

## Personality of Drug User College Students

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### Abstract:

300 undergraduate male college students were administered Eysenck Personality Questionnaire along with a Personal Data Schedule to examine whether the drug user and non-user college students differ in terms of their personality characteristics. The findings reveal that the drug users and non-users differed significantly in terms of their neuroticism, extraversion and psychoticism dimensions of personality. Drug users scored significantly higher on all the three variables.

**Key words:** Personality, Drug, College Students

### I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the problem of drug use in college campus has assumed greater significance in India. Drug is defined by WHO as any substance that when taken into the living organism, may modify one or more of its functions. This definition conceptualizes drug in a very broad way, including not only the medication but also the other pharmacologically active substances. National Academy of Sciences of Newyork concludes that there is no single set of psychological characteristics that embrace all addictions. But the study does see common elements from addiction to addiction. The report finds that there are several "significant personality factors" that can contribute to addiction:

- Impulsive behavior, difficulty in delaying gratification, an antisocial personality and a disposition toward sensation seeking.
- A high value on nonconformity combined with a weak commitment to the goals for achievement valued by the society.
- A sense of social alienation and a general tolerance for deviance.
- A sense of heightened stress. This may help explain why adolescence and other stressful transition periods are often associated with the most severe drug and alcohol problems.

In the present study, drug includes as cigarettes, gutkha, pan masala and other forms of tobacco used by college students.

The many health social and economic problems and even deaths associated with such abuse have attracted much research attention of social scientists. Consequently, a number of familial, environmental, social, religious and psychological correlates of drug use/abuse have been explored by the social scientists of India and abroad. In this connection, the linkage between personality characteristics and drug use can not be denied. That is why the objective of this study is: To compare the personality dimensions of drug users and non-users college students.

This linkage has attracted the attention of researchers for quite sometimes. Eysenck (1964) observed that extroverts drink more and smoke more cigarettes; they also make more expensive movements and generally behave as if they are the

stimulus hunger. In respect to the Indian drug scene, the linkage between extraversion and drug use is, however, far from being settled. Chatterjee and others (1979) supported the stimulus hunger theory, but Singh and Chopra (1979) reported extraversion as one of the prominent personality traits of drug users. The relationship of personality characteristics to different forms of substance abuse has drawn widespread attention, however, the relationship of personality characteristics to different forms of substance abuse are highly complex because the range of personality dimensions which have been postulated to exist and which have been hypothesized to influence drug use, is extremely broad and the personality factors may influence the use of drugs at several level. (Cox and Others, 1987). Shanmugam (1979) found that drug abusers to be more extraverted while Edible and Pela (1981) found that drug abusers to be more introverted. Individuals prone to abuse intoxicating substances have been characterized by low extraversion (Trull and Sher, 1994), agreeableness (Leukefeld & Clayton, et.al. 2002) and conscientiousness (Flory and Others, 2002) and high neuroticism and openness (Sher and Others, 2000). On the whole, findings of the studies suggested that drug users were distressed, social non-conforming and impulsive. In terms of big five personality traits, drug abusers are low on emotional stability, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Kvisle (2004) found the personality profile of opioid addicts scored higher on neuroticism and lower on extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Nordvik (2007) also reported the same results. Sher, Bartholow, and Wood, (2000) reported substance abusers had scored higher on neuroticism and showed more neurotic tendencies as compared to non-substance abusers.

Moreover, some other personality traits like anxiety (Lather, 1993), depression (Khantzian and Khantzian, 1984) and insecurity (Dhillon and Pahwa, 1981) have also been correlated with drug use by a number of researchers.

### II. METHOD

**Sample:** The sample consisted of 300 male college students, drawn equally from the two groups, namely drug users and

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non-users. They were males enrolled in degree colleges located in Ghaziabad(UP). In this way, an attempt was made to match the two groups in terms of their age(18-25), inhabitation (urban), education (undergraduates) and socio-economic status(middle).

Tools: In order to ascertain drug use among students, their age, inhabitation, education and socio-economic status, a Personal Data Schedule was prepared and used. For measuring personality characteristics of the respondents, Hindi adaptation ( Jehan, 1984) of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) was used. The data so obtained were analysed by using t-test.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the comparison of the drug user and non-user groups in terms of their personality variables.

**Table-1:** Comparison of Drug user and Non-user Groups in respect of their Personality Variables:

Variable	Group				t-ratio (df=298)
	Drug users		Non-users		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Neuroticism	16.42	3.72	13.91	4.31	5.45*
Extraversion	12.87	5.64	10.64	4.92	3.71*
Psychoticism	8.14	5.66	6.02	4.07	3.78*

\*p < .01

The findings as summarized in Table 1 reveal that the drug users have scored significantly higher on all the three dimensions of personality in comparison to their non-user counterparts. The comparison of drug users and non-users in respect of neuroticism, extraversion and psychoticism has yielded significant t-values of 5.45, 3.71 and 3.78, respectively. The results clearly indicate that the drug users are more neurotic, extraverted as well as psychotic in terms of their personality. The findings of the present study have some direct or indirect support from the observations made by Eysenck (1964), Singh and Chopra (1979) Khan and Krishna (1982), Lather (1993) and several others.

To conclude, drug user adolescents have scored higher on all the three dimensions ( i.e., neuroticism, extraversion and psychoticism ) of the personality than non-user adolescents. The mean differences between both the groups were significant on the three dimensions. So, on the basis of available results, it can be said that the drug users were neurotic, extrovert and psychotic.

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