



A Study To Assess Socio-Demographic Profile and Sexual Practices Among The Charas Drug Abusers in Metropolitan City

KEYWORDS

Drug abusers, Charas drug abusers, sexual debut, paid sex.

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ABSTRACT *The drug abusers problem is becoming worse in the metropolitan city. Drug abuse is becoming the emerging problem in the youth of India. The present study mainly focus on the charas drug users. This is descriptive cross sectional study conducted at the drug de-addiction centre of NGO working for drug abusers. There were total 77 male charas drug abusers interviewed in the drug de-addiction centre. More than 50% subjects were below the age of 40 years. About 71.4% subjects were Muslim by religion, 62.3% subjects were married and maximum 63.6% subjects were educated upto secondary level. Out of 77 subjects, 74 (96.1%) subjects had their sexual debut. Out of 74 sexual debut subjects, 66.2% subjects had history of paid sex while 14.9% subjects gave history of sex inexchange of money/drug.*

INTRODUCTION

Substance/Drug abuse is complex and multidimensional problem. The problem is not merely that of individual and a drug or a community, but of the interaction between the traid.¹ According to the World Health Organization (WHO) substance use is persistent or sporadic drug inconsistent with or unrelated to acceptable medical practices.² In India, the traditional drug like opium, charas, bhang and ganja were used by the section of society partly as leisure time activity and partly as part of religious ceremony.³ Drug addiction causes immense human distress and the illegal production and distribution of drugs have spawned crime and violence worldwide. The drug abuse is the ancient phenomenon. The intoxicating properties of certain cannabis preparations were probably known in India more than 2,000 years ago. The earliest reference to it is in Atharva Veda, a religious text believed to belong to the period 2000-1400 B.C.⁴ For spreading awareness among the people 26th June is celebrated as International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicite Trafficking.⁵ Charas drug abusers is one of the common drug abused in the metropolitan city. Charas is the name given to a hashish form of cannabis which is handmade in India, Pakistan and Nepal. It is made from the resin of the cannabis plant (Cannabis sativa or Cannabis indica). The present study was conducted with the objectives to assess the socio-demographic profile & sexual practices in Charas drug abusers. The study was conducted in the drug de-addiction centre of NGO working for the drug abusers in metropolitan city.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Study Area – The present study was conducted at drug de-addiction centre of NGO in a metropolitan city.

Study Population – It comprised of male Charas drug abusers enrolled at Drug De-addiction Centre of a NGO.

Study Design – Cross-sectional Descriptive Epidemiological Study.

Duration of study - 1st January 2013 to 30th June 2013.

Sample size and sampling technique – Convenient Sam-

pling Method was used to collect sample size. Total 100 subjects were selected randomly from the registration register of drug de-addiction centre of NGO and was asked whether they have consumed charas or not in the past. Then interview was proceed forward with the subjects who had consumed charas in the past. In the present study we came across 77 subjects who had consumed charas and was taken as the sample size.

RESULTS –

Table No. 1 – Socio-demographic Profile

Socio-demographic profile	Number (n=77)	Percentage
Age (in years)		
20-29 years	26	33.8%
30-39 years	18	23.4%
40-49 years	16	20.8%
50 & above	17	22.0%
Religion		
Muslims	55	71.4%
Hindu	21	27.3%
Christian	1	1.3%
Marital status		
Married	48	62.3%
Unmarried	25	32.5%
Separate / divorce	3	3.9%
Living in relationship	1	1.3%
Education		
Illiterate	14	18.2%
Primary	14	18.2%
Secondary	49	63.6%
Higher secondary	00	0.0%
Graduate	00	0.0%
No. of Substance abused		
1	00	0.0%
2	30	39.0%
3 & >3	47	61.0%
Total	77	100.0%
Socioeconomic class *		
Class I	9	11.7%
Class II	26	33.8%
Class III	21	27.3%
Class IV	20	25.9%
Class V	1	1.3%
*(As per Modified B.G. Prasad classification 2013) ⁹		

There were total 77 charas drug abusers were found in the drug de-addiction centre of NGO. About 57.2% subjects were below the age of 40 years of age. The mean age of the subjects were found to be 37 years with 22 years as minimum age of subjects and 72 years as maximum age. Seventy one point four percentage of subjects were belonged to Muslim community followed by 27.3% subjects belonging to Hindu community. About 62.3% subjects were married followed by 32.5%, 3.9%, 1.3% were unmarried, separate/divorced and living in relationship respectively. Maximum 63.6% subjects were educated upto secondary level and 18.2% subjects were illiterate. From the given table we can make out that about 61% subjects are poly-substance abusers and these all subjects were consuming atleast one more drug along with Charas for their drug abusing practices. Also, maximum 33.8% subjects were belonged to socio-economic class II followed by 27.3% subjects of socio-economic class III.

