

EXAMINING DRUG ABUSE ROUTES: A HUMANITARIAN INVESTIGATION OF THE TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD AND POLICY MATTERS IN INDIA AND BEYOND

¹*Vinita Damle, Dr. Ajay Sharma

¹*Department of law, Lovely Professional University, Grand Trunk Rd, Phagwara, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of law, Organization, Grand Trunk Rd, Phagwara, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

Abstract

Drug misuse is a global public health concern with profound consequences for individuals, families, communities, and society at large. This study delves into the complex issue of juvenile drug abuse to adult drug abuse from a human rights perspective, examining its prevalence, contributing factors, policy effectiveness, and potential human rights violations in India and beyond. Through a comprehensive analysis of public awareness campaigns, legislation, preventive programs, and community-based initiatives, this research assesses the legal and policy frameworks surrounding drug abuse. It underscores the importance of holistic strategies encompassing awareness, prevention, treatment, and recovery support services to mitigate the negative impact of drug misuse. By shedding light on the human rights implications of drug abuse and the existing measures to combat it, this study aims to inform evidence-based policy development and help safeguard the well-being of young people, families, and communities worldwide.

Keywords: *human rights, drug policy, global impact, drug abuse.*

1. Introduction

The word juvenile means a young person who is not an adultⁱ. A 'child'ⁱⁱ who's below the age of 18 years.ⁱⁱⁱ The term, Drug abuse is concerned with; the Usage of unlawful drugs or the illegal use of prescription pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter drugs, or alcohol. Also, Drug use in an excessive manner is not medically safe. Juveniles are especially prone to addiction since their brains do not fully mature until they reach the age of maturity. Mental health concerns, a family environment, and poverty are all risk factors for children. There are various things parents may do to help their children avoid drug abuse as teenagers. Every year, hundreds of people die from the abuse of narcotic drugs in India. It also has one of the harshest drug laws in the world that punishes addicts and dealers with long prison terms or death. One of the most serious concerns confronting children and teenagers inside and outside of the school or college premises; is drug and substance misuse. The issue of drug misuse harms drug users' academic, social, psychological, economic, and physical development. Drug and substance abuse among young people; are observed to be influenced by their level of literacy, peer pressure, and their desire to try new things. Another

factor is the accessibility of drugs and other substances. Sharing needles and syringes increases the risk of HIV and AIDS infection among drug users who inject narcotics. Additionally, this makes the issue of drug abuse worse.

The study analyzed adolescent outcome research from 1980-2007 to assess parental consenting procedures' impact. Authors stressed reporting parental consent as vital in adolescent treatment outcome studies. Concerns included sample bias in risk behavior research. Parental consent is standard in Substance abuse studies, even when teens can consent in some regions. Transparent reporting of consent procedures in outcome reports was deemed essential. (Smith et al, 2009) The research explores how conduct, problems, and peer behavior impact adolescent substance use. Data was collected through cross-sectional and prospective methods. Friends who use substances heightened the influence of conduct problems on alcohol-related issues. This effect was consistent in both cross-sectional and prospective analyses, supported by permutation analysis. Managing exposure to peers who use alcohol can effectively decrease related problems among adolescents dealing with conduct issues, underscoring the significance of addressing these factors to curb substance use. (Glaser et al., 2010) Childhood adversity, violation of rights, and influence on health and social growth are substantial. The neglect of research on adverse childhood experiences, particularly abuse in Africa, hinders comprehension. Understanding the need for child safety is essential for enacting laws and rights. Schools, notably in Africa, facilitate abuse, persisting with unlawful corporal punishment in South Africa. This exposure detrimentally affects brain development, fueling antisocial behavior. Study results emphasize adversity's association with amplified health risks. (Jewkes et al., 2010) Adolescence is crucial for drug initiation, with changing neurobiology impacting stress regulation, emotions, and rewards. Early life stress raises substance disorder risk. Nonhuman primates, like humans, aid in studying early-life stress. It alters drug-related neural systems. The review enhances intervention for at-risk groups. Studying early life stress effects on drug abuse in nonhuman primates advances interventions. (Wakeford et al., 2018) This study delved into how people in the northeastern states of India use substances like alcohol, tobacco, and smokeless products. It uncovered a notable trend: substance use is significantly more common among men in this region compared to the rest of the country. In fact, Assam stands out, with over 65% of all substance users residing there. This suggests that substance use is a more prevalent issue in the northeastern states, particularly among men. The underprivileged showed a higher likelihood of smoking and alcohol consumption. State-specific variations were observed, highlighting the need for targeted policy interventions. This study underscores the urgent need for public health initiatives aimed at reducing substance use, especially among disadvantaged males in the northeastern states of India, through awareness campaigns, taxation, and community involvement. (Saikia & Debbarma, 2020) In the United States, in states with a high population, A team of researchers delved into the connections between student well-being and school discipline over time. Their findings painted a clear picture: when students engaged in more substance use and faced higher risk factors, it influenced their overall school experience. Notably, schools where students felt safe and supported, within the school walls

and in the community, had fewer cases of disciplinary issues. These insights threw a curveball at traditional thoughts about punishment, shedding light on how strict policies and zero tolerance could take a toll on young minds. The study aimed to predict school discipline and police contact. The research aimed to identify predictors of school discipline and police involvement. (Prins et al., 2022)

