
Drug Abuse Among Adolescent Workers: Egyptian Sample

Prof. Dr. M. Abd El Wahab

M.D., F.A.P.A., M.R.C. Psych.

Introduction

Screening for substance abuse in adolescents is very important in the field of prevention and management of the problem of drug abuse. The battery of chemicals that can be used to create an alteration in mood is extensive and adolescents have found access to all of them. Among adolescents aged 12-17 years referred to mental health services, the prevalence of drug use was 13.1% (Swadi, 2000). It is to be noted that the median reported age of initiation of illicit drug use in adults with substance use disorders is 16 years and with 50% of cases begin between age of 16-18 (Antony and Helzer, 2003). It was found in the National survey on Drug use and Health (NSDUH) in 2004 that among all youth aged 12-17, 10.6% were on marijuana, 3.6% on prescription type drugs users, 7.6% were on marijuana, 3.6% on prescription type drugs non medically used, 1.2% inhalants, 0.8% on hallucinogen and 0.5% on cocaine. Among youth aged 12-17, 14.4% used tobacco products and 11.9% used cigarette (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2003).

Aim of the work.

This work was carried out by the General Egyptian Association for Prevention of Alcohols and Combat of Narcotics with the support of National Council for Maternity and Childhood. Adolescent workers constitute one of the main risk groups of drug abuse. This work aims to study a group of Egyptian adolescent workers, to illustrate: -

- a) The prevalence of drug abuse.
- b) The demographic data of the drug abusers among them.

Subjects and Method

One hundred adolescent workers in workshops and small Factories in Midtown were randomly selected with age between 12-18 years old, All of them were males.

The sample was subjected to questionnaire prepared by scientific team of the research, stressing on the following items:-

- a) Demographic data of the group.
- b) Family circumstances.
- c) Work situations.
- d) History of drug abuse.

Steps of the research:

- a) The workers in all workshops and small factories in two district areas in Midtown were surveyed.
- b) The field force was chosen from social workers and psychologists. They were subjected to training course on the questionnaire, and how to manage the situation with subjects and conflicts with the owners of the workshops and factors.
- c) Application of the questionnaire on the subjects.
- d) Statistical evaluation of the results.

Results

(1) Age of subjects was between 12-18 years old, distributed as follows:-

- 20 subjects between 12-13, years old 20%.
- 25 subjects between 14-16 years old 25%.
- 31 subjects between 16 and less them 18 years old. 31%.
- 24 subjects 18 years old 24%.

(2) According to Level of Education:

Level	No	%
Illiterate	18	18%
Can read of write	14	14%
Primary school	42	42%
Preparatory school	13	13%
Secondary school	23	23%

(3) According to Residence

Level	No	%
Living with both parents	45	45%
Living with one parent	25	25%
Living with siblings	16	16%
Living with peers	5	5%
Living in work or alone	9	9%

(4) According to Work Time
Working Hours

Working hours	No	%
6-8	2	2%
8-10	22	22%
10 and mode	76	76%

(5) According to Monthly Income in
Egyptian Pounds:..

Income	No	%
100	12	12%
100-150	23	23%
150-200	24	24%
200-250	25	25%
>250	16	16%

(6) According to Drug Abuse.

* 31 were abusing narcotics distributed as follows:

- 27 abusing bongo 87%.
- 18 smoking hashish 58%
- 8 abusing alcohol 26%.
- 1 abusing opium 3%.

* 70 subjects were smoking as follows.

- 44 were cigarette smoking 62.9%
- 23 were water bubble (shisha) 32.9%
- 23 were water bubble (Goza) 32.9%

Age Distribution of Drug Abusers:-

Age	No	%
12-13	2	10
14-15	4	16
16-17	8	26
18	17	71

Level of Education of Drug Abusers:

Level of education	No	%
Illiterate	11	61%
Can read of write	5	36%
Primary school	7	16%
Preparatory school	6	46%
Secondary school	2	15%

Monthly Income of Drug Abusers:

Income	No	%
Less than 100	6	19.4%
100-150	9	29%
150-200	7	22.6%
200-250	5	16.1%
>250	4	12.9%

Distribution of Drug Abusers
According to Adaptation In Work:

Gavel of adaptation	No	%
Adapted	12	12%
Partially adapted	23	23%
Unadapted	24	24%
Strongly non-adopted	25	25%

Distribution of Addicts According to
Daily Hours of Work

Daily hours of work	No	%
6-8	1	3%
8-10	7	22.6%
>10	23	74.2%

Source of Knowledge of Narcotics.

Source of Knowledge	No	%
Friends	21	68%
Relatives	3	10%
Siblings	2	6%
Themselves	5	16%

Distribution of Drug Abusers According to Their Trials to Quit From Narcotics

- 23 (74%) tried to stop narration and failed.
- 8 (26%) didn't try.

From the above we can deduce that:

- a) Adolescent workers are very risk group for drug abusing since 70% were smokers and 31% were drug abusers.
 - b) The prevalence of drug abuse increases with increased age.
 - c) The prevalence of drug abuse is inversely proportionate with level of education.
 - d) The prevalence of drug abuse goes hand with hand with bad work circumstances.
- The adolescent who lives with friends or in work away from the family is more exposed to be drug abuse.
 - Most of drug abusers get their knowledge about drugs from their friends.

Recommendations:

- a) There should be psychological and social care for adolescent workers.
- b) There should be awareness programs for this group of adolescents.

c) Religious attitudes and knowledges should be encouraged.

d) We should try to improve work situations and circumstances for the adolescents.

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