adolescents in urban poor residential neighbourhood communities shall be carried out to prevent the usage of substances which in turn shall result in reduction of high risk behaviour and preventing crimes committed by adolescent under the influence of substances. The study also suggests the below mentioned measures to prevent substance usage and high-risk behaviours resulting in serious crimes.

- Positive Role Models of Parents abstaining from using substances
- Having a conventional peer group.
- Involving in sports that brings discipline in adolescents.
- Making the Adolescents to be socially responsible.
- Stringent enforcement of law.
- Strict monitoring of communities over adolescents.

#### CONCLUSION

From the study it shall concluded that it is better to address the issues and challenges posed by substance induced high risk behaviours of adolescents dwelling in urban poor residential neighbourhood communities at the entry level itself and alter the deviant behaviours of adolescents by intervening with activities promoting positive self-efficacy to help the adolescents abstain from using substances and involving in high-risk behaviours. It is clear from the study that *Prevention is Better than Cure* when it comes to substance usage and high-risk behaviours of adolescents which may lead to dangerous crimes.

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