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Research Article

**A STUDY ON THE DRUG ABUSE SITUATION AMONG SIX  
DIFFERENT PRIVATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF DHAKA  
CITY****Md. Rajdoula Rafe\*<sup>1</sup>, Rayhanus Salam<sup>2</sup>, Zebunnesa Ahmed<sup>3</sup> and Md. Monir Hossain<sup>4</sup>**<sup>1,2,3</sup> Department of Pharmacy, Southeast University. Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh.<sup>4</sup> Department of Pharmacy, Jagannath University, 9-10 Chittoranjan Avenue, Dhaka, Bangladesh**Abstract:**

*Drug abuse refers to the use of prescribed or over the counter drugs in excess of the directions and any non-medical use of drugs. The objectives of this study were to identify various drugs used by students, the prevalence of such practices and the factors that influence in university students to use drugs. The study was conducted in the six universities of Dhaka with a total of 300 students. Relevant data were obtained using a questionnaire designed for conducting university surveys on drug abuse. Students most widely used gastrointestinal drugs (93%), painkillers (87%) and among the over the counter drugs paracetamol (87%), ranitidine (70%) and in case of prescribed drugs paracetamol (93.33%), diclofenac (41.61%), paracetamol and caffeine in combination (33.33%). The prevalence of drug abused is more in lower middle class (54%). The more showed sign and symptom was pain mainly headache & migraine (60%). The drugs were used mostly anytime and mainly by oral route of administration. There was a high frequency of psychotropic drug use among the students with caffeine being the most widely used. Drug use by the youths could be attributed to psychosocial perceptions of self need and peer influence.*

**Keywords:** Drug abuse, Dhaka city, University students, Addiction, Narcotics, Stimulants.

**Corresponding author:****Md. Rajdoula Rafe,**

Lecturer,

Department of pharmacy,

Southeast University.

Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

rafi.soyeb@gmail.com

QR code



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**INTRODUCTION:**

Drug abuse is a real problem in many parts of the world. It not only causes pain and suffering for the individuals involved, but also those around them and society as a whole. Despite continued attempts to understand and eradicate drug and alcohol abuse there is no sign that it is abating. It is a complex problem because there are so many reasons why people fall into substance abuse in the first place. Unless all these reasons are considered, it will be difficult to effectively tackle the problem. One reason why many individuals abuse substances is that they are attempting to self-medicate an existing mental health condition. Such people can be aware or unaware of their problem. They may just feel that something is not quite right in life. Those who are suffering from conditions such as depression or anxiety may find that they find temporary relief by turning to alcohol or other drugs. This approach may help in the short-term, but ultimately it can lead to a dual diagnosis. Not only do they still have a mental health problem, but also an addiction to deal with as well. Anyone who abuses these substances can also develop a mental health problem as a result. This may encourage them to escalate their usage. Most teens use drugs and alcohol when going to friends' homes, spending the night out or when attending parties. Make sure to ask teens where they are going and contact information so they can be contacted when outside the home. Let them know that at any time, you could call or drive by which will reduce the urge to lie about where they are. Over the past 20 years, many research studies have examined factors related to drug use and abuse which are provided a theoretical basis and empirical structure for the scientific understanding of the drug abuse causes and guidance in designing and testing preventive interventions [4-10]. There is agreement on the major predictors of drug use, and reviews of the correlates of drug use are numerous [11-15]. Previous studies showed that harm in the form of long-term health, social, and economic damage in young adulthood resulted only from adolescents [16]. Several researchers have reviewed etiologic studies that identify factors associated with or that appear predictive of drug use in adolescence and adulthood [17-20]. Moreover, there are questions and discussion about the limitations of drug abuse prevention evaluation research and prevention evaluations in general [1]. A comprehensive theory for drug abuse prevention is needed [3]. Through effective education designed to strengthen self-concept, social skills development, and community organization and action; to deterrence via social control measures and punitive consequences [2, 21]

**METHOD:**

This study was carried out at 06 (six) University in Bangladesh on around 300 student for about 03 months. This survey was mainly conducted in private university situated in Dhaka city most populated country of Bangladesh and most of the students of Bangladesh are stayed in Dhaka city.

**Sample size:** This survey was conducted with a standardized questionnaire by interviewing 300 persons of 6 (six) different private universities that are situated in Dhaka city. A huge number of students of Bangladesh are studied in private universities that are why we were interested to know their status on these topics. The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were adopted to ensure that the respondent interviewed, best represent the students of private university.

Inclusion criteria

- the respondent should be a student of private university.
- must be a resident of Dhaka city.

Exclusion criteria

- Students from other regions were excluded.
- Respondents with hearing and speaking disabilities were excluded
- Respondents of public universities were excluded.

**Study questionnaire:**

It was a cross-sectional study conducted among the undergraduate students of private universities of Dhaka city. Survey protocol was discussed with students and all possible measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality of all participants. Three hundred students were selected and information was collected by the help of questionnaire with the duration of three months. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of thorough literature reviews. Informal interviews and verbal counseling was done to enhance our understanding of previous and existing ratio of drug abuse in students. The eligibility criteria were adjusted in such a way that both genders (male, female) were studied. Students of age between 17-25 years were selected.

