

## **A Critical Analysis of the Impact of Drug Addiction in Urban Life of Bangladesh**

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**Abstract:** There is no denying the fact that drug addiction has become a dangerous social problem and menace to every nation all over the world. At present this problem is no longer a problem of any particular country of nation, it has rather become a part of global problem. As a part of global village, Bangladesh is seriously affected by it. It creates many social offences in village, towns as well as in the cities of Bangladesh. The drug addicts are involved in various social offences such as stealing, hijacking, pick pocketing, etc and also indulged in unethical and immoral activities for collecting money to procure drugs. So the article tends to realize the nature of crime of the drug addicts in urban area special reference to the Dhaka city.

**Key words:** Critical analysis, drug addiction, urban life, Bangladesh

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past two decades, the abuse of illegal drugs has spread at an unprecedented rate and has reached every part of the world. Now no nation can claim to be immune from the curse of Drugs. It is needless to mention here that abuse of drugs has wide range of adverse effects on human civilization. It is not only impairing the public health, but also corrupting institutions, retarding Socio-Economic development, threatening political stability and some cases endangering state security. Because Bangladesh is geographically located in the middle of world's largest Narcotics growing belt-the Golden Triangle (Laos, Burma, Thailand), the Golden Crescent (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) and Golden Wedge<sup>[1]</sup>. Besides this, important opium producing country India is also around our country. So the people of Bangladesh become addicted easily. According to the report of a newspaper About 12 lac people of Bangladesh are drug addicts. Among these about 22 thousand addicts are citizen of Dhaka city. World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that, about 50 crore people in the world are affected by the abuse of drug<sup>[2]</sup>. If a man is affected by drug, he can not come out from this practice, even an addict has (a) a compulsory need or desire continues drug taking (b) a tendency to increasing doses day by day and (c) eventual dependence on it. Many of the adolescent users begin their experiment with drugs through smoking cannabis (marijuana), cigarettes specially prepared with relatively higher intoxicant items usually in company with the closest friends. They may graduate to out of such practices, the use heroin. Typically they begin by

sniffing-it (snorting) and finally injecting it intravenously(shooting the mainline)<sup>[3]</sup>.

Through a study it has been found that 65 % of the addicts start first with liqueur, hemp and tend to taking heroin and pathdine. It is also found that a great majority of the addicts were unemployed, 25% were students and the female addicts were estimated to be about 10%. Findings about how the subjects developed the habit indicate that 50% took first drug through drug user friends and under pressure, 20% out of frustration and 15% out of curiosity. The highest incidence of addiction occurred between 23-26 years of age the study reports<sup>[4]</sup>. Abuse of drug some potential threats on personal and social health. The threats that usually following drug addiction can be identified as loss of interest in work, indifference to family responsibility, loss of ability to concentrate oneself which may impair discord family relations increase in sexual demand or misbehaviour, violence or social nuisance and boosting up uncounted criminal offences as mentioned<sup>[5]</sup>. The other important aspect of abuse of drug is that it causes disturbance in perception of outer reality and of ones own identifying resistance to stress, freedom in decision making. Truly speaking it causes potential harm for self-actualization and mastery of ones own environment<sup>[6]</sup>.

Drug addiction does not harm individual addicts only; it affects their families and the society as a whole. It paralyses the life of the addicts, disrupts peace and prosperity of families and even shake the stability of the social texture itself. It also begets moral degradation, generating different social crimes like theft, robbery, hijacking and terrorism. A drug addict appears to the

criminal activities generally associated with drug abuse may be termed as offences; related to property. About regarding crime tendency of the drug addicts it has been said that- The habit smoking and drinking alcohol among urban youth have been increasing and passes dangerous threat to young people health. Sometimes they lead to road accidents and many anti-social behaviours are related to alcohol and drug addiction which produce physical and social disability among youth<sup>[7]</sup>. According to the United News Agency of Bangladesh (UNB) report- Drug addiction is on the rise in Bangladesh causing an alarming increase in social crimes and injustice in the society. Authoritative sources said 65% of the crimes in Dhaka city are taking place due to drug addiction and the scenario almost the same in other cities of the country<sup>[8]</sup>.