2. A Global Perspective on Juvenile Drug Abuse and Human Rights

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime approach is to use science to stop drug use and help kids grow up healthy. They try to stop drug use in many ways, but families and schools are the most important. Other places like communities, businesses, and the media can also help stop drug use. Interventions that focus on developing family skills are mainly successful in avoiding drug use among adolescents. Families may establish a supportive environment that promotes healthy development and minimizes the risk of drug use by educating parents and caregivers on how to communicate effectively with their children, set limits, and monitor their behavior. A comprehensive approach to drug use prevention entails a variety of sectors collaborating to provide a safe and supportive environment in which young people may thrive. We can help prevent drug use and enhance community well-being by addressing risk factors and constructing protective factors. When families learn skills to help them be better, it can stop their kids from using drugs. Families can make a safe and helpful place for their kids by teaching parents and caregivers how to talk to them, set rules, and keep an eye on what they do. Lots of different groups working together can help kids stay away from drugs and be healthy. We can make communities better and stop drug use by taking away things that might make kids more likely to use drugs and making things that help them be healthy.

One of the major social policy concerns is the issue of drug usage and the illicit drug trade. It is a complicated issue that has a direct impact; on the human rights of persons and communities. Addressing the different facets of this problem, such as drug use, drug-related illnesses, and the illicit drug trade, necessitates careful consideration of the human rights implications. The drug problem has an impact; on several aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the goals; of reducing poverty, reducing inequality, and improving health. Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions is very important since it demands human rights in all facets of the SDGs. Since the late 1990s, the United Nations General Assembly has recognized that resolving the global drug problem is done in complete conformity with all human rights and freedoms. This commitment was; reaffirmed in every Major UN political declaration on drug control and multiple Commission on Drugs decisions.

2.1 A synopsis of the various sections of the International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy.

Human rights are a key component of United Nations activity, and they are inextricably related to peace, security, and prosperity. They constitute one of the three pillars of the United Nations, alongside peace, security, and development, and are incorporated into the UN Charter. The United

Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is dedicated to preserving these human rights values as it carries out its responsibilities and assists nations in combating crime, narcotics, and terrorism. Many types of crime are widespread and established to have a direct influence on the enjoyment of human rights; consequently, it is the obligation of nations to implement systems to prevent and respond to them.

UNODC recognizes the potential for human rights breaches occurring in the name of responding to drug and crime concerns. The UNODC takes a comprehensive approach to its commitment to respect, preserve, and promote human rights, which is critical for its work in crime prevention and criminal justice. The United Nations recognizes human rights as a fundamental element of its work, along with peace, security, and development. The UNODC upholds human rights principles in its fight against crime, drugs, and terrorism and works with the UN system to coordinate these initiatives. The organization advocates for a comprehensive strategy to guarantee that human rights are respected, safeguarded, and advanced in all of its endeavors, acknowledging that several crimes have an influence on individuals' ability to enjoy their rights.

2.2 The United Nations' holistic approach to Human Rights and Drug Policy

Human rights are central to the United Nations' mission, as indicated by its founding Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights are acknowledged; as one of the United Nations' three pillars, alongside peace, security, and development. Through legislative frameworks and practical actions, the organization actively safeguards human rights. Human rights are essential for attaining long-term development in all of its dimensions, including social, environmental, and economic issues. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development expressly contains human rights concepts and Standards, to ensure all persons' human rights and promote equality and non-discrimination. As noted by Sustainable Development Goal 16, which highlights the significance of functioning institutions and equitable access to justice, the rule of law and respect for human rights are mutually reinforcing. In 2020, the Secretary-General issued the Call to Action, emphasizing the importance of human rights in tackling urgent concerns across seven thematic areas. Furthermore, the Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda highlights the significance of human rights and the rule of law in solving global issues, renewing the social compact, creating trust, and addressing inequality.

Human rights; are a vital part of the United Nations' mission, as evidenced by its founding Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It considers human rights as one of its pillars, alongside peace, security, and prosperity. Through legislative frameworks and practical actions, the organization actively protects human rights. Human rights are critical to attaining complete sustainable Development; which includes social, environmental, and economic components. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development incorporates human rights concepts; intending to ensure all persons' rights and promote equality. The rule of law and respect for human rights are inextricably linked, with SDG 16 emphasizing functional institutions and equitable access to

justice. The Secretary-General's 2020 Call to Action emphasizes the importance of human rights in resolving important concerns across seven thematic areas. The Our Common Agenda emphasizes the importance of human rights and the rule of law in addressing global issues, building trust, and combating inequality.