**Questionnaire distribution and data collection:**

The study was conducted on the 300 students to collect information about different prescribed and OTC (Over The Counter) drugs abusing at different private universities of Dhaka city, considering age, sex, socio-economic status. The period of survey was June to August, 2015. The survey questionnaires were pilot-tested prior to the main survey.

**Analytical Approach**

**Variables in analysis:** Drug abuse of various drugs among students of private universities of Dhaka in

survey was the outcome variable. Other variables in the analysis included gender, social class, types of drugs.

#### Statistical analysis:

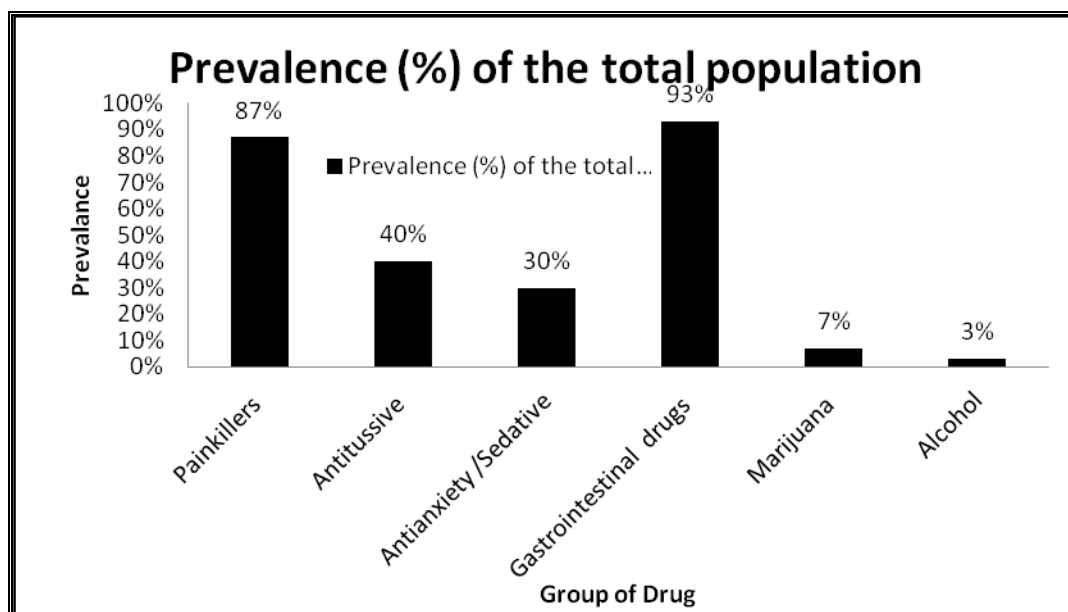
Analysis was conducted by calculating proportions and means for discrete and continuous data. It is important to be highlighted here that the survey was descriptive and most results are summarized in counts and percentages, some of the questions had multiple options to choose from, total of percentages is not always

We compared the prevalence of drug abuse in different six study centers according to gender variations and I observed that 77% drugs were abused by male and 23% drugs were abused by female. In our study out of the 300 students we observed that 87% of students abused painkillers and 93% abused gastrointestinal drugs, 30% abused anxiolytic and sedative drugs. Antitussives drugs abused 40%, alcohol and marijuana abused respectively 3% and 7%. From this it was concluded that the students were mostly abused painkillers drugs for analgesics and anti-pyretic action during my study period in Bangladesh.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 1: Prevalence of drug class which were mostly abused.

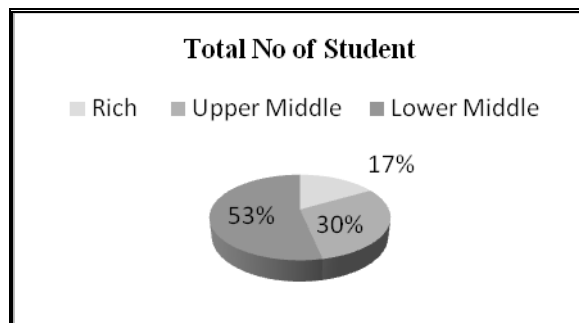
Types of drugs	NO. of student( n=300)	Prevalence (%)
Painkillers	260	87%
Antitussive	120	40%
Antianxiety /Sedative	90	30%
Gastrointestinal drugs	280	93%
Marijuana	20	7%
Alcohol	10	3%



The prevalence of drug abuse according to age distribution and found that the most significant portion i.e. 50% of students was in the age range between 18-20 years. 30% of students were in the age range of 21-23 years that they significantly abused drugs in my study duration. We also observed that a significant portion of students who were in lower middle classes abused drugs mostly in 54%, upper middle classes 30% and 17% rich class families.

