



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychiatry

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES IN PATIENTS COMING TO AN ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY AT A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL.

KEY WORDS: Substance use disorder, epidemiology, addiction,

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ABSTRACT

Substance use is a multifactorial challenge involving the individual, the substance and the community. Substance users are generally the active workforce of the nation who contribute to the progress, but owing to the substance use, the nation misses out on them. By our study we compiled the sociodemographic data of people coming to an addiction treatment facility in a tertiary care hospital. A cross sectional study was done from April 2021 to December 2022 and 921 patients were assessed. Majority of the patients (71.45%) were from the age group of 21-50 years, and 94.94% of the study sample were males. 79.59% were working as a semiskilled / skilled worker. 52.33% were educated up to high school. 90.01% of patients were from the upper lower socioeconomic class as per Kuppuswamy's Socioeconomic Scale. A majority of the sample (45.1%) were seen using tobacco and 40.1% of the study sample was using alcohol. Our Results were consistent with many other studies, and were in contrast with some as they had different location where the study was done. It was seen that substance use is more common in working age group with more population belonging to the upper lower socioeconomic class as per kuppuswamy's socioeconomic scale. To tackle this challenge of substance use, awareness about hazards of substance use and better accessibility to addiction treatment facilities is of paramount importance.

Introduction

The National Mental Health Survey (2015–2016) (1), postulates that 22% of India's entire population has lifetime prevalence of consuming a substance.

Epidemiological studies in relation to substance use are often tricky and challenging as substance use is a private topic for many, and not everyone readily discloses or approaches a deaddiction center. (2)

Substance use disorder is an interplay between an individual, the drug, and the community, hence measures have to be taken at all these levels to mitigate the magnitude of substance use.

Countries with a large population and fewer resources, face a lot of issues with respect to substance use, as major part of the population who should be contributing to the development and progress of the nation, is using a substance and causing impairment. Here sociodemographic studies help as they try to narrow down a range of population characteristic affected by substance use so policy and management guidelines are designed in accordance with that.

Objectives

- To assess the age, gender, occupation, economic status, educational status and the substances commonly used, in patients coming to a tertiary care hospital.

Materials and Methods

- Cross Sectional study at Tertiary Care Centre.
- Duration of study: April 2021 to December 2022.
- Sample size: 921
- Data was collected using a structured proforma and was analysed.
- Kuppuswamy's Socioeconomic Scale was used.
- Due consent was taken and those not consenting to the study were excluded.

Results

- 71.45% of patients were from age group 21-50 years.
- 94.94% of patients were males, whereas 5.54% of patients were females.
- 79.59% of patients were semiskilled/ unskilled workers
- 52.33% were educated up to high school

- 90.01% of patients were from the upper lower socioeconomic class as per Kuppuswamy's Socioeconomic Scale.
- 45.1% used tobacco and 40.1% of the study sample used alcohol

