

A Sociological Study on Addictions among Adolescents in Pre-University Colleges

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ABSTRACT

Youth are the strength of a nation. They are productive population of any society. Education, employment opportunities and scope for their overall development can evolve them to be productive population of our country. But the youth in the recent days are falling prey to various addictions thereby causing a setback to their overall development and progress. Deviance of any kind is not tolerated by society and any institutions. Youth generally are prone to various forms of addictions such as smoking, consuming alcohol, drugs and mobile addictions. Most of the deviant acts such as murder, theft, kidnapping, various forms of abuses in society are performed under the influence of addictions. The study focusses on the various addictions among adolescents in the Pre-university colleges in India. Objectives- 1. To examine the various types of addictions that are associated with the students in the Pre-university colleges. 2.To examine the involvement of mobile or gadget addiction among the students. Sample - Sample consisted of 300 students selected from 30 Pre-university colleges of Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka. The age group of the sample was 16 to 18 years, the adolescents. Structured questionnaire was the adopted tool to collect primary data from the sample. Results- 91% of the sample were into one or the other form of addictions, out of which only 9% of them have reported that they were not into any form of addictions. 39% of the sample were addicted to watching porn and adult movies. 27% were addicted to smoking, 21% were addicted to alcohol consumption and 13% were addicted to drugs. Out of the above-mentioned addictions, the students were more addicted to watching porn and adult movies. 75% of the sample were addicted to gadgets and video games Conclusion: Among various forms of additions that are seen in the adolescents, there is a higher level of addiction to gadgets and games played using internet among the Pre-university students of Dakshina Kannada district. There is relatively a higher level of addiction in watching porn and adult movies on the internet, followed by smoking and alcohol consumption. In the sample very few of the students have been reported who are not addicted to any form of addictions.

Keywords: *Counselling, adolescents, Pre-university students*

A *dolescence – A Phase of Growth in Human life*

Human beings pass through different phases of growth right from their birth. Adolescence is a phase of growth between childhood and adulthood. The

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etymological root meaning of the word adolescent is derived from the Latin word 'adolescere', which means to, 'grow into adulthood'. It is a stage which incorporates a lot of physiological and psychological transformation to prepare the body and set forth the body towards puberty. The biological changes of adolescence include hormonal secretions leading to growth of secondary sex characteristics, growth in height, weight and changes in body composition. Psychologically this is an extremely sensitive period, as it is a stage when an individual become inquisitive, attempts to explore his individuality, independence and thinks critically about themselves and the world around them (Mishra and Krishna 2014). World Health Organization in its report pertaining to the Health for the World's Adolescents 2014, has stated that, "Adolescence is the key phase of human development. The rapid biological and psychosocial changes that take place during the second decade affect every aspect of adolescents' lives. Some adolescents are particularly vulnerable to poor health and developmental outcomes as a result of individual and environmental factors, including marginalization, exploitation and living without parental support" (WHO Report 2014).

Adolescents are the real strength of any society. But the turbulent age is signified by marked changes in the person in all developmental dimensions (physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural). They are also accompanied by heightened social expectations, new roles and uncertainties. The phase is also manifested by evolving sexuality. They tend to become idealistic and risk-taking behaviour is quite rampant. Attraction towards the opposite sex is on the rise (Pushpalatha and Sasikala, 2015).

However, in India, the age of adolescents has been fixed differently to include them under different programmes, keeping in view the objectives of the programme. World Health Organization (WHO) has grouped adolescents as young people aged between the ages 10 and 19 years. In India, it constitutes one fifth of the total population. This is a large section of the population and we have about 225 million adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years (Mishra and Krishna, 2014).