Table 2: Social status of drug abusing students

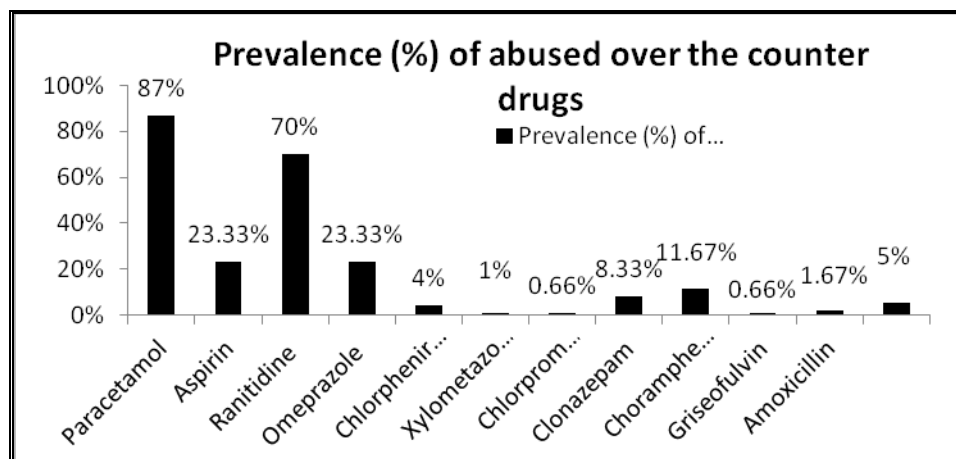
Social status	Number of student(n=300)	Prevalence (%)
Rich	50	17%
Upper Middle	90	30%
Lower Middle	160	54%



A significantly abused over the counter drugs are paracetamol 87% as Analgesics Diclofenacas a Anti-inflammatory 41% Choramphetamine 11.6% as antimicrobial drug clonazepam 8.33% as anxiety and Multivitamin as vitamin, mineral and nutritional drugs 3.33% I observed during my study period.

Table 3: Types of abused over the counter drugs

Name of the medicaments (Generic name)	Number of student (n=300)	Prevalence (%)
Paracetamol	260	87%
Aspirin	70	23.33%
Ranitidine	210	70%
Omeprazole	70	23.33%
Chlorpheniramine((Histacin)	12	4%
Xylometazoline	3	1%
Chlorpromazine(vomiting)	2	0.66%
Clonazepam	25	8.33%
Choramphenicol	35	11.67%
Griseofulvin	2	0.66%
Amoxicillin	5	1.67%
Dextromethorphan	15	5%



We observed different types of drug abused such as prescription drugs and over the counter drug In general, men abuse prescription medications more than women during my study period and found that a higher percentage of codeine and morphine abused.

**Table 4: Types of abused prescription drugs**

Name of the medicaments (Generic name)	Number of patients (n=300)	Prevalence (%)
<b>Antibiotic drugs.</b>		
Ciprofloxacin	8	3%
Cephadrine	3	0.66%
Amoxicillin	5	1.67%
Azithromycin	7	2.33%
<b>Opioid Analgesics</b>		
Codeine	8	2.67%
Fenttanyl	4	1.33%
Morphine	3	0.67%
<b>Analgesics</b>		
Paracetamol	280	93.33%
Paracetamol + caffeine	160	53.33%
Diclofenac	125	41.61%
<b>Vitamin &amp; Mineral</b>		
Vitamin B complex	10	3.33%
<b>Anti-Tussive/Expectorants</b>		
Dextromethorphan	15	5%
Dextromethorphan+Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride+Triprolidine Hydrochloride	40	13.33%
Ambroxol	5	1.66%
Guaiphenesin+Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride+Triprolidine Hydrochloride	60	20%
<b>ANTI-DEPRESSANTS</b>		
Amitriptyline	35	11.67%
<b>Stimulant</b>		
Amphetamine	10	3.33%
Dextromethorphan	15	5%
<b>Anxiolytic</b>		
Diazepam	65	21.67%
Clonazepam	25	8.33%
<b>Gastrointestinal drugs</b>		
Ranitidine	55	18.33%
Omeprazole	38	12.67%

We found that self-medication pain anxiety insomnia boredom panic euphoria, depression and relation problems are the main sign & symptom of drug abused.

**Table 5: Signs and symptoms of drug abuse**

Signs and Symptoms	No. of student (n=)	Prevalence (%)
Fever	80	27
To forget normal life	5	2%
personality disorder	2	0.66%
Self-medication	210	70%
Relationship problems	3	1%
Pressure/stress	15	5%
Pain(Headache & Migraine)	180	60%
Anxiety	30	10%
Depression	20	7%
Financial worries	30	10%
Boost confidence	2	0.66%
Euphoria	20	7%
Insomnia	30	10%
Work performance	2	0.66%
Panic	20	7%
Boredom	50	17%
Promote relaxation	30	10%

*From the above data we can make an assumption on present condition of drug abuse and it's prevention patterns. In future this study will help us to develop the prevention and use the right medicines in right manner in Bangladesh.*

### CONCLUSION:

This study found that gastrointestinal drugs, painkillers, antipsychotic drugs are the most commonly abused drugs among private university students. And comparatively male students abused more than the female student and students came from the lower middle class are more observed with drug abuse than other social class. The most observed sign and symptom of drug abuse were pain, boredom and insomnia. In addition, health education is required for the private university students to increase public health knowledge and awareness about drug abuse.

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