2.2.1 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: Safeguarding Human Rights through Comprehensive Thematic Initiatives

- **Thematic Areas of Work:** UNODC operates in different thematic areas of work, meaning it focuses on various aspects or topics related to its mission.
- **Role in Human Rights:** It states that within these thematic areas, UNODC is essential for protecting and advancing human rights, indicating that this is a core aspect of its mission.
- **Drug-related Policies:** UNODC is described as advocating for comprehensive drug policies that cover prevention, therapy, and social reintegration. This means it supports strategies that not only address drug use but also help individuals recover and reintegrate into society.
- **Compliance with Human Rights:** UNODC's commitment to ensuring that its initiatives to control drugs are in line with human rights principles and legal frameworks. This emphasizes the importance of respecting human rights, even in the context of drug control efforts.
- **Assistance to Member Nations:** UNODC assists member countries in developing drug policies that prioritize human rights, public health, and sustainable development goals. This indicates that UNODC provides support and guidance to countries in formulating policies that align with these principles.
- **Combating Organised Crime:** UNODC also supports countries in strengthening their legislative frameworks and law enforcement capabilities to prevent and combat organized crime. This includes promoting human rights-based approaches in investigations and providing support for victims of organized crime.
- **Addressing Specific Crimes:** Specific crimes like gun trafficking and human trafficking, indicate that UNODC also works to combat these crimes that directly violate human rights.

Furthermore, UNODC aids nations in preventing and combating corruption, money laundering, and illicit financial flows, emphasizing integrity, transparency, and accountability as crucial elements in protecting human rights and fostering sustainable development. In the realm of terrorism prevention and counteraction, UNODC supports member states in enhancing criminal justice responses while upholding human rights standards. This includes capacity building for law enforcement and judicial authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, with a strong emphasis on the rule of law and human rights principles. UNODC strives to enhance

community-based strategies for crime prevention and to advance just and efficient criminal justice systems that guarantee everyone's access to the courts. Key elements of these initiatives include victim protection, rehabilitation programs, and alternatives to incarceration. To give evidence-based insights on drug use, crime, and associated concerns, UNODC undertakes research and data analysis. This helps shape policy that upholds human rights and tackles new issues. This also supports well-informed decision-making and progress tracking for the advancement of sustainable development goals and human rights.

2.2.2 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's transformative efforts in safeguarding Human Rights

The United Nations' work on the rule of law is founded on the United Nations Charter, and international law includes human rights law, criminal law, refugee law, and humanitarian law. Responses to drug, criminal, and terrorist activities should be based on the rule of law and integrate human rights values. To successfully address human rights and complex concerns, holistic and interconnected methods are required. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is committed to a human rights-based approach in all aspects of its work.

Within the United Nations, there exist two distinct teams: one dedicated to addressing issues surrounding drugs Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), and the other focused on preventing and addressing crime Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). Both teams share a common mission: to ensure that the laws they establish regarding drugs and criminal activities are fair and beneficial for all individuals involved. Acting as a supervisory authority over these teams is the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), akin to a central overseeing entity. The CND and CCPCJ have tasked the UNODC with the responsibility of considering human rights implications when formulating new policies and regulations. Consequently, in their deliberations on matters concerning drugs or crime, utmost attention is given to ensuring the fairness of these regulations and their alignment with human rights principles, safeguarding the rights of individuals without compromise. The CND makes sure that countries follow the rules about drugs while also thinking about people's rights. The UNTOC Conference and its groups suggest ways to prevent problems and help victims using human rights ideas. Another convention about corruption is supported by the Conference of States Parties and its groups to make sure it's followed well.

2.3 Empowering of Communities an initiative of UNODC's fight against Drugs, HIV/AIDS, and Trafficking

Drug Use Prevention, Treatment, Care, and Rehabilitation:

Encouraging individuals to maintain their health and abstain from hazardous drugs is crucial. When someone is abusing drugs, they need to receive the appropriate help and not face excessive punishment. The UNODC educates youth on drug abstinence as a means of ensuring their safety. Furthermore, assistance with drug abuse needs to be provided on an equal basis with other medical conditions.

HIV/AIDS:

Receiving the proper care and treatment for HIV/AIDS is crucial for all individuals living with the infection. This aids in their good condition management and maintenance of health. Regrettably, some HIV/AIDS sufferers get unjust treatment from others. Simply because they carry the virus, they might face consequences or receive poor treatment. Regardless of their health, everyone needs to be treated with dignity and compassion. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) works with nations to ensure that HIV/AIDS treatment is accessible to all those in need. They concentrate particularly on drug users and those incarcerated since they frequently face barriers to receiving healthcare. The UNODC strives to take down these obstacles so that everyone may receive the care and assistance they need, regardless of their circumstances.

