

# ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ERADICATION OF DRUGS

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## ABSTRACT

The problem of drug abuse is prominent today, especially among children and teenagers wherein parents and teachers play the most important role in eradicating this social evil of drug abuse. Therefore, this research paper primarily studies the impact of drugs on the most vulnerable group of the society i.e. children and teenagers hence focuses on the role of civil society in the eradication of drugs. It suggests measures for the prevention of drug abuse and the relationship between the police and the drug suppliers. This study also examines that how the young generation of an educated society gets entrapped in the suffocating clutches of drug. The main objective of drug abuse prevention is to reduce the usage of drugs among youth by halting its addiction and eradicating it entirely. Only an educated and aware civil society can contribute to prevent drug abuse hence, we should lead towards a reformed and rehabilitated society. Before analyzing the role of civil society, an attempt has been made to identify the seriousness of drug abuse highlighting the causes behind this social evil. It is important to first highlight the causative agent and reasons behind every evil prevailing in society and their effects on any particular group.

**Keywords:** *Drugs, Drug abuse, teenagers, civil society, vulnerability*

## ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ERADICATION OF DRUGS

*“The eradication of drugs is not simply a matter of law enforcement, but requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, treatment, and education. Only by addressing the root causes of drug abuse can we hope to make a lasting impact on this issue.” - Barack Obama*

Civil society refers to the range of non-governmental organizations and institutions that operate independently of the government and engage in various activities to promote social, economic, and political development. Civil society can include community groups, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, and others.

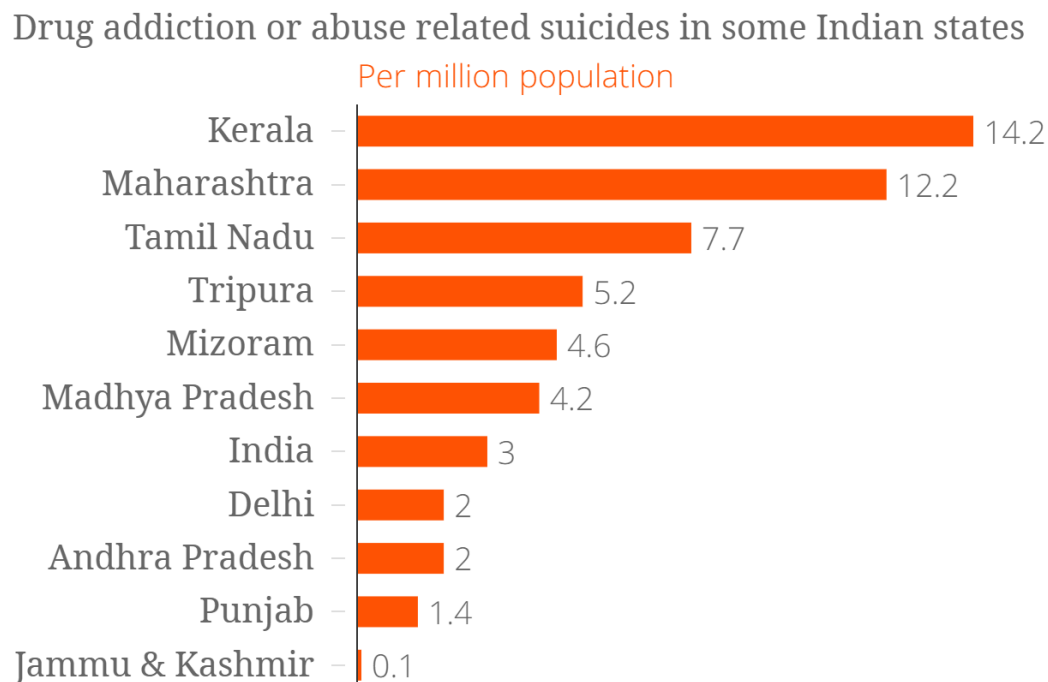
In the context of drug eradication, civil society can play an important role in tackling the problem of drug abuse and addiction. Civil society organizations can provide education and awareness campaigns to raise public awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and promote drug-free lifestyles.