Through a report it has been found that 15% of drug addicts are involved in street-robbery (hijacking), 10% pick-pocketing, 5% vandalism/gangsterism, 5% auto-accident, 20% behaviour against standard conduct, 30% drug peddling, and 30% unwilling to disclose (any offence). Drug addiction itself is a psychosocial problem. But it also creates many anti-social activities. Due to the drug addiction, the criminal activities are increasing with alarming rate in all over the country specially in urban area like Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal. This study has been conducted to explore the impact of drug addiction in urban life of Bangladesh.

**Objectives of the study:** The general objective of the study is the critically analysis the impact of drug addiction in urban life of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study are as follows;

- To know the socio-economic and demographic background of the drug addicts.
- To identify the nature and causes of drug addiction.
- To know the nature and causes of crime which committed by the drug addicts.
- To review the theoretical matters of drug addiction in Bangladesh.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Social Survey method has been used for the study. All the drug addicts who have come to receive at treatment from the specialized medical centre of the Metropolitan Dhaka city (from June, 2004 to April, 2005) has been considered the population and each of them has been considered the unit of analysis of the study.

Table 1: Age distribution of drug addicts

Age-group	Frequency	Percentages
15-25	40	38.46
25-35	45	43.27
35-45	11	17.31
45-55	06	5.77
55-65	02	1.92
Total (N-104)	104	100

Average age (x)= 28.94 years

Table 2: Religion of drug addicts

Religion	Frequency	Percentages
Islam	75	72.12
Hindu	24	23.08
Others	05	4.18
Total (N-104)	104	100

Table 3: Marital status of drug addicts

Marital status	Frequency	Percentages
Married	35	33.65
Unmarried	56	53.85
Widower	07	6.73
Divorced	06	3.85
Total (N-104)	104	100

**Samples:** Seven specialized medical centers (two government center namely Madokashakti Neramoy Kendra, Manorog Bidda Department, P G Hospital and the five others non-government centres namely Mukti Clinic, Baraka Clinic, Zaman Clinic, Dhaka Manorog Treatment Clinic and Apon, respectively). Out of 234 drug addicts from these centres 104 samples have been selected randomly those who came to receive treatment from those centres. All the respondents were male folk. Because no female drug addicts didn't come to receive treatment during the study period (from June, 2004 to April, 2005).

**Sources of data:** The study is based on empirical data, which is collected by interviewer from drug addicts. Direct interview method was followed for collecting data. The data are analyzed through simple statistical calculation such as frequencies and percentages. Further more, the data reported in this study are collected from different secondary sources, which include recent publications, journals, books, research report and newspapers.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Table shows that the highest concentration of drug addicts is between the age of 25 and 35 years (43.27%), followed by the 15-25 years (38.46%) and the 17.31, 5.77, 1.92% are in 35-45,45-55 and 55-65 years, respectively.

The Table reveals that most of the drug addict (72.12%) belongs to Islam followed by Hindu (23.08%) and others (6.67%). Others include Christian, Buddhist (Table2). This means that drug addiction cuts across religion,

Table 4: Educational qualification of the respondents

Level of education	Frequency	Percentages
Illiterate	14	13.46
Literate	02	1.92
Up to primary school	12	11.54
Up to class x	30	28.85
H.S.C/Class up to xii	27	25.96
Graduate	16	15.38
Others (M.B.A, Engineering)	03	2.88
Total (N-104)	104	100

Table 5: Occupation of the drug addicts

Occupation	Frequency	Percentages
Business	21	20.19
Service	22	21.15
Unemployed	20	19.23
Students	25	24.03
Day-Laborers	06	5.77
Driver	07	6.73
Others (Beggary, Salesman)	03	2.88
Total (N-104)	104	100

Table 6: Residence of drug addicts in urban area

Residence of the drug addicts	Frequency	Percentages
Own house	19	18.27
Relative's house	12	11.54
Mess	22	21.15
Hall/Hostel	28	26.92
Slum	15	14.42
Others	08	7.69
Total (N-104)	104	100

race and color i.e. it is prevalent in all religions. However, data indicates that Bangladesh is a Muslim dominated country.