Access to Controlled Drugs for Medical Purposes:

More individuals should have access to the medications they require for pain management and other medical needs, according to the UNODC. They also aim to lessen drug abuse. People should not have to suffer from insufficient access to pain medication since this prevents them from receiving the necessary care. The UNODC works with other agencies, such as the World Health Organisation, to guarantee that medications are used appropriately and aren't abused.

Illicit Production and Trafficking of Drugs:

Illegal drug production and sales hurt communities and impede the growth and development of nations. The UNODC is in favour of drug control strategies that put human rights first and deal with the underlying causes of drug use. Alternatives to drug cultivation are offered by programmes that improve opportunities for people and protect the environment. Furthermore, the UNODC supports law enforcement in their efforts to capture those engaged in illicit drug activity and guarantee that they face just punishment.

3. Government initiatives for drug abuse in India

The National Action Plan for Reducing Drug Demand was launched; by India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Narcotic Drug and; Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985 and Policy 2012 National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction are being created for 2018 to 2025 in consideration of the United Nations conventions in connection to drug misuse and control of drug crimes. This approach focuses on lowering the harmful effects of drug misuse through several; long-term measures that include drug users' education, addiction treatment, and family rehabilitation. A focus on improving the capacity of service providers through joint efforts between the central and state governments and non-governmental organizations; raising awareness; identifying, counseling, treating, and rehabilitating those who are substance dependent; and enlightening and raising knowledge of the negative impacts of substance abuse on the person, family, workplace, and society at large; decrease stigmatization and discrimination towards groups and people who use drugs to help them reintegrate into society.

3.1 Role of Non-Government Institutions concerning Drug Abuse

Several non-governmental organizations are actively engaged in drug demand reduction programs. Consistent with the involvement of volunteer organizations in numerous health and social initiatives. Various of these groups are very resourceful, have committed employees, and have received money from; both the government and several foreign donating agencies. Gulhati and colleagues assessed voluntary activities in health, the environment, and women's development in India in 1995. They discovered that NGOs; were roughly classified into two types. The first category included organizations that performed functions for the benefit of their members. The other kind aided grassroots organizations that were not necessarily members. A handful had government financing and were major governmental; organizations. Others provided their resources. Both had a high level of voluntary engagement; and a lower level of institutionalization and were often non-profit and self-governing. Some NGOs are devoted groups with extensive knowledge of demand reduction. Others are active in a variety of activities, including drug addiction control. Some are quite; vocal and perform a key advocacy role in bringing attention to numerous drug abuse-related concerns, calling for a national action plan. Gulhati also said that coordination between the government and non-governmental organizations was critical for program effectiveness.

3.2 Indian Judicial attitude towards Drug Abuse in Juvenile

Drug abuse has lately emerged as a Major societal issue with Serious health implications for children and adolescents. The law criminalizes the sale, production, and consumption of illicit drugs; for minors. Under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, children aged below 18 years are prohibited from using drugs that include alcohol and tobacco in most cases. The Act, however, only prescribes imprisonment for those minors; found involved in the manufacturing of, selling or consumption of alcohol or tobacco under specified conditions and does not make specific provisions for the sale of drugs for minors. It also does not address the situation of trafficking and sexual exploitation of minors or child labor. Violating the Act could bring a child to trial for breaching the terms of protection from abuse by the legal guardian or a community member. According to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985, narcotic substances are including:- any form of opium, including heroin and morphine, cocaine, cannabis (includes marijuana), and other drugs.

3.2.1 Supreme Court guideline case law

The Bachpan Bachao Andolan seeks to address India's rising problem of drug and alcohol consumption among young people. The petition; was started to preserve children's rights. Those afflicted by substance use and abuse, in particular. The petitioner requests that the Court issue a mandamus order ordering the Indian government to develop and implement a national action plan to combat drug, alcohol, and substance abuse among children. The principal remedy requested by the petitioner is that this should address concerns connected to identification, investigation, recovery, counseling, and rehabilitation. Other instructions include incorporating relevant content into the school curriculum, establishing a coordinating body, requiring school principals and police

to report drug and substance abuse, establishing de-addiction centers in every district and at the tehsil level, safeguarding children's report of drug usage, creating a national database, and ordering the registration of cases against individuals supplying tobacco, alcohol, and drugs to children. In this case, more remedy was sought.