They can also provide support and counseling to individuals struggling with drug addiction and help them access treatment and rehabilitation services. Furthermore, civil society organizations can advocate for policies and laws that support drug eradication efforts, such as providing funding for prevention and treatment programs, implementing harm reduction strategies, and increasing access to healthcare services.

Overall, civil society can complement government efforts to eradicate drugs by leveraging their unique expertise, resources, and relationships with communities. By working together, civil society and government can create a more comprehensive and effective approach to addressing drug abuse and addiction.

### **ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ERADICATION OF DRUGS**

- **Raising Awareness:** Civil society organizations play a pivotal role in raising awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and addiction. They conduct campaigns, workshops, and seminars to educate people about the harmful effects of drugs.
- **Mobilizing Communities:** Civil society organizations mobilize communities to take action against drug abuse. They organize community-based events, rallies, and marches to create awareness about the issue.
- **Providing Support:** Civil society organizations provide support and counseling to individuals struggling with addiction. They help individuals access treatment and rehabilitation services.
- **Advocating for Policies:** Civil society organizations advocate for policies and laws that support drug eradication efforts. They recommend and pressurize for increased funding for prevention and treatment programs, harm reduction strategies, and increased access to healthcare services.
- **Conducting Research:** Civil society organizations conduct research on drug abuse and addiction. They provide policymakers with authentic data and evidence-based solutions to deal with the problem.
- **Supporting Law Enforcement:** Civil society organizations support law enforcement agencies in their efforts to combat drug trafficking and distribution. They provide information and intelligence to law enforcement agencies to help them identify and prosecute drug dealers.
- **Providing Alternative Livelihoods:** Civil society organizations provide alternative livelihoods to people involved in drug trafficking and production. They offer vocational training, microcredit facilities, and other support to help individuals transition to legal and productive livelihoods.

**FIGURE 1.2. DRUG ABUSE CASES IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>**

The above shown figure have an alarming signal for India. The number of suicide cases occurring due to drug abuse or drug addiction had a knock-on effect on subsequent generations, who now face the perilous situation of having to adjust to a poisonous social environment or risk being poisoned themselves. When young people don't have access to adequate resources, they may become sceptical of established authorities and rebel against society by adopting unreasonable viewpoints and engaging in antisocial behaviours like drug use. Drug trafficking is one of the many organised criminal enterprises that has developed strategies, plans, and technical capacities to keep pace with the advancements in economics and technology. In light of this, the global community must maintain its anti-drug initiatives.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

"Civil Society and the Challenge of Drug Abuse Control" by Raphael O. Akinyele and Ibrahim O. Tomori: This article discusses the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in drug abuse control in Nigeria. The authors argue that CSOs can play a crucial role in creating awareness, providing education, and mobilizing communities to tackle drug abuse. However, they also note that CSOs need to be better coordinated and funded to be more effective.

"Civil Society and Drug Policy Advocacy in the United States" by Katherine Beckett and Steve Herbert: This article explores the role of civil society in drug policy advocacy in the United States. The authors state that

<sup>1</sup>Instapedia – "The war of drugs" Insigtas Retrieved on 6 Dec 2022 from [The 'war on drugs': - INSIGHTSIAS \(insightsonindia.com\)](https://insightsonindia.com).

civil society organizations have been critical in shifting the drug policy debate from one of criminalization to one of public health. They also note that civil society organizations have been successful in influencing policy outcomes at the local and state levels.

"Civil Society and Drug Control Policy in Latin America" by Vanda Felbab-Brown: This article examines the role of civil society in drug control policy in Latin America. The author asserts that civil society has been exigent in pushing for alternative drug policies that prioritize public health and human rights over criminalization. However, she notes that civil society faces significant challenges in the region, including violence, corruption, and political instability.

