



ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SENSATION SEEKING WITH ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO CONSUMPTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN BANGALORE

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ABSTRACT **Background And Need For Study:** Adolescence is critical developmental stage during which individuals are naturally inclined to experiment and explore. The dominance of amygdala in adolescents makes them prone to high-risk behaviours. Most common risky behaviour seen in our community is alcohol, tobacco and substance consumption. Substance use in adolescence is influenced by temperamental, psychological, and social factors. Personality traits like sensation seeking (SS) are strongly linked to use and misuse of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol among teenagers. Assessing SS could help in understanding and preventing substance abuse. Sensation seeking, a trait with biological roots, involves a desire for novel, complex, and intense experiences, and a willingness to take risks for such experiences. **Objective:** To find association of sensation seeking with tobacco and alcohol abuse among adolescents. **Method:** After obtaining permission, a sensitization module was prepared which include questionnaires, ppt, video display. There were 2 different questionnaires "a" and "b" which were given to students and advised to complete in 20 to 30 minutes. **Results:** The results showed that students who heard about alcohol, heard from mass media, family members who drink alcohol, student who maintain contact with friend who smoke have a significant total SSS score indicating overall greater sensation seeking. Adolescents who heard about alcohol from mass media, if family member use alcohol have significant boredom susceptibility. Students who have heard about alcohol, heard from mass media, family members who drink alcohol, student who maintain contact with friend who smoke exhibit greater Thrill and Adventure Seeking behaviour. Adolescents who know that smoking in public place is punishable, pan masala is addictive, advertisement of tobacco products punishable and prohibited exhibit greater Thrill and Adventure Seeking behaviour. Adolescents who heard about alcohol from mass media, if family member use alcohol have significant higher experience seeking behaviour.

KEYWORDS : Sensation-seeking ; Adolescence; Personality

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of substance use disorders in adolescents range from 1.8% to 57.4%¹. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage during which individuals are naturally inclined to experiment and explore. This period is critical because adversities like poverty, family conflict, and negative experiences such as violence can have long-term emotional and socio-economic impacts on adolescents, their families, and communities. The dominance of the amygdala in adolescents makes them prone to high-risk behaviours. Most common risky behaviour seen in our community is alcohol, tobacco and substance consumption. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage during which individuals are naturally inclined to experiment and explore. This period is critical because adversities like poverty, family conflict, and negative experiences such as violence can have long-term emotional and socio-economic impacts on adolescents, their families, and communities. The dominance of the amygdala in adolescents makes them prone to high-risk behaviours. Most common risky behaviour seen in our community is alcohol, tobacco and substance consumption.

Substance use in adolescence is influenced by temperamental, psychological, and social factors. Personality traits like sensation seeking (SS) are strongly linked to the use and misuse of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol among teenagers. Assessing SS could help in preventing substance abuse. Sensation seeking, a trait with biological roots, involves a desire for novel, complex, and intense experiences, and a willingness to take risks for such experiences.

METHODOLOGY:

Source Of Data: Students of 8th, 9th and 10th standard from schools in Karnataka were involved in the study

Study Design: Prospective study

Inclusion Criteria: All the students present in the class of 8, 9 and 10.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Students who are absent on days of pre and post test
2. On medication for psychiatric illness

PROCEDURE:

A cross sectional study was done on a total of 300 students. Permission

was taken from the Deputy director of Public Instruction, Principal of the schools. Consent was taken from the parents and assent from the students. Institutional Ethics committee clearance was obtained. A sensitization module was prepared which include questionnaires, ppt, video display. There are 2 validated questionnaires namely "a" and "b". For Kannada medium students, questionnaire translated into Kannada language by the expertise.

Questionnaire "2" includes demographic data. The questionnaire "b" is a Sensation Seeking Scale² with 35 questions. Each question has A and B option. It has 4 primary scales which include disinhibition, boredom susceptibility, thrill and adventure seeking, experience seeking. Each question is given a score of 1. Five questions related to sexuality, in disinhibition section were not approved from ethical committee. Hence a total of 35 questions considered.

Each classroom was selected priorly. A unique number was allotted to each respondent and their identity not revealed. Each student was provided with a questionnaire "a" and "b" and they were advised to complete in 20 to 30 minutes.

Outcome Criteria:

Association between sensation seeking scale with alcohol and tobacco consumption

RESULT ANALYSIS:

Socio-demographics Of The Subjects:

Among the surveyed group, 2.0% are 12 years old, 15.3% are 13 years old, 30.0% are 14 years old, 18.3% are 15 years old, and 34.3% are 16 years old. 52.0% of the participants are female and 48.0% are male. 37.0% are in grade VIII, 30.7% are in grade XI, and 32.3% are in grade XII. 69.0% attend school in rural areas while 31.0% are in urban areas. 58.0% engage in 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week, 25.7% exercise for 90 minutes every week, and 16.3% do not engage in any physical activity.

14.0% of father's are illiterate and 86.0% are literate. Similarly, 20.3% of mothers are illiterate while 79.7% are literate. 5.3% of fathers are businessmen, 3.3% work in the government sector, 90.0% are in other occupations, and 1.3% are teachers. 0.3% are businesswomen, 0.7% work in the government sector, 63.0% are housewives, and 36.0% hold other occupations. 93.3% live with both parents, while 6.7% live with a

single parent. 90.0% do not know friends who drink alcohol, and 10.0% do. Similarly, 89.0% do not know friends who smoke, while 11.0% do.

The results showed that students who have heard about alcohol, heard from mass media, family members who drink alcohol, student who maintain contact with friend who smoke have a higher significant total SSS score indicating overall greater sensation seeking.

Adolescents who know that smoking in public place is punishable have significant SSS score.