The Apex Court has addressed the three main issues mentioned. It considered the existing policies of the government mentioned at the beginning of the judgment. The court did not create new policies through its judicial review, but it did give directions to enforce existing laws and regulations. The Directions given by the Supreme Court to the government are as follows:

1. Complete a national survey and create a national database within six months.
2. Develop and adopt a comprehensive national plan within four months, which will address the immediate concerns mentioned earlier, among other things.
3. Include specific content in the school curriculum under the NEP (National Education Policy). The Supreme Court concluded the writ petition with these directions. However, it allowed the petitioner to approach the court separately in the future if necessary, particularly regarding the various aspects discussed in these proceedings. (Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs Union Of India & Ors, Inc. 2012).

3.2.2 Recent Government initiatives regarding Juvenile Drug Abuse and Control in India

The Indian government started the *Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan* (NMBA) campaign to help young people in India who are taking drugs. They launched this plan in 272 districts that are most susceptible to drug abuse, starting in August 2020. The program's goals are to assist young people who are drug addicts and to discourage others from using drugs. They are focusing on including as many groups as possible that may be affected by drug usage, such as mothers, children, schools, and community organisations. 8,000 Master Volunteers have undergone training to manage the programme in these areas.

So far, they've reached over 11.99 crore people through various activities. More than 4,000 youth groups have joined the program, and over 2.05 crore women have been involved in spreading awareness about issues like substance abuse, maternal and child health, and nutrition. These women play important roles in their communities through programs like Anganwadi, ASHA workers, ANMs, and Women SHGs. Anganwadi workers provide basic health services to pregnant women and children under six, while ASHA workers link communities with healthcare services. ANMs offer primary healthcare services, especially in rural areas, and Women SHGs promote savings and entrepreneurship among women.

The Indian government launched the *Abhiyaan* campaign to address drug abuse on a national scale. This campaign involves using social media platforms in collaboration with educational institutions. Over 1.19 lakh educational establishments have been actively engaged in educating youth about the dangers of using illegal drugs. Women have played a significant role in this endeavor, especially in rural areas with poor access to healthcare. They have taken part in

initiatives that empower locals, promote healthy living, and spark positive change. The Abhiyaan has effectively utilized social media platforms to spread its message to a wider audience, including those who might not have access to traditional media channels. Additionally, they've developed a mobile application available on the Google Play Store, that allows for real-time data collection on campaign activities. Collaboration with universities has further expanded the campaign's reach, allowing college students to engage with the issue and contribute to its success. By focusing on digital technologies and engagement tactics, the Abhiyaan ensures that its message reaches as many people as possible and equips individuals with the necessary tools and information to participate effectively.

4. Methodology

The methodology employed in this research paper adopts a robust doctrinal approach, focusing on the analysis of legal texts, case law, and international treaties concerning drug abuse and human rights. The study will meticulously examine the legal frameworks governing these issues, with a specific emphasis on prominent international treaties such as the UN Drug Conventions and Human Rights Treaties. Additionally, it will conduct an in-depth review of various international and national initiatives. Furthermore, the research methodology encompasses a comprehensive doctrinal analysis, including a thorough review of public awareness campaigns, legislative frameworks, preventive initiatives, and community-based programs aimed at addressing drug addiction among young individuals. The study also involves a meticulous evaluation of legislation and governmental strategies pertaining to juvenile drug abuse within both domestic (Indian) and global contexts. The primary objective is to gain insights into the prevalence and repercussions of juvenile drug abuse within the broader spectrum of human rights on a global scale. By exploring factors contributing to susceptibility to drug abuse among young populations and evaluating the efficacy of existing policies, the study aims to shed light on critical aspects influencing juvenile drug abuse while upholding fundamental human rights principles. It acknowledges the influence of social, economic, cultural, and environmental determinants on drug abuse prevalence and recognizes the importance of diverse intervention strategies in preventing substance abuse and minimizing harm.

5. Reason for Drug abuse

A person gets addicted by consuming a particular substance on a day-to-day basis. The term addict means a person with dependence on any narcotic drug or a psychotropic substance, particularly alcohol, can take hold of anyone from a child to an adult. Overindulgence and an addiction to harmful substances are widespread in the country. According to an estimate, over 40 percent of India's youth aged 10 to 24-years-old drink alcohol. When a child is addicted to an intoxicating substance, they are deprived; of the possibility of providing a productive and respectable life. Drug abuse has caused social and economic problems as well. Young girls and children are vulnerable to drug traffickers who lure them into this cycle of misery.