"Civil Society Participation in Drug Policy Making in South Africa" by Julius Fobil: This article throws light on the role of civil society in drug policy making in South Africa. The author states that civil society has been successful in influencing drug policy through advocacy, lobbying, and public mobilization. However, he notes that civil society faces challenges such as limited funding, lack of political will, and fragmentation.

Descriptive, non-experimental research was conducted on adolescent drug use and abuse. Socio-demographic data revealed that the vast majority of participants were male (81%) and Hindu (71%). There is a 5.39 percent consensus among those educated on the topic that drug misuse prevention and treatment should be a priority. 7 percent report an increase in happiness after drinking, 9 percent report an increase in bodily comfort, 9 percent report an increase in excellent sleep and relaxation, and 10 percent report avoiding negative actions. Substance misuse is common, and as a consequence, 56% of students regularly partake in alcoholic beverages or other narcotics. Nearly five percent of kids report that they were inspired to try drugs or alcohol by seeing a parent doing so. The correlation between knowledge score and demographic factors such as age, adolescent stream, and parental employment was shown to be statistically significant at the 0.001 level (13.1%, 4.3%, and 6.35%). (Nayak, 2016)<sup>2</sup>

Exploratory research was undertaken on the prevalence of heavy drinking and drug addiction among Bhubaneswar high school students. The sample consisted of 863 adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17, with 58.8% male and 41.2% female participants. Just 8.2% of the population has ever tried alcohol. At present, drug usage accounted for 43.6% of the population. (Jha, et al 2016).<sup>3</sup> The choice to drink was heavily influenced by social pressure from peers and loved ones. A sufficient amount of information was

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<sup>2</sup> Nayak, D. (2016, June 28). International Journal of Nursing Education and Research. International Journal of Nursing Education and Research. Retrieved December 6, 2022, from <https://ijneronline.com/HTMLPaper.aspx?Journal=International%20Journal%20of%20Nursing%20Education%20and%20Research;PID=2016-4-2-7>.

<sup>3</sup> Jha RR, Tiwari A, Shekhar R., Patnaik GS, Kar AS (2016), "Lifetime use of alcohol in High School Students of Bhubneshwar" IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences, Vol. 5, Iss. 3.

known concerning alcohol's negative effects. Preventing alcohol-related problems in young people requires urgent intervention at the secondary school level.

"The war on drugs has been a failure, and we need to shift our focus towards harm reduction and treatment. Eradication is not the answer, but rather a multi-pronged approach that prioritizes public health and safety."

- Johann Hari

None of the studies till now have actually conducted research solely on drug abuse and the need for its eradication wherein a civil society plays an integral role hence, the literature used in the author's study is either partially related to drug abuse or various jurists have combined drug and alcohol abuse together in their research.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The present research paper unfolds the following aims and objectives:-

- To analyse the vulnerable group of society towards Drug Abuse.
- To study the causes of drug abuse among teenagers in India.
- To propose the preventive ways of drug abuse.
- To highlight the role of educated and aware civil society in the eradication of drug abuse.

### **Vulnerable group of Drug Abuse**

The vulnerable group to drug abuse are adolescents, young adults, homeless persons and LGBTQ+ community. But some are at-risk populations, such as "children in care facilities" "homeless young people," or teenagers are the most vulnerable. They may start using drugs at younger ages or in more problematic ways than the general population.<sup>4</sup> In addition, they may develop a dependency on drugs more rapidly than the general population. Since vulnerable populations are more prone to experience high rates of drug use and drug-related harm, they are receiving specialised attention in the form of demand reduction strategies.

### **Causes of Drug Abuse**

Some of the individual risk factors that lead to teenage drug abuse include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and depression. Sometimes use it for recreational purpose or trying to cope up with tension, distress, anxiety and stress. Having a parent or sibling who is addicted to alcohol or drugs increases

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<sup>4</sup>Drugs and Vulnerable groups of young people Available at-[att 64250 EN EMCDDA SI08 vulnerable-young.pdf \(europa.eu\)](http://att.64250.EN.EMCDDA.SI08.vulnerable-young.pdf(europa.eu)) (Last accessed on 29.12.2022 at 10 am).

a person's risk of developing an addiction. Addiction, in the eyes of some, stems from a combination of careless drug use and naivete. The physical pain of drug addiction is just one factor in why so many people are addicted. Reactivity to addictive chemicals, and hence the chance of developing a substance use problem, may be heightened when people are exposed to stressful events, such as domestic or social conflict or abuse, during vulnerable developmental phases (Dhillon 2019)<sup>5</sup>.