Adolescents, are the productive generation of the future require a face lift for their overall development for the following reasons:

1. The adolescents are the forthcoming productive generation of any society and the obligation of putting them on the right track is the duty of the society, nation and social institutions.
2. It is a period of transition that involves rapid physical growth involving sexual and psychological changes. Along with physical transition, it encompasses cognitive, emotional and social transition.
3. It is a stage where a child becomes more involved and identified with social systems and peer groups. It's the time when attitudes about sex, love, marriage, gender roles, and other important life issues are formed and become a part of the individual's identity. Hence identity versus role confusion is the important component and aspect in adolescents. (Hashmi 2013)
4. Any of the habits and behaviour picked up during this age has a greater impact on the life of an individual. (Mishra and Krishna 2014).
5. Adolescents' are a force for their own health and the health of their families and communities. They are factors for social change, not simply beneficiaries of social programmes. Hence their participation needs to be advocated and facilitated (WHO 2014)

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6. High risk-taking activities in order to rebel against the existing system, wishes or their expectations, could be detrimental to their health and wellbeing. (Hashmi 2013)
7. This phase is also susceptibility to peer pressure, and they are more likely to conform to their peer's opinion with respect to fashion, fad, tastes in music, eating habits, lifestyle and their day-to-day activities. During this period, the search for intimacy intensifies and self- disclosure between friends become an important past time. The discover that they tend to think and feel the same as someone else, which becomes another important basis of friendship. (Hashmi 2013). This signifies that the peer group has a major role in socialisation in this phase.
8. The World Health Organization report on "Health for the World's Adolescents" describes why adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years need specific attention, distinct from children and adults. The report focuses on giving high level attention in the crucial adolescent phase, as they are more prone to psychoactive substances, HIV related issues, mental health, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, tobacco use and violence. The report also highlights that globally suicide ranks third among the death causes during adolescence, the first being road injuries and the second is death related due to HIV/AIDS (Table 1.1). Among mental disorders and disability that impedes an adolescent's progress in life, depression is the top cause of illness and disability (Table 1.2). The report further indicates that as many as half of all mental health disorders start by age 14, but most of the cases go unrecognized and untreated, due to which the person has to suffer serious consequences throughout the life (WHO 2014).
9. Seventy percent of mortality in adulthood is linked to habits picked up during adolescence acquired due to risk taking behaviour, substance abuse, eating habits and conflict resolution. Adolescent sexuality leads to adolescent pregnancy, unsafe abortions, RTI, STI/HIV and social problems (Hashmi 2013).

Table 1.1 Top 10 Causes of Death among Adolescents Globally Source: Source: Health for the World's Adolescents Report 2014

