

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF DRUG DEPENDENCE: A BURNING SOCIAL ISSUE

Dr. Snehal Dinkar Gajbhiye<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Pallavi G. Maske<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rajesh S. Upadhyay<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MD Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Guide and Associate. Professor, <sup>3</sup>HOD;

Agad Tantra Avum Vidhivaidyak Department,

C.S.M.S.S Ayurved College Kanchanwadi Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India

### ABSTRACT

Drug should normally be used for medical reasons only but with the increasing stresses of life, to control anger or distress, family issues, inability to do a job etc. made the person feel strong desire for taking the drug. Peoples started consuming overdose of drugs to overcome their problems and unfortunately becomes dependent on drug. Drug dependence is also known as the substance dependence. Now a day, people found the easiest solution of their problems in the form of drug. Drug dependence does not just affect the addict but also family, friends, employers and society. This problem has been increasing immensely among our society lead to harming one's body, causing problem in family structure and contribute to the delinquency in society. So, the present study is carried out for understanding devastating concept of drug dependence; so that youth can keep themselves away from overdose consumption of drug and so as to help to keep society healthy.

**Keywords:** Drug dependence, Substance dependence, drug, madakari dravyas

### INTRODUCTION

India is a developing country leading by youth. Along with development, change in lifestyle took place which may lead to many medical conditions like high blood pressure, chronic pain, stress etc. which requires taking drug to maintain quality of life. This might be considered "drug dependence". According to *Ayurveda samhita*, *Sharangdhar* describes *madakari dravyas* in *Sha. S. Pratham khand 4/21-22* which means narcotics. While describing the *madakari* property, included all the drugs with *tamoguna* causing derangement of mind under *madya varga*. *Madya* is the one which makes the person to lose control over senses after consumption and also causes partial loss of intellect, conscious-

ness & discriminating power.<sup>1</sup>

"A drug is any substance, other than those required for the maintenance of normal health, that when taken into the living organisms may modify one or more of its function"<sup>2</sup> But in today's modern era, drugs are being consumed in higher doses to overcome abnormal mental condition, frustration in life, anxiety, chronic tensions, physical inability to do a job, curiosity etc. resulting in dependence on drug for normal behaviour. To satisfy their urge to drug addiction, drugs have made its path from doctors /chemist's cabinet across the social, cultural, educational, economical and ethnic classes of the society by giving birth to a very serious social issue 'drug

dependence’.

W.H.O. expert committee on addiction producing drug has coined terminology ‘drug dependence’<sup>3</sup>. If it left untreated, one may increase drug dose as the body adapts to the drug which can result in overdose and death. So, for eradication of devil of drug dependence, young India must have to understand the concept of drug dependence, aetiology, its sign and symptoms and its treatment to deal with this burning social issue.

**AIM:** To study the concept of drug dependence.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To study the concept of drug dependence in details.
- 2) To draw a conclusion from study.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

**Type of study:** Conceptual study

The study is based on literally review collected from classical modern text. The whole study is carried out under following heads –

- 1) Definitions of drug dependence
- 2) Epidemiology of drug dependence
- 3) Classification of drugs of dependence
- 4) Aetiology of drug dependence
- 5) Types of drug users
- 6) Factors related to drug dependence
- 7) Sign, symptoms and treatment of drug dependence
- 8) Discussion

**1) DEFINITIONS OF DRUG DEPENDENCE**

- a. It has defined by W.H.O. experts committee (1952) as a state arising from repeated administration of a drug on a periodic or continuous basis.<sup>4</sup>
- b. Substance dependence arises out of maladaptive pattern of substance use, leading to a cluster of behavioural, cognitive and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated intake.<sup>5</sup>

- c. It is defined as state, psychological or physical, in which a person has the compulsion to take a drug on a continuous or periodic basis, either to experience its pleasurable effects or to avoid the discomfort of its absence.<sup>6</sup>

**2) EPIDEMIOLOGY OF DRUG DEPENDENCE<sup>7</sup>:**

The National Household Survey of Drug Use in the country is the first systematic effort to document the nation-wide prevalence of drug use; alcohol (21.4%) was the primary substance used (apart from tobacco) followed by cannabis (3.0%) and opioids (0.7%), 17%-26% of alcohol users qualified for ICD10 diagnosis of dependence, translating to an average prevalence of about 4%. There was a marked variation in alcohol use prevalence in different state of India (current use ranged from low of 7% in western state of Gujarat (officially under prohibition) to 75% in the north eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. Tobacco use prevalence was high at 55.8% among males, with maximum use in the age group 41-50 years.

The National Family of Health Survey (NFHS) provides some insights into tobacco and alcohol used. The changing trends between NFHS 2 and NFHS 3 reflect an increase in alcohol use among males since the NFHS 2 and an increase in tobacco use among women.

The Drug abuse monitoring system which evaluated the primary substance of abuse in inpatient treatment centres found that the major substances were alcohol (43.9%), opioids (26%) and cannabis (11.6%).

**3) CLASSIFICATION OF DRUGS OF DEPENDENCE<sup>8</sup>**

- a) Ethanol
- b) Tobacco

- c) Tranquillisers and sedatives: barbiturates, benzodiazepines, chloral hydrate, chlormethiazole, ethchlorvynol, glutithimide, meprobamate, methaqualone, zolpidem, zopiclone.
- d) Opiates and opioids.
- e) Cocaine
- f) Cannabis
- g) Amphetamines
- h) Hallucinogens: lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), phencyclidine, psilocybine, mescaline, ketamine, DMT( Dimethyltryptamine).
- i) Inhalants: fluorinated hydrocarbons (freons), ethers, ketones, aromatic and aliphatic hydrocarbons.
- j) Miscellaneous drugs and substances: caffeine, *datura* seeds, analgesics, anabolic steroids, cough syrups, laxatives.