Below mentioned are reasons which are evident for drug abuse in children:

- **Attention:** At the growing ages of adolescents, kids need attention from their friends and family. Kids at this age feel a lack of confidence and purpose in life.
- **Addiction:** The feeling of euphoria after consuming a particular substance. It makes kids consume the same substance regularly. Basically, to experience the same feeling again and again.
- **Companionship:** Duration of growing up into adults, kids develop a feeling to fit in and make new friends. With the feeling of being accepted by a popular-groups who are already abusing drugs. The kids follow the same culture.
- **Competition:** To become the best among other kids in academics and sports, they consume drugs to enhance their performance.
- **Experiment:** Kids mostly get attracted to drugs. In greed of trying something new; feeling of thrill and excitement. They try different substances childishly that further claim their lives.
- **Relaxation:** Adolescents face a lot of stress nowadays to be the best in academics, society, and sports. To combat peer pressure, they get easily fascinated with drugs; to feel good and relax.

5.1 Gender sensitive towards Drug Abuse

Substance abuse and addiction manifest differently between men and women, highlighting the complex interplay of biological, social, and psychological factors. Peer pressure continues to be a significant influencer, driving men to engage in substance abuse for social acceptance. This social dynamic often leads men to use illegal drugs more frequently than women, risking potential health consequences. In contrast, women face a higher susceptibility to progress from substance abuse to dependency, underscoring the need for targeted intervention strategies. Men, generally, exhibit a tendency to stabilize their drug intake at lower doses, but paradoxically, endure more severe alcohol withdrawal symptoms. This gender-based distinction extends to rates of seeking medical assistance or succumbing to overdose, with men being more predisposed to these outcomes. The prevalence of substance use or addiction is consistently higher among men across various age groups, emphasizing the need for gender-sensitive approaches to prevention and treatment. It's crucial to acknowledge that women are not immune to substance abuse issues.

They are just as susceptible as men to developing substance use disorders. The consequences, though, differ, with women facing a higher likelihood of experiencing severe health complications such as liver damage and drug overdose. Understanding the nuances of addiction in both genders is vital for developing effective support systems and treatment plans. Women have additional hurdles due to the cyclical nature of addiction, where acute cravings and relapses are more common. Identifying these important stages, such as desire and recurrence is critical in developing holistic and gender-informed ways to end the addiction cycle. It is critical to have a complete understanding of these gender-specific patterns in drug addiction in order to adapt therapies that target the particular needs and vulnerabilities of both men and women on their recovery journeys.

5.2 Impact of drug abuse on Juvenile

Both short-term and long-term impacts are potential outcomes of drug use. Individuals struggling with addiction often underestimate the potential harm, believing that occasional drug use won't have lasting effects. However, both psychological and physical dependence can significantly influence their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. This lack of control over thoughts and actions poses a significant challenge. Casual drug use, done without considering the consequences, can lead to a dangerous path. People's bodies might become acclimated to medications when they use them more frequently, necessitating higher doses to achieve the intended results. Different medicines cause different bodily effects, ranging from heightened alertness and energy to a peaceful, relaxed sensation. Drug use can also cause alterations in perception and hallucinations, making it difficult for people to connect with others. The hazards of taking greater doses and utilizing medications for an extended length of time are substantial. These include the risk of infection from sharing needles, long-term brain and organ damage, and a variety of health risks that might result in death. According to studies, drug users are more likely to suffer from mental health concerns such as anxiety, despair, and psychosis. Under the Juvenile Justice Act of 2015, children who are dealing with substance misuse are identified as minors in need of care and protection. When a young person becomes addicted to mind-altering substances, their ability to lead a fulfilling and respectable life diminishes. The consequences of drug misuse extend beyond personal struggles, contributing to broader social and economic issues. Drug traffickers specifically target vulnerable populations, including young females and children, making the challenges associated with substance abuse even more severe. It's really important to stress the importance of stepping in early and providing support networks for individuals dealing with drug addiction. Education and awareness play a crucial role in preventing drug abuse, and community efforts are necessary to tackle the broader social impacts of this complicated issue. Recognizing substance addiction as a public health concern allows for the implementation of comprehensive measures, including rehabilitation programs and mental health counseling, to ease the widespread effects of drug use on individuals and communities alike.

6. Discussion

In the discourse surrounding drug-related challenges, a paradigmatic shift towards prioritizing human rights principles emerges as imperative. This necessitates a nuanced understanding of the inherent rights to health and freedom from discrimination, which is central to any effective approach. Rather than resorting solely to punitive measures, it becomes essential to delve into the multifaceted nature of drug use, acknowledging its intersectionality with socio-economic disparities and limited access to essential services. By embracing a human rights-centered perspective, interventions can address the underlying determinants of drug-related issues, thereby fostering sustainable solutions. Facilitating the integration of human rights principles into drug policies necessitates interdisciplinary collaboration among governmental entities, civil society actors, and affected communities. Through concerted efforts to align policy frameworks with human rights standards, stakeholders can forge a path toward a compassionate and equitable

response to drug-related challenges. This transformative endeavours signifies a departure from conventional methodologies, yet embodies a requisite step towards fostering a society characterized by enhanced well-being and social justice.