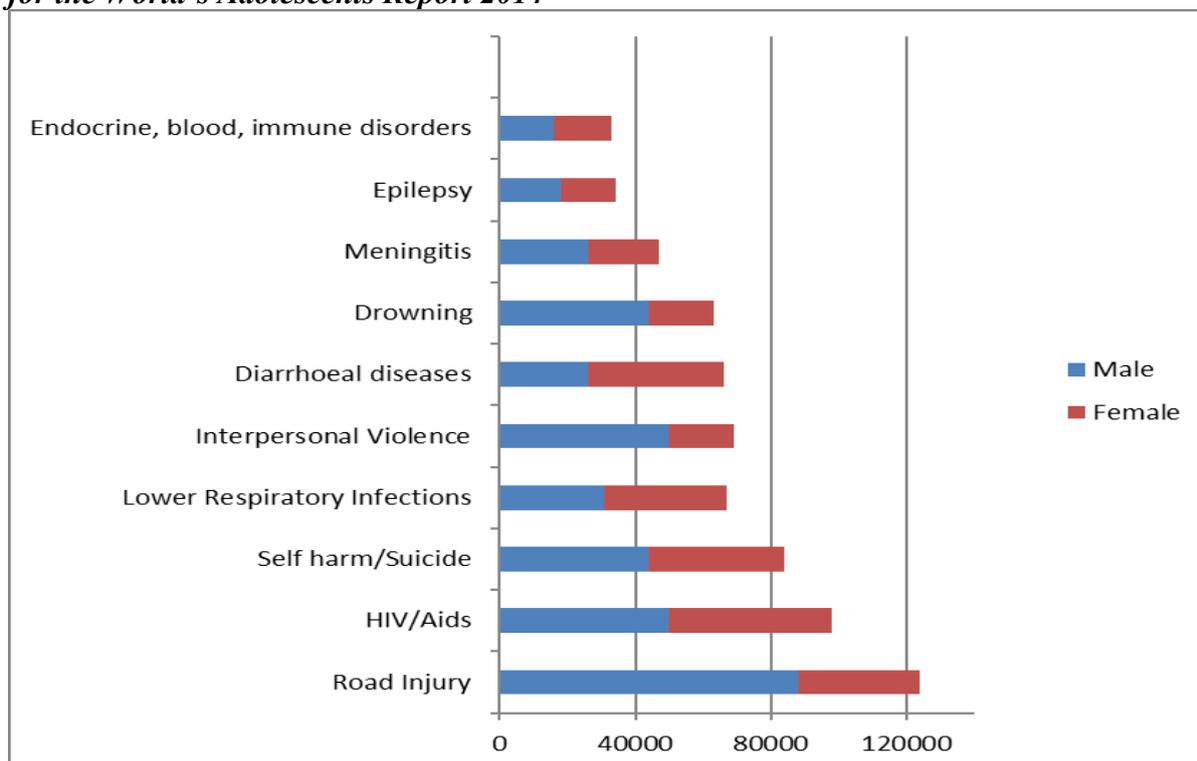


Table 1.2 Top 10 Causes of Disability-Adjusted Live Years Lost

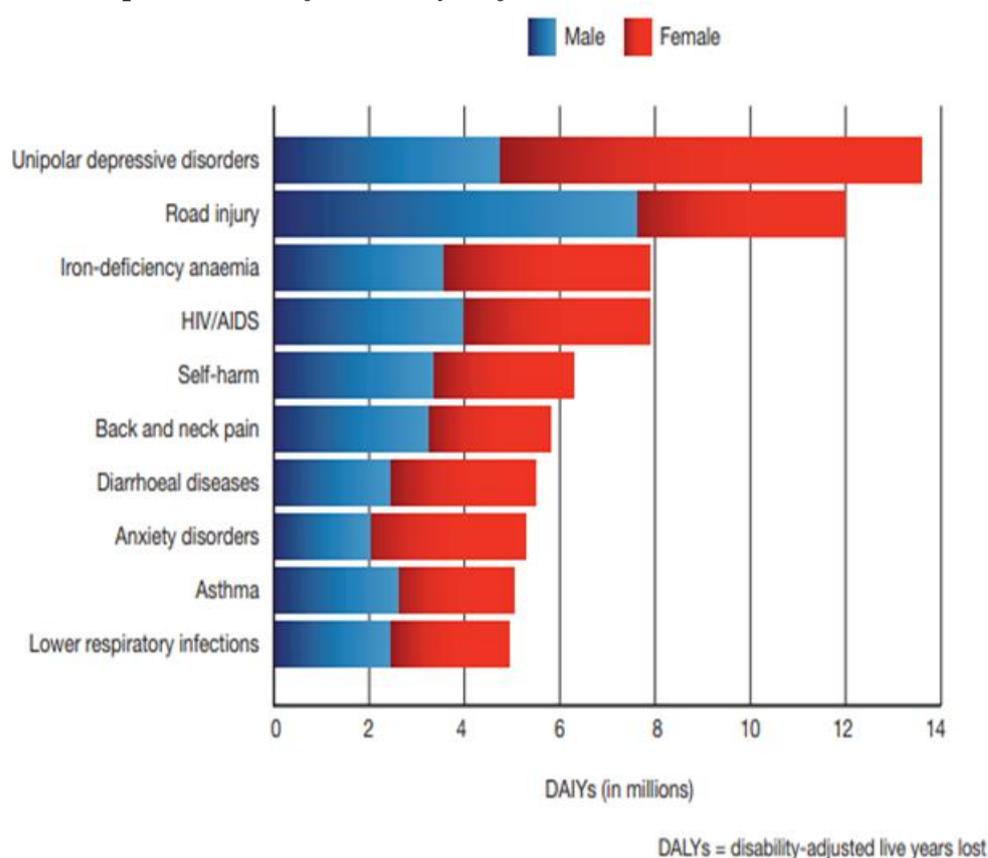


Figure. 2. Top 10 causes of DALYs lost among adolescents by sex

Source: *Health for the World's Adolescents Report 2014*

Deviant Behaviour among Adolescents

Deviant behaviour, in general parlance may be termed as departing from usual or accepted modes of conducts or standards of behaviour. A deviant person is referred to as someone whose behaviour falls far outside of society's norms. According to Horton and Hunt, "The term deviation is given to any failure to conform to the customary norms of the group". In the words of Louise Weston "Deviance can be defined as behaviour that is contrary to the standards of conduct or social expectations of a given group or society. M.B. Clinard suggests that the term deviance should be referred for "those situations in which behaviour is in a disapproved direction, and of sufficient degree to exceed the tolerance limit of society. Hence, we can say that deviance is an act of going against the group shared expectations and norms.

Adolescents are more prone to deviant behaviour. As they are in a transition phase of psychological and physical growth, they are more susceptible to such incidents. The commonly reported forms of deviant behaviour observed are drug abuse, pre-marital sex, rape, violence, alcohol and substance abuse. Crimes resulting out of deviant acts by the adolescents are also committed under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Incidence of depression and issues related to mental health are on the rise and is creating a lot of scope of deviant behaviour among students (Sinha 2008). Research by Webster and Herman (2010) has revealed that social relationships have been declining drastically thereby giving rise to individualism due to the rapid development of technology. Also, in a conflict subculture,

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youth learn to form gangs to express their frustration about the lack of opportunities in their society and neighbourhood. (Cloward and Ohlin 1960).

Deviant acts committed by an adolescent can be understood in three different levels. At the individual level it focuses on the behavioural traits, various forms of intelligence, routine activities and habits of the individual along with the innate and acquired socialization process. At the micro-social level, deviant habits may be habituated by an individual due to stress on relationship ties and being associated with deviant groups. At the macro-social level, the social class, social cohesiveness of his group and the social disorganization plays an important role in influencing deviancy in an individual (M. Gayle 2003).

According to the statistics released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) of India, the adolescents who are in conflict with law are increasing at an alarming rate. There has been an increase in crimes committed by juveniles, especially by those in the 16-18 years' age group. NCRB data given below shows the trends of juvenile offences.

