

KNOWLEDGE OF PSYCHO ACTIVE SUBSTANCE USE; DISORDERS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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"Perhaps the greatest feature which distinguishes man from other animals is his desire to take medicine" (Sir William Osler)

Drug abuse is a universal phenomenon with its roots in history and tradition. Drug abuse problem has become a global challenge. From a transit country India is fast becoming a major consumer of different kinds of drugs. It has become a world wide phenomenon among students. It is imperative for the Nurses to assess the self care aspects of the young students to guard themselves against drug abuse in terms of knowledge.

Keeping this in view the investigator conducted the study to assess the knowledge of Psycho Active Substance Use Disorders (PASUD) among college students.

The Objective of the Study were:

- To assess the knowledge of Psycho Active Substance Use Disorders (PASUD) among male students.
- To assess the knowledge of Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders (PASUD) among female students.
- To compare the knowledge of PASUD among male & female students.
- To determine the relationship of knowledge of PASUD with selected variables among students:-
 - Age
 - Family income
 - Father's education
 - Year of study
 - Mass-media exposure.

It was hypothesized that:

- Male students have significantly

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higher PASUD knowledge score than female students.

- The older students have higher PASUD knowledge score than younger students.
- There is a significant relationship between family's income, father's education & PASUD knowledge of students.
- The students studying in higher classes and with higher mass-media exposure have higher PASUD knowledge score than students studying in lower classes and with lower mass-media exposure.

METHODOLOGY:

A comparative descriptive research approach was adopted. The sample consisted of 50 male & 50 female college students. The data was collected by random sampling method with the help of (1) Self structured personal data questionnaire (2) Self structured tool for knowledge of PASUD.

The tool was validated and highly reliable ($r=0.93$)

Prior to data collection a formal permission was obtained from the principals of concerned colleges. Five class standard 10+1 to final year of bachelor degree and 10 students from each class were selected randomly, thus total 100 samples in which 20 each class and 50 in each sex groups were selected.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The data was analyzed in descriptive and inferential terms in accordance with objectives.

The major findings of the study revealed that:-

- Female students had higher knowledge score than male students. ($t=2.27$)
- The older students had higher knowledge score of PASUD than

younger students.

- Middle class family income group students had higher knowledge of PASUD.
- In each study year female students had higher PASUD knowledge than male students.
- Students with higher mass-media exposure had more PASUD knowledge than lower mass-media.
- The trend of PASUD knowledge score among students was same.

CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to make broad generalization because the size of the sample was small and study was limited to the enrolled students in two government colleges. Yet, the following conclusions were drawn:-

Students of lower age group, lower family income and with lower father's education need health education regarding PASUD. All the students need health education about drug abuse and its consequences.

IMPLICATIONS

Psychiatric Nursing is a recent development in the Indian Nursing set up. More & more Nurses are taking up this speciality. Gradually the role of the psychiatric Nurses is expanding in to liaison Nursing. The assessment of PASUD knowledge among college students will help Nurses to plan organize health education in deficit areas of knowledge, guidance and counseling services for drug abusers and their families. This will assist in adopting healthy living and promote mental health.

NURSING PRACTICE:

- A regular health education program should be carried out by hospital Nurse, PHN & school health Nurses in



schools, colleges, hospitals & communities.

2. Counseling centers may be organized to provide services.
3. Teaching parents to provide the child with a secure & healthy home environment to avoid drugs.
4. Promote a well knit family feelings to interdependence, being wanted and loved.
5. Organize health camps to identify high risk people in the community.

NURSING EDUCATION

1. Nurse educators need to lay emphasis on drug abuse in the curriculum and orient the students to de-addiction centres during clinical postings.
2. Nurse educators should also give more emphasis in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of PASUD.
3. Conducting in service education program for Nurses & health workers.

NURSING ADMINISTRATION

1. Nurse administrators should take the initiative in organising continuing education programs for Nurses for PASUD.
2. Appropriate teaching / learning material needs to be prepared and made available for Nurses.
3. Helping in early identification of drug addict clients from other settings by providing proper tools and aids.
4. Legal control Law enforcing agents of all levels should be committed and more vigilant.

GENERAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

1. School & college curriculum may include drug education.
2. Teachers in schools should allocate a certain period on the hazards of drug addiction.
3. Seminars & discussions on the ill effects of drug abuse need to be

organized in schools & colleges.

4. Short terms courses for teachers and parents of students should be conducted in educational institutions.

GENERAL EDUCATION TO PUBLIC

1. The mass-media could be used for drug education program with special caution.
2. An ideal channel would be face to face contact with small group discussion and attempt to answer questions.
3. Action through the voluntary sector by setting up of counselling centres in different parts of the country.
4. Setting of de-addiction centres and after care centres.
5. Face to face communication with specific target groups through street plays, mime shows and house to house contacts.

NURSING RESEARCH

More research is needed to find out the causes and factors predisposing to drug addictions. It can also help in finding out better alternatives for individuals at risk and at the time when they are on the verge of becoming drug addicts.

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