Addiction may be a symptom of deeper problems, such as social isolation, family discord, low self-esteem, and failure to secure or maintain a gainful job. There are several risk factors for drug abuse, but unfortunately no well-accepted preventative measures. On the other hand, investing wisely in control and preventative measures would save millions of dollars annually for the health and well-being of children and families, as well as enhance productivity and create good employment (Lotfi et al. 2015)<sup>6</sup>. Drug abuse and addiction among today's youth are largely attributable to widespread instances of cyberbullying and harassment. Adolescents who have trouble forming close bonds with their parents or siblings may also turn to substance abuse as a coping mechanism. The main causes behind this problem of drug abuse among youth are:

- **Genetics:** Sometimes child's biological history may be the cause of his inclination towards drugs. He can predispose them to drug addiction. His genetics can lead him to drugs.
- **Mental health issues:** Adolescents may turn to drugs if they find themselves struggling with mental stress, mental illness, personality issue, tension, anxiety, depression, trauma at early age, or any other mental or physical health issues .
- **Pressure of Peer Groups:** Influence of society and pressure of peer groups can push teenagers to drug addiction.
- **Social factors:** Some social factors prevalent in society like poverty, unemployment and social discrimination can contribute to drug abuse and addiction.
- **Experimentation:** Sometimes teenagers start taking drugs out of curiosity, for the sake of variety or just experimenting with drugs try to get rid of boredom .
- **6. Deficiency of skills:** When teenagers do not have the ability to manage their stress or tension, they may turn to drugs.
- **Easy availability of drugs:** Easy access and availability of drugs and prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription can lead to drug addiction.
- **Severe and Chronic Pain:** People who suffer from severe and chronic pain are often prescribed painkillers by their doctors. They become addict to those medicine which can lead them to drug addiction.
- **Traumatic Situations:** Traumatized situation like physical torture, sexual assault or emotional breakdown can lead the teenagers towards drugs.

<sup>5</sup> Dhillon, S, S. Singh, G., & Kaur, R. (2019). Drug abuse and its underlying causes: A Case study of Farmers in Bathinda district. *International Journal of Applied Research*. 5(9): 339-344.

<sup>6</sup> Lotfi, M., Javadimehr M, & Adwomen, M. (2015). Attitudes of Students Living in Dormitories of Zahedan University of Medical Sciences towards the Causes of Drug Addiction. *International Journal of High Risk Behaviour Addict*. 4(2).

- **Influence of Social Media:** In present days, social media promotes drug usage, glamorize it, romanticize it, or normalize it and make the use of drugs attractive as it is status- symbol which can lead to drug addiction.

In the field of drug abuse research, understanding the causes of drug abuse is a very important area of study. Here an effort has been made to find out the individual and environmental factors that contribute to the development of drug abuse and addiction, in order to inform prevention and intervention efforts.

Individual risk factors, such as mental health disorders, genetics, and personal history of trauma, are important factors that can contribute to drug abuse. Researchers aim to identify these individual risk factors in order to better understand who may be at greater risk for developing a drug abuse problem.

Environmental risk factors, such as peer pressure, lack of parental supervision, and availability of drugs, can also play a significant role in the development of drug abuse. Researchers seek to understand these environmental risk factors in order to develop effective prevention and intervention strategies that address these risk factors.

Overall, understanding the causes of drug abuse is a crucial area of research in the field of drug abuse prevention and intervention. By identifying the underlying causes of drug abuse, researchers can develop targeted prevention and intervention efforts that address the unique needs of individuals and populations at risk for drug abuse.