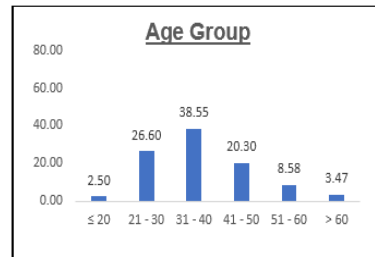


Table 1: Age group of study sample

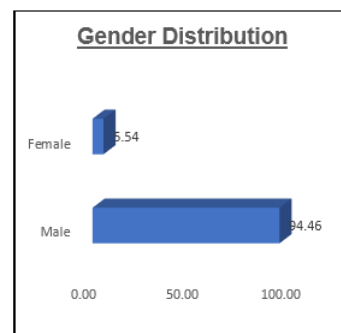


Table 2: Gender distribution in study sample

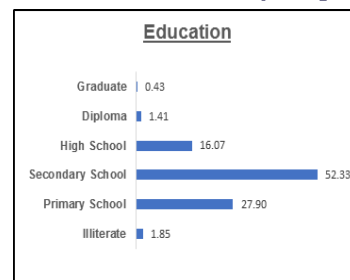


Table 3: Education of the study sample

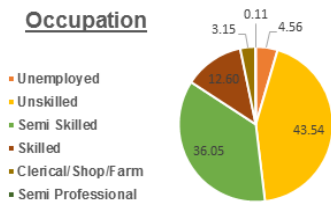


Table 4: Occupation of the study sample

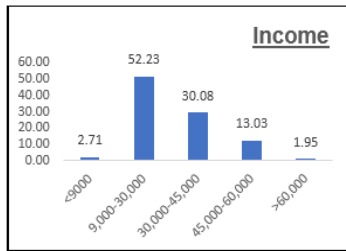


Table 5: Income of Study sample

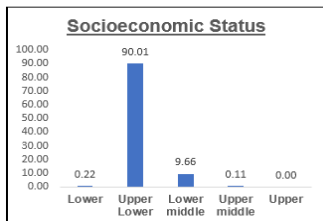


Table 6: Socioeconomic Status amongst the study population

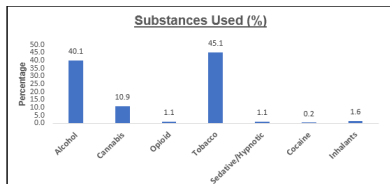


Table 7: Percentage of substance use in study sample

Discussion

- In our study, most substance users were from age group 31-40 which was consistent with the Drug Abuse Monitoring System, published in 2004, along with Rather et al, Bashir et al and Kadri et al (Bashir et al., 2015; Kadri et al., 2003; Rather et al., 2013). This age group is most vulnerable as they face stress regarding personal as well as professional life more than before. Due to the increase in urbanization and industrialisation, it could lead to increased mental stress and individuals who have poor coping skills to the newly increased stress, they often turn to substance use for comfort.
- Murmu et al (Murmu et al., 2017) found that 45.1% of their study sample was from the age group of 19-30 years which was followed by 39.0% from 31-45 years, which was consistent with Pandey et al (Pandey et al., 2015). Young age is often associated with novelty seeking attitude in some, combined with increased peer pressure which culminates to substance use.
- Most substance users were male, as concurred by Prajapati et al, Arora et al, Rather et al, and Pandey et al (Arora et al., 2016; Pandey et al., 2015; Prajapati et al., 2019; Rather et al., 2013). This could be due to poor awareness of substance use amongst females along with the feeling of humiliation and shame to come to clinics.
- In our study, 43.54% were unskilled workers which was

consistent with Kadri et al (Kadri et al., 2003) and which was in contrast with study done by Randhawa et al (Randhawa et al., 2020), where they found 47.2% self-employed. Unskilled workers out of frustration, could use substance to cope with it, and self-employed people could have increased stress with poor coping mechanism and easy access in procuring substance financially.

- In our study, 90.1% of patients belonged to upper lower socioeconomic status, which was also seen by Kumar et al (Kumar et al., 2013) and Kadri et al (Kadri et al., 2003). Arora et al Found that 38% of their study population belonged to lower middle socioeconomic status (Arora et al., 2016). This could be due to that with illiterates and lower socioeconomic class purchasing power is an issue and with higher socioeconomic class, better awareness is there regarding the harmful effects. Also, regarding visiting a public hospital is less preferred by individuals of higher socio-economic class. A study done by Patrick ME et al to assess the relationship between the socioeconomic status (SES) and substance use observed that individuals belonging to a lower SES used tobacco, whereas individuals belonging to higher SES used alcohol and cannabis. (Patrick et al., 2012)
- Tobacco (45.06%) and Alcohol (40.07%) were the predominantly used substances, which was also found by Prajapati et al and Bashir et al. (Bashir et al., 2015; Prajapati et al., 2019)

Randhawa et al (Randhawa et al., 2020) found that 67.5% were addicted to heroin which was consistent with. As the study done by Randhawa et al, was based in Punjab, where opioid use is more frequent such findings could be seen. (Sharma et al., 2017)

Kadri et al found that 70.2% of their study sample uses alcohol, which was consistent with findings by Murmu et al As their study was done in a industrialized city in India, such findings showed the effect of development on substance use. (Kadri et al., 2003; Murmu et al., 2017)

Better awareness and accessibility to deaddiction centers is of paramount importance in dealing with substance use disorder.

There is also a need for regular research in this topic. Such type of studies are effective to collect data regarding the composition of the population consuming substance so as to effectively plan and implement management guidelines and policy.

As we know substance use is a complex multifactorial problem, and certain issues were highlighted in our study, such as less awareness regarding deaddiction and substance use in females, social status and the awareness and choice of substance used

Conclusions

Substance use disorder is a wide spread challenge which affects multiple domains of life, mainly medical, social and occupational amongst others. Hence it is crucial to know the sociodemographic details of the population suffering from substance use disorder so appropriate measures can be taken in a holistic manner. In our study we found that majority of the people coming to addiction treatment facilities belonged to the working age group of 31-40 years, were males and belonging to upper lower socioeconomic class as per Kuppuswamy's socioeconomic scale, and majority of them used tobacco which was followed by alcohol. Spreading awareness regarding the substance use and its implications specially catering to this population characteristic, making healthcare accessible is necessary to reduce or stop substance use and related problems.

Conflict of Interest: None

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