Table No. 2 – Sexual Practices

Sexual Practices	Number	Percentage
Sexual Debut (n = 77)		
YES	74	96.1%
NO	3	3.9%
History of any paid sex? (n = 74)		
YES	49	66.2%
NO	25	33.8%
History of sex in exchange of money/drug? (n = 74)		
YES	11	14.9%
NO	63	85.1%
Sexual Orientation (n = 74)		
Heterosexual	63	85.1%
Bisexual	11	14.9%

On asking about the sexual debut it was found that 74 (96.1%) out of 77 subjects had their sexual debut. The mean age of sexual debut was found to be 18 years with 13 years as minimum and 40 years as maximum age of sexual debut. Also, about 66.2% subjects gave history of paid sex in their life. While only 14.9% subjects gave history of sex in exchange of money or drugs. Maximum 85.1% subjects were having heterosexual orientation while 14.9% subjects were bisexual orientation.

Table No. 3 – Association between Socio-economic class (B.J. Prasad Modified Classification 2013) & No. of Substance use

Socioeconomic class (B.J. Prasad Modified Classification 2013)	No. of Drug abused		Total
	2	3 & > 3	
Class I + II	13 (43.3%)	22 (46.8%)	35 (45.5%)
Class III	06 (20.0%)	15 (31.9%)	21 (27.3%)
Class IV + V	11 (36.7%)	10 (21.3%)	21 (27.3%)
Total	30 (100.0%)	47 (100.0%)	77 (100.0%)

$\chi^2 = 2.589$ df = 2 p-value = 0.274

From the above table we came to know that 46.8% subjects belonging to Socio-economic class I + II was abusing 3 or more than 3 drugs at a time, while 31.9% & 21.3% subjects belonging to socio-economic class III & IV + V respectively were abusing 3 or more than 3 drugs. Thus, we can conclude that higher the socio-economic class more is chances of abusing more drugs. But, the association between socio-economic class and no. of substance used was not found to be statistically significant (**p-value = 0.274**).

DISCUSSION

In the present study more than half of the subjects were below the age of 40 years indicating the early initiation of

their drug abusing habits. Similar results of maximum subjects below the age of 40 years were shown in study by Vinay Kumar & etal⁶ and by Manick & Meher Singh.⁷ we found that maximum subjects in the present study were Muslim (71.4%) followed by Hindu (27.3%). The similar results were shown by study conducted by I.C. Chopra and Sir R. N. Chopra.⁸ Also, about 63% subjects were educated upto secondary and 18% subjects were illiterate indicating that literacy is not barrier to the drug abusing practices. While, in a study conducted by Ghulam Muhammad in Pakistan, majority of the subjects in this study were literate.⁹ Also, in the present study more than 60% subjects were found to belong socio-economic class II + III. Most of the study subjects were daily wage worker, labourer & auto driver (Non-tabulated data). In a descriptive study conducted at de-addiction centre at Kanpur 19.3% were unemployed, 29.3% self-employed, 19.3% in government sector, 28.8% in private sector and 3.1% were students.¹⁰

Not a single subject was using only charas for their drug abusing practices. 39% subjects were using 2 drugs for drug abusing practices and 61% subjects were using 3 or more than 3 drugs at a time. A study in Nepal show that about 76.3% patients were poly-substance abusers abusing atleast 3 or more drugs at a time for last 5 years.¹¹ About 66% subjects gave history of paid sex while, only 14% subjects gave history of sex in exchange of money/drug. Maximum 85% subjects were having heterosexual orientation. The study conducted by Sunil Suhas Soloman and others give us information that in the last one month 23% participant had history of paid sex, but only 2% had sex in exchange of money or drug.¹² Also, the association of no. of substance abused and the socio-economic class by B.J. Prasad classification 2013 was not found to be statistically significant (**p-value = 0.274**). But, if we observed table carefully we can conclude that higher is the economic class, more is the no. of drug abused.

CONCLUSION

The maximum numbers of study subjects were Muslim followed by Hindu religion. Majority of the subjects were educated upto the secondary. Maximum drug abusing subjects were in the age group of 20-29 followed by 30-39 years of age. Maximum subjects belonged to socio-economic class II & III according to the Modified Prasad Classification 2013. Most of the subjects were poly-substance users i.e. using more than 3 drugs at a time. Maximum subjects in the present study had their sexual debut. Maximum subjects gave history of paid sex, while most of the study subjects had heterosexual orientation.

Conflict of Interest : Nil

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