Table 1: Association Of Knowledge, Addiction And Harmful Effects Of Tobacco And Alcohol With The SSS Questionnaire.

SSS TOTAL OF 35 QUESTIONS		N	Mean(0-35)	p value
Heard about alcohol	No	33	15.8788	0.016
	Yes	267	18.7303	
Heard about alcohol from Mass Media	No	37	15.4324	0.002
	Yes	263	18.8365	
Any of Family member drink alcohol	No	113	17.0708	0.004
	Yes	187	19.2299	
Maintain contact with Friend who Smoke	No	280	18.2071	0.034
	Yes	20	21.3500	
Smoking in Public place is Punishable	False	13	14.6154	0.028
	True	287	18.5889	

Adolescents who heard about alcohol from mass media, if family member use alcohol, knowledge of Sale of tobacco within 100 yards of educational place is prohibited and punishable have significant boredom susceptibility.

The results showed that students who have heard about alcohol, heard from mass media, family members who drink alcohol, student who maintain contact with friend who smoke, adolescents who know that smoking in public place is punishable, pan masala is addictive, advertisement of tobacco products punishable and prohibited, Sale of tobacco within 100 yards of educational place is prohibited and punishable exhibit greater Thrill and Adventure Seeking behaviour.

Adolescents who heard about alcohol from mass media, if family member use alcohol, knowledge of advertisement of tobacco products punishable and prohibited alcohol have significant higher experience seeking behaviour.

Table2: Association Of Knowledge, Addiction And Harmful Effects Of Tobacco And Alcohol With The Boredom Susceptibility, Thrill Adventure Seeking And Sensation Seeking.

a)Boredom Susceptibility		N	Mean	p value
Heard about alcohol from Mass Media	No	37	4.973	0.039
	Yes	263	5.7452	
Any of Family member use Tobacco	No	137	5.3139	0.012
	Yes	163	5.9325	
Sale of Tobacco within 100 yards of educational place prohibited and punishable	False	65	5.0000	0.005
	True	235	5.8298	
b)Thrill Adventure Seeking		N	Mean	p value
Heard about alcohol	No	33	5.0909	0.028
	Yes	267	6.3483	
Heard about alcohol from Mass Media	No	37	4.8649	0.005
	Yes	263	6.3992	
Any of Family member drink alcohol	No	113	5.7434	0.043
	Yes	187	6.4920	
Maintain contact with Friend who Smoke	No	280	6.0893	0.011
	Yes	20	7.9000	
Smoking in Public place is Punishable	False	13	4.5385	0.047
	True	287	6.2857	
Pan masala is additive	False	46	7.2391	0.014
	True	254	6.0236	
Advertisements of Tobacco products Punishable and Prohibited	False	80	5.2000	0.001
	True	220	6.5773	
Sale of Tobacco within 100 yards of educational place prohibited and punishable	False	65	5.0769	0.001
	True	235	6.5234	
c)Experience Seeking		N	Mean	p value
Heard about alcohol from Mass Media	No	37	5.5946	0.024
	Yes	263	6.692	

Any of Family member drink alcohol	No	113	5.8496	0.001
	Yes	187	6.9840	
Advertisements of Tobacco products Punishable and Prohibited	False	80	5.7250	0.002
	True	220	6.8591	

DISCUSSION:

The Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS) is a forty-item questionnaire. The SSS has four primary scales (Disinhibition, Boredom Susceptibility, Thrill and Adventure Seeking, Experience Seeking). The SSS consists of 40 items, each having two options from which the participant must choose one. 5 questions related to sexuality which included in disinhibition section were not approved from ethical committee. Hence a total of 35 questions were considered.

Sensation seeking scale in adolescents can identify those who are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, including substance use. Early identification allows for targeted interventions. With knowledge of SS traits, prevention programs can be tailored to address the specific needs and motivations of high sensation seekers. Educating parents and teachers about SS can help them recognize the signs of high sensation seeking in teenagers. They can then provide guidance, support, and supervision to adolescents from harmful behaviours. Programs can focus on developing coping skills, stress management techniques, and decision-making abilities in high sensation seekers. This can help them handle their impulses in healthier ways.

Our study showed that students who have heard about alcohol, heard from mass media, family members who drink alcohol, student who maintain contact with friend who smoke have a higher significant total SSS score indicating overall greater sensation seeking. In a study done by **Palacio J³** showed higher sensation seeking score positively associated with alcohol drinking.

In a study done by **Sznitman S et al⁴** showed that sensation seeking had a significant direct path to adolescent alcohol use, part of the association was mediated by unstructured socializing with peers. The mediated paths were similar for boys and girls alike.

In study done by **Scalese M et al⁵** showed adolescents with high sensation seeking tendencies use more psychotropic drugs.

In a study done by **Sargent JD et al⁶** Sensation seeking works moderately well at identifying adolescents at risk for onset of binge drinking and established smoking.

Study done by **Cappelli C et al⁷** suggest sensation seeking presents as a stable trait during childhood, which can cause children to seek out novel or exciting behaviours such as alcohol use.

CONCLUSION:

Sensation seeking is an important factor in predicting alcohol and tobacco abuse among adolescents. There was a significant relationship between higher sensation-seeking tendencies and an increased likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours, such as alcohol and tobacco use.

Sensation seeking, as a personality trait characterized by a preference for novel and intense experiences, has been consistently linked to riskier behaviours during adolescence, a period when individuals are particularly influenced by peer pressure, social norms, and the desire for excitement.

The study likely highlighted other risk factors associated with substance abuse, such as family history, mental health issues, and environmental influences, but sensation seeking remains a key predictor of early substance use initiation.

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