#### 4) AETIOLOGY OF DRUG DEPENDENCE<sup>9</sup>

Following factors are considered as aetiology of drug dependence.

- a) Common in adolescents and adults.
- b) More common among persons with a tendency of –
  - Taking risk
  - Rebelliousness
  - Sexual promiscuity
- c) The drug may be taken for effect-
  - Euphoria
  - Improvement in capacity to understand and creativity.
  - Better relaxation
  - Improvement in capacity to overcome stress strains of life.
  - Enhanced sexual capacities.
  - Experience of sexual pleasure without having actual sexual relation.
  - Improve power of meditation. (religious)
- d) Common among people with psychological disorders such as-

- Psychoneurosis
- Psychopathic state
- Frank psychoses

#### 5) TYPES OF DRUG USERS<sup>10</sup>:

Drug users may be-

- a) Occasional or moderate or social drug users
- b) Heavy users
- a) Occasional / Moderate/ Social drug users- related to occasional uses of alcohol or cannabis in some society. Western society may easily accept occasional use of alcohol but not cannabis, whereas our Indian society, particularly in some sections, occasional use of some specific preparations of cannabis may be acceptable but not alcohol. On the other hand, tobacco which definitely causes harm, a broad based acceptability in almost all society.
- b) Heavy users- are addicted or dependent on some drug and cannot do without the same. For them, to be 'normal' the drug should be always present in their blood.

#### 6) FACTORS RELATED TO DRUG DEPENDENCE<sup>11</sup>

a) **Personal factors**-physical & mental illness, user's personality, tolerance, threshold to different odds, compulsive psycho-educational states etc. may have to contribute towards indulgence to drug.

b) **Social and environmental factors**-these includes family status, environment, social and mental status of his friends, his capacity to meet social bindings and obligations etc.

c) **Drug factors**- this is probably the most important of the factor. Some of the drugs, on repeated use, cause psychological dependence, some physical dependence, and some both.

#### 7) GENERAL SIGN, SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT

General sign and symptoms of drug dependence are as follows-

- Irresistible desire to continue to take drug, development of tolerance, tendency to increase the dose, physical dependence on drug, desire to obtain drug by any means, withdrawal symptoms when the drug is stopped.<sup>12</sup>
- Constipation, emaciation due to loss of appetite, personal hygiene is very poor, likely to suffer from skin diseases and infections, impotence and sterility, in pregnant woman- premature, stillborn or addicted infants.<sup>13</sup>
- Unsteady gait, clumsy movement, reddening and puffiness of eyes, slurring of speech, lethargy and passivity, depersonalization and emotional detachment, acute intravenous narcotism characterised by the appearance of fulminant pulmonary oedema and immediate collapse & death.<sup>14</sup>

### WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

(Abstinence Syndrome)

The withdrawal symptoms are self-explanatory. They develop in 6 to 48 hours of withdrawal of drugs to which an individual has become an addict. Typical abstinence syndrome characterized by following symptoms and lasts for variable period depending upon the drug used.

- Yawning, running of nose and eyes, perspiration, tremors, goose-flesh, loss of appetite, restlessness, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, muscular cramps, dehydration, loss of weight and burning sensation in back.<sup>15</sup>
- Vague pain in abdomen and limbs, diarrhoea, increased libido, feeling of anxiety.<sup>16</sup>

### TREATMENT<sup>17</sup>

Following measures are effective-

- a) Institutional treatment is recommended.
- b) Secret watch for preventing further supply of drug.
- c) Gradual withdrawal of drug in stages by progressive tapering of drug.
- d) Administration of small doses of sedatives. eg. Barbiturates
- e) Keeping the victim engaged with physical and mental activity.
- f) Psychotherapy in the form of encouragement.
- g) Improving general health by good and rich food.
- h) Symptomatic measures.
- i) **Rehabilitation<sup>18</sup>**: It is a continuous process of weaning away the victims of drug dependence. It is the most important component after weaning addicts away from drug dependency to prevent relapse.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Drug dependence is an adaptive state that developed from repeated drug administration. We know that, drugs are only used for medical purposes but if it consume in overdose, one must have to suffer from its poisonous effects. People consume overdose to deal with their personal issues, to overcome frustration, to gain physical and mental fitness etc. and finally get addicted to a drugs like ethanol, tobacco, barbiturates, tranquilizers etc. without which they are enable to act normally. Such peoples are not only corroding their health but also corrode health of society and so as to country. Drug users are of two types 1) occasional users and 2) heavy users. Personal, social and drugs factors are responsible for drug dependence. It may produce symptoms like irresistible desire to continue to take drug, develop-

ment of tolerance, physical dependence on drug, desire to obtain drug by any means, constipation, impotence and sterility etc. Sudden withdrawal of drug produces Abstinence syndrome characterized by perspiration, tremors, goose- flesh, anxiety, vague pain in abdomen and limbs etc. Institutional treatment is the best way to treat patient. Psychotherapy, improving general health and symptomatic measures must be applied to deal with drug dependence.

It is important to study the concept of drug dependence to know its influence over the body. The concept of drug dependence is literally studied and its effect on body is explained. The literally concept of drug dependence helps to know the people about the severity of it and enhance their awareness about their health. Once we come to know the drug dependence, drug can be used properly only for medical reasons and their unwanted effects can be nullified from society. Hence to lead the world, young India must keep them away from the devil of drug dependence and it can be possible by understanding concept of drug dependence.

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#### **CORRESPONDING AUTHOR**

**Dr. Snehal Dinkar Gajbhiye**

**Email:** nakshatra29@gmail.com

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