7. Conclusion

This intricate nexus of drug abuse and public health crises demands an intricate and nuanced examination, considering not only the immediate consequences but also the enduring societal repercussions. A critical lacuna in the existing landscape, contributing significantly to the propagation of addiction, is the palpable absence of comprehensive drug usage knowledge and education initiatives. The dearth of accessible information renders individuals susceptible to the allure of substance abuse without a thorough understanding of the potential consequences.

India, renowned for its diverse cultural heritage, grapples with a significant challenge manifested in the form of substance abuse, revealing a poignant paradox embedded in its societal framework. Despite the implementation of various legal measures and collaborative endeavors dedicated to addressing the pervasive issue of drug addiction, the haunting persistence of this problem remains a cause for serious concern. Therapeutic interventions, crucial for mitigating the impact of substance abuse, are notably lacking. The widespread vulnerability of the nation's youth is particularly alarming, as a substantial proportion find themselves ensnared in the intricate legal framework outlined by the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

This legal complexity amplifies their susceptibility, rendering them disproportionately prone to the adverse consequences of substance misuse. The pervasive prevalence of addiction in Indian society is underscored by the omnipresent grip of narcotic substances. Furthermore, the alarming escalation of intravenous drug use emerges as a consequential contributor to elevated rates of HIV/AIDS transmission. Educational interventions emerge as an imperative strategy in the battle against drug addiction. Cultivating a heightened awareness regarding the physiological, psychological, and societal implications of substance misuse is pivotal in fostering informed decision-making among the populace. Drug addiction should be viewed as a human rights issue since it involves defending the dignity and welfare of those who are abusing drugs. By guaranteeing that treatment and assistance are accessible to everybody, we can combat the stigma and prejudice that drug users experience. Human rights-focused policies enable us to provide more compassionate assistance, enabling individuals to rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society. It's also crucial to spread awareness about drug usage through international media. This entails exchanging anecdotes and having civil, honest conversations about addiction. We can shift the public's perception of drug problems by highlighting the difficulties faced by those who struggle with addiction and emphasizing the importance of compassion and assistance.

To address this multifaceted predicament effectively, a holistic approach encompassing legislative reforms, intensified therapeutic interventions, and expansive educational campaigns becomes imperative. Legislative frameworks should not only be punitive but also rehabilitative, fostering an environment conducive to the recovery and reintegration of individuals ensnared by addiction.

Concurrently, the augmentation of therapeutic resources is requisite to meet the burgeoning demand for rehabilitation services and to provide a lifeline for those grappling with the throes of addiction. An intelligent culture is a powerful antidote to the spread of drug usage. Comprehensive educational materials must be extensively distributed in order to reach varied populations and refute stereotypes about substance abuse. Such efforts can act as a barrier against the invisible danger of drug dependency by arming citizens with the information needed to recognize the dangers of addiction. India is at an intersection where it is essential to address the intricate relationship of cultural, legal, and public health variables in the context of drug addiction. To rescue the country from the control of this widespread condition, concerted strategies that include legislative change, therapeutic interventions, and vigorous educational activities are required. With such broad efforts, India may aim not just to address the urgent issue of drug addiction, but also to build an efficient societal framework that protects its citizens against the temptation of substance usage.

8. Recommendation

The development of efficacious techniques to tackle drug addiction necessitates the prioritization of programs that attempt to eradicate treatment-seeking anxiety. For recovery journeys to be effective, a supportive environment where people feel safe asking for help is necessary. Targeted media exposure, particularly in educational settings such as schools, can play a pivotal role in raising awareness about drug abuse and its consequences. Utilizing platforms like hoardings in school auditoriums to deliver educational messages in a sensitive and informative manner can empower children with knowledge and equip them with the tools to make informed decisions. Furthermore, adopting a humanitarian and empathic approach towards drug abusers is essential for promoting recovery and reducing stigma. Instead of stigmatizing individuals struggling with addiction, fostering an environment of compassion and understanding can facilitate their journey toward rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Comprehending the varying perspectives among individuals regarding drug addiction is crucial. Some individuals condemn persons who battle addiction because they think drug use is a sign of a horrible person. However, some recognize that addiction is a disease that requires assistance and treatment. We can help more individuals obtain the assistance they require if we shift the conversation around addiction from one of blame to one of compassion and support. This entails showing folks who are experiencing difficulties more compassion and concentrating on their recovery rather than passing judgment. It's about developing a more compassionate and perceptive strategy for handling addiction.

Endnote

ⁱ relating to a young person who is not yet old enough to be considered an adult Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). *Juvenile*. In Cambridge English Dictionary.

ii “child” means a person who has not completed eighteen years of age, The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act), § 2(12) (2015)

iii “juvenile” means a child below the age of eighteen years, The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act), § 2(35) (2015).