### **Effects Of Drugs Abuse**

India's drug problem is multifaceted. 20th-century adolescents used alcohol, cigarettes, opium, morphine, and other drugs. Drug users number 190 million worldwide. The issue is growing rapidly, particularly among young persons under 30. Drug addicts flood our courts, hospitals, and jails. That impacts everyone. It destroys people and society physically, socially, morally and economically. Medications alert and respond by stimulating the brain and nerve system. Drug addiction causes extreme weight loss and anxiety. Drug addicts ignore, abuse, and abandon their children. Drug abuse has long-term impacts. It affects humans long-term.

Drugs also affect families and communities. Drug use and concealing it up may generate family and social problems. It disrupts families, causing marital discord and divorce. Our neighbourhoods are ravaged by drug-related violence

### **Preventive Ways and Role of Society in the Eradication of Drugs**

The societal factors that contribute to drug abuse, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to education and healthcare need to identified to develop effective preventive measures to tackle drug abuse.

Preventive measures, such as education and awareness campaigns, are important tools in reducing the incidence of drug abuse. An effort has been made to identify the most effective methods as prevention measures to deal with it. In fact, understanding the role of society in preventing drug abuse and identifying effective preventive measures and treatment options is very important in reducing the harm caused by drug abuse and addiction. Preventing drug abuse is a complex issue that requires a multi-faceted approach from society as a whole. Some preventive ways that society can contribute to the eradication of drugs include:

- **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Society can raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse through education campaigns that target schools, workplaces, and other community settings. These campaigns can help people to better understand the risks associated with drug use and empower them to make informed decisions.
- **Access to Healthcare:** Ensuring that individuals have access to healthcare, including mental health services, can help to prevent drug abuse. Early intervention and treatment can help to address mental health issues that may contribute to drug abuse.
- **Law Enforcement:** Society can contribute to the eradication of drugs by supporting law enforcement efforts to crack down on drug trafficking and drug-related crime.
- **Social Support:** Providing social support to individuals who are struggling with drug abuse can help to prevent relapse and support recovery. This can include access to support groups, therapy, and peer support networks.
- **Economic Support:** Addressing economic factors, such as poverty and unemployment, can help to prevent drug abuse. By providing individuals with access to economic opportunities, society can help to reduce the risk of drug abuse.
- **Counseling and Support groups:** Various Government and Non Government organisations can run counseling sessions, support groups, and other therapies to help individuals who battle drug addiction. It can help them understand their behavior, learn to identify triggers, and develop healthy coping strategies.

## CONCLUSION

Drug trafficking and its addiction among youth have grown worldwide. Millions of addicts are miserable. India has a growing drug issue. We must intervene here to reduce drug use. Drug research yields fresh insights daily. Modern society is shaped by NGOs. Our society needs new drug abuse laws and programmes. Public opinion and NGOs may influence behaviour and institutions. Organizations and the public are crucial



to eradicating drug abuse. So, these organisations must lead. Physicians, community leaders, and schools may employ evidence-based research to reduce teenage substance misuse. Drug addicts should be counselled, treated, and rehabilitated in awareness camps organised by government, nongovernment, and civil society. Long-term recovery requires organising the deaddiction and main health centre. Non-governmental and religious de-addiction institutions should use multiple medical methods to treat addicts. Local communities should help drug addicts integrate. Civil society should host public meetings. Civil society can also develop social skills training and welfare programmes to educate adolescents about this deadly dilemma. The role of society is most significant in shaping individual behavior and attitudes towards drugs. It's essential to create community awareness programs that educate individuals about the harmful effects of drug use, the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and the importance of seeking help when necessary. Society can play an influential role in identifying and eliminating drug suppliers and dealers, reporting suspicious behaviors to the appropriate authorities, and supporting rehabilitation programs for those struggling with addiction. By working together, society can help eradicate drug abuse, reduce demand for drugs, and improve public health and safety.

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