Table 1.3: Cases registered against Juvenile in conflict with law and Crime Rate under IPC from 2005-2019.

Year	Cases Registered Against Juveniles in Conflict with Law
2005	18939
2006	21088
2007	22865
2008	24535
2009	23926
2010	22740
2011	25125
2012	27936
2013	31725
2014	33526
2015	31396
2016	35849
2017	33606
2018	31591
2019	32235

Source: Crime in India 2019, Statistics NCRB, Ministry of Home Affairs

Majority of juveniles in conflict with law apprehended under Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws (SLL), were in the age group of 16 years to 18 years. As it is evident from the data in the table 1.3, there is an increase in the number of cases registered against juveniles in conflict with law. From 2005 to 2019, this number has increased from 18,939 to 32,235.

Factors Affecting Deviant Behaviour among Adolescents

There are many factors that contribute to the occurrence of deviant behaviours among adolescents. Factors such as family, educational system, peer groups, social media, play a very significant role in influencing the behaviour of adolescents.

1. **Family Atmosphere:** The family environment plays a very important role in the personality development of the adolescents. Parents' failure in disciplining children, confusing attitudes and faulty socialization, adolescents raised in disorganized

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families have more tendencies to procure deviant tendencies in their day-to-day activities. When parents fail to provide a healthy environment for their children, they tend to become deviant, which will be continued in adolescence.

2. **School Environment:** The environment at school also plays an important role in making a child deviant. Pressure for marks and grades in our present educational system, heavy work load without any specific focus, no proper channel for recreation and physical activities, no intervention methods to address undesirable attitudes and behaviours in schools and colleges, and no adequate counselling facilities to address the students' grievances contribute to deviant behaviours among adolescents.
3. **Media:** Most of the adolescents are influenced by the attitude and behaviour of peer groups. They follow the fads and fashion of their peer group and they are easily carried away with their friends whether it is approved or not. In order to get accepted in their peer group they go to adapt any form of habits, which sometimes makes them habituated to different types of addictions.
4. **Social Media:** Social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, twitter has initiated virtual effects of comfort and has given room for chatting, texting, video calls, thus making interaction seeming within the four walls of the room and within the personal comforts of their electronic gadgets. According to psychiatrists and women right activists, easy access to pornography and changing food habits can be attributed as a cause in rise in sexual offences among the adolescents (Alok K.N. Mishra,2013).