References

- [1] Australian Government Department of Health. (n.d.). *What are the effects of taking drugs?*. Australian Government Department of Health. [URL: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/drugs/about-drugs/what-are-the-effects-of-taking-drugs>]
- [2] Bezruczyk, D., & Hampton, D. (2023, February 9). *The difference in Addiction between Men and Women*. *Addiction Center*. [URL: <https://www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/differences-men-women/>]
- [3] *Better Health Channel*. (n.d.). *How Drugs Affect Your Body*. Better Health Victoria. [URL: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/How-drugs-affect-your-body>] (Accessed 21 June 2023)
- [4] Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). *Juvenile*. In *Cambridge English Dictionary*. Retrieved March 29, 2022, from [URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/juvenile>]
- [5] Glaser, B., Shelton, K. H., & van den Bree, M. B. (2010). The moderating role of close friends in the relationship between conduct problems and adolescent substance use. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 47*(1), 35-42. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2009.12.022>]
- [6] Government of India. (n.d.). *Implementation framework Of National Action Plan For Drug Demand Reduction*. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. [URL: https://socialjustice.gov.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/Scheme_for_NAPDDR.pdf]
- [7] Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. (n.d.). *Community Based Targeted Interventions For Drug Abuse Prevention Screening Assessment and Counseling*. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. [URL: <https://socialjustice.gov.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/Operational%20Guidelines636868637186365567.pdf>]
- [8] Jewkes, R. K., Dunkle, K., Nduna, M., Jama, P. N., & Puren, A. (2010). *Associations between childhood adversity and depression, substance abuse, and HIV and HSV2 incident infections in rural South African youth*. *Child abuse & neglect, 34*(11), 833-841. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2010.05.002>]
- [9] National Cancer Institute. (n.d.). *Substance abuse*. In *NCI Dictionary of Cancer Terms*. Retrieved March 29, 2022, from [URL: <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/substance-abuse>]
- [10] NIDA. 2022, May 4. *Sex and Gender Differences in Substance Use*. Retrieved from November 28, 2022, [URL: <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/substance-use-in-women/sex-gender-differences-in-substance-use>]
- [11] Press Information Bureau, Government of India. (2023, April 11). *Drug Addiction*. *Press Information Bureau*. [URL: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1842697>] (Accessed 21 June 2023)
- [12] Prins, S. J., Kajeepeta, S., Hatzenbuehler, M. L., Branas, C. C., Metsch, L. R., & Russell, S. T. (2022). *School health predictors of the school-to-prison pipeline: substance use and developmental risk and resilience factors*. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 70*(3), 463-469. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.09.032>]

- [13] Ray, R. (n.d.). *ROLE OF NGOs IN DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/documents/india/ddch10.pdf>]
- [14] Saikia, N., & Debbarma, B. (2020). *The socioeconomic correlates of substance use among male adults in Northeast India*. *Clinical epidemiology and global health*, 8(1), 149-157. [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cegh.2019.06.004>]
- [15] Smith, D. C., Boel-Studt, S., & Cleeland, L. (2009). *Parental consent in adolescent substance abuse treatment outcome studies*. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 37(3), 298-306 [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2009.03.007>]
- [16] The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act), § 2(12) (2015).
- [17] The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, § 2(35) (2015).
- [18] The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, § 2(i)
- [19] Turnbridge. (n.d.). *Why Do Teens Use Drugs?: 8 Reasons Parents Should Consider*. Turnbridge. [URL: <https://www.turnbridge.com/news-events/latest-articles/why-do-teens-use-drugs/>]
- [20] United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *International guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy*. [URL: <https://www.undp.org/publications/international-guidelines-human-rights-and-drug-policy>] (Accessed 5th May 2023)
- [21] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *Addressing and countering the world drug problem*. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/es/humanrights/areas/drugs.html>] (Accessed June 23, 2023)
- [22] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *Children and Youth*. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/humanrights/approach.html>] (Accessed 20 June 2023)
- [23] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *Cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, women, children, and communities*. [URL: https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016/FactSheets/human_rights_women_children.pdf] (Accessed 3rd May 2023)
- [24] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *Human Rights*. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/Human-rights/overview---more.html>] (Accessed 4 May 2023)
- [25] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *Mainstreaming Human Rights in Our Work*. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/humanrights/areas.html>] (Accessed 21 June 2023)
- [26] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (n.d.). *The work of UNODC*. [URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/humanrights/policy.html>] (Accessed 21 June 2023)
- [27] Wakeford, A. G. P., Morin, E. L., Bramlett, S. N., Howell, L. L., & Sanchez, M. M. (2018). *A review of nonhuman primate models of early life stress and adolescent drug abuse*. *Neurobiology of Stress*, 9, 188-198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ynstr.2018.09.005>

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest related to this research.