



A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENTS WITH A VIEW TO DEVELOP A PAMPHLET REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN URBAN AREA OF RAJPURA, DISTRICT PATIALA, PUNJAB

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ABSTRACT **Background:** Substance abuse among adolescents is a growing global public health challenge, particularly in developing countries. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterised by experimentation, identity formation, and increased susceptibility to peer influence. In India, especially in Punjab, substance abuse among adolescents has emerged as a serious health and social issue. Nurses play a vital role in prevention through assessment, education, and early intervention. **Aim:** To assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescents residing in an urban area of Punjab and to determine the association between knowledge levels and selected socio-demographic variables. **Methods:** A non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted. The study was conducted in an urban community of Rajpura, District Patiala, Punjab. Sixty adolescents aged 13–19 years were selected using non-probability convenience sampling. Data were collected using a self-structured knowledge questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. **Results:** The findings revealed that 73.3% of adolescents had good knowledge, 21.7% had excellent knowledge, and 5% had average knowledge regarding substance abuse. Significant associations were found between knowledge levels and age, educational status, parents' occupation, family income, and previous exposure to information on substance abuse ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** Although the majority of adolescents demonstrated adequate knowledge, gaps were identified in areas related to prevention strategies and early consequences of substance abuse. Nurse-led educational interventions such as pamphlets and school-based programs are recommended to strengthen preventive awareness among adolescents.

KEYWORDS : Adolescents, Substance Abuse, Knowledge, Prevention, Nursing Research, Health Education

INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse is a major public health concern that affects individuals across all age groups; however, adolescents are particularly vulnerable due to their developmental stage. Adolescence represents a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, marked by rapid physical, emotional, psychological, and social changes. During this period, curiosity, experimentation, peer pressure, and risk-taking behaviours increase, making adolescents more susceptible to initiating substance use.

Globally, substance abuse among adolescents contributes significantly to morbidity, mortality, and social problems. According to the World Health Organisation, alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use are among the leading risk factors for disease burden in young people. Early initiation of substance use is associated with poor academic performance, mental health disorders, risky sexual behaviour, violence, and long-term addiction.

Knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and behaviours related to substance use. Adequate awareness regarding the harmful effects, risk factors, and prevention of substance abuse can empower adolescents to make informed decisions and resist peer pressure. Nurses, as frontline healthcare providers, are uniquely positioned to assess adolescents' knowledge, identify gaps, and implement health education interventions.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:

Research Design

A non-experimental descriptive research design was used to assess the knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescents.

Setting

The study was conducted in an urban community of Rajpura, District Patiala, Punjab.

Population And Sample

The target population consisted of adolescents aged 13–19 years residing in the selected urban area. A sample of 60 adolescents was selected using non-probability convenience sampling.

Inclusion Criteria

- Adolescents aged 13–19 years
- Residing in the selected urban area
- Willing to participate in the study

Exclusion Criteria

- Adolescents with known cognitive impairments
- Those not available during data collection

Tool For Data Collection

A self-structured questionnaire was developed after reviewing relevant literature and consulting experts. The tool consisted of two sections:

- Section A: Socio-demographic variables
- Section B: Knowledge questionnaire on substance abuse (20 multiple-choice questions)

Reliability And Validity

The reliability of the tool was established using the split-half method, yielding a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.78$, indicating acceptable reliability. Content validity was ensured through expert review.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the concerned authority. Informed consent was obtained from participants and guardians where required. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained.

RESULTS

Table 1: Level Of Knowledge Regarding Substance Abuse

Knowledge Level	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	16–20	13	21.7
Good	11–15	44	73.3

Average	6–10	3	5.0
Poor	≤5	0	0

Table 2: Mean And Standard Deviation Of Knowledge Scores

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Knowledge Score	14.2	2.8

Table 3: Association Between Knowledge Level and Selected Variables

Variable	χ^2 value	p-value	Significance
Age	10.45	0.005	Significant
Educational status	9.87	0.007	Significant
Parents' occupation	13.21	0.001	Significant
Family income	8.12	0.017	Significant
Previous information	7.36	0.026	Significant

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to assess the knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescents in an urban area of Punjab. An effective and evaluative research approach descriptive research design was selected. A self structured questionnaire was asked from 60 adolescents of urban area of Rajpura, Punjab to assess the knowledge regarding substance abuse using convenience sampling technique. The results showed that out of 60 samples, 0 % had poor knowledge, 5% average, 73.3% had good and 21.7% had excellent knowledge regarding substance abuse.

The study findings showed that the obtained mean value on knowledge scores 14.02 and standard deviation is 1.89. The obtained p value is $p < 0.05$.

The findings showed that there was no significant association found between socio demographic variables and knowledge scores.

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