In view of the above situational factors involving around adolescents, it can be summed up that it is also an age which is vulnerable to acquire various addictions. Addiction is also one among the deviant behaviour which can trigger the youth to various types of criminal activities such as theft, murder, rape and assaults. Moreover, adolescence is an age which is also highly vulnerable to various forms of addiction. Hence it is important to understand the levels of addictions that are associated with the adolescents. This research paper throws light on the various forms of addictions that are associated with the adolescents. The study covers the students of Pre-university colleges/senior secondary schools of Dakshina Kannada District. In view of the analysis of the above literature, it is quite evident that adolescents are more prone to deviant behaviours. The research is hence a sociological study to examine the scenario of addictions associated among the adolescents in Pre-university educational institutions in India.

Objectives

1. To examine the various types of addictions that are associated with the students in the Pre-university colleges.
2. To examine the involvement of mobile or gadget addiction among the students.

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample

The present study was conducted to examine the various addictions students are usually associated in their adolescence. The study was conducted in the seven taluks of Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka. The students pursuing their studies in the Pre-university colleges of the district were considered in particular, keeping in mind their transition phase from high school education to higher education. The district is renowned for its academic institutions and high literacy rate. In this study a total sample of 300 students across 30 Pre-university colleges were considered. Age group of the sample was 16 to 18 years. 61% were male students and 39% were female students. They included students studying in the arts

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stream (22%), commerce stream (47%), and science stream (31%). Sampling was done based on random and convenient sampling technique giving due representation to students who have been associated with various forms of deviant activities in the college premises.

Tools: Questionnaire was the tool that was used to collect the primary data. Interviews were conducted with the counsellors, teachers and the students for supplementary information. The design adopted is explanatory type.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.4: Addiction types of students in Pre-university Colleges.

Total number of students under sample	Sample under consideration which are into various addictions	Smoking	Alcohol Consumption	Watching Porn/Adult movies	Drugs	Students who are not into any of these addictions
300	273	82	62	116	13	27
100%	91%	27%	21%	39%	04%	09%

Table 1.5: Spending time on gadgets and skill games.

Total colleges under sample	Students addicted to gadgets and skill games	Students not addicted to gadgets and skill games
300	225	75
100	75%	25%

Table 1.4 shows the descriptive statistics related to the addiction types in students in Pre-university colleges. It depicts, 91% of the sample were into one or the other form of addictions, out of which only 9% of them have reported that they were not into any form of addictions. 39% of the sample were addicted to watching porn and adult movies. 27% were addicted to smoking, 21% were addicted to alcohol consumption and 13% were addicted to drugs. Out of the above-mentioned addictions, the students were more addicted to watching porn and adult movies.

Most of the students are also prone to addiction to gadgets and video games. Addiction to gadgets refers to spending the most of the time on their electronic gadgets including their mobile phone, personal computer, tablets and the like. It is also known as gaming disorder or internet gaming disorder which refers to the compulsive use of video games that results in significant impairment to an individual's ability to function effectively and efficiently over a long period of time. Table 1.5 depicts that nearly 75% of the sample were addicted to gadgets and video games. Spending a long time on the gadgets either spending a lot of time on social networking sites and spending a lot of time on playing skill games on them.

CONCLUSION

1. Among various forms of additions that are seen in the adolescents, there is a higher level of addiction to gadgets and games played using internet among the Pre-university students of Dakshina Kannada district.
2. Among the other addictions there is relatively a higher level of addiction in watching porn and adult movies on the internet, followed by smoking and alcohol consumption. In the sample very few of the students have not been addicted to any form of addictions.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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