The study reveals that 53.85% of drug addicts are unmarried, 33.65% are married, 6.73% are widower and 3.45% are divorced. The average age of the respondents is 28.94 years (Table 1 and 3) which the legally recognized age of marriage. But due to their frustration, unemployment and drug addiction etc, they live on society remain unmarried who influences our family system negatively and have adverse effects on socio-cultural life of the community, which they live in.

Education is one of the vital factors in the life of an individual. An educated man can overcome his problems properly. But the Table reveals that 13.46% drug addicts are illiterate, 1.92% is literate, 11.54% attended primary school, 28.85% read up to class-x, 25.96% respondents have passed H.S.C and 15.38% are found to have completed graduation degree. The remaining 2.88% have achieved other degrees like-M.B.A, Diploma (Table 4). It has been noticed that the rate of drug addiction is increasing among the educated people.

The above Table shows that the respondents are engaged in variety of occupations. The highest number of drug addicts (24.03%) are students, 20.19% are businessmen, 21.15% are service holders, 19.23% are unemployed, 5.77, 6.73 and 2.88% are day laborers, drivers

Table 7: Monthly income of the drug addicts

Income (Tk.)	Frequency	Percentages
No income	39	37.05
300-2300	18	17.31
2300-4300	29	27.88
4300-6300	10	9.62
6300-8300	08	7.69
Total (N-104)	104	100

Average income (x)=2272.60

Table 8: Distribution of the causes of drug addicts

Causes	Frequency	Percentages
Peer-group	70	67.30
Curiosity	60	57.69
Frustration	17	16.35
Unemployment	06	5.77
Failure in love	12	11.54
Family conflict	21	20.19
Total (N-104)	*186	

\*Multiple responses are possible

Table 9: Nature of reaction of the drug addicts if they stop taking drug

Nature of responses	Frequency	Percentages
Nose flowing	11	10.58
Growing aggressive	15	14.42
Perspiration of body	20	19.23
Biting of muscles	09	8.65
Growing ill feelings	34	32.69
Affected by fever	06	5.77
Others	09	8.65
Total (N-104)	104	100

and others, respectively (Table 5). It has been noticed that the students are become drug addicts which is very harmful and alarming for our nation.

Residential area is an important factor of men. Men are influenced by the norms, values and customs according to their living area. The table shows the residence of drug addicts where they live in. It indicates that the highest number of addicts (26.92%) reside in hall/hostel. 18.27, 11.54, 21.15, 14.42 and 7.69% are live in own house, relative's house, mess, slum and others (railway platform, bus stand, open air and street), respectively. It is significant that most of the addicts are students (Table 6) who live in hall/ hostel. It is very alarming matter for a nation.

The Table reveals the monthly income of drug addicts. The majority of addicts don't have any income (37.05%). About 17.31% earn up to Tk. 2300, 27.88% respondents earn Tk. 2300-4300, 9.62%, 7.69% earn Tk. 4300-6300, 6300-8300, respectively. The monthly average income of drug addicts is Tk. 2272.60 only and mentionable percentages (37.05%) of drug addicts have no income (Table 7). As they have no income they involve themselves in any crime to fulfill their demands.

There are many reasons of being drug addicts in our country. The above.+669963.able shows the distribution of causes of drug addiction. It reveals that 67.30% respondent become addicted by the influence of their peer group/ friend, 57.69 respondents mentioned that curiosity

Table 10: Nature of crime committed by the drug addicts

Nature of crime	Frequency	Percentages
Stealing	31	29.81
Street robbery (hijacking)	30	28.85
Extortion of money	20	19.23
Pick-pocketing	06	5.77
Visiting brothels	16	15.38
Cruelty to women	09	8.65
Unwilling to confess (any offence)	07	6.73
Total (N-104)	*119	

\*Multiple responses are possible

Table 11: Causes of being criminal of drug addicts

Causes being criminal	Frequency	Percentages
Collecting money	76	73.08
Mitigating the excitement of taking drug	25	24.04
Group feelings	14	13.46
Separation of family life	07	6.73
Others	05	4.81
Total (N-104)	*127	

\*Multiple responses are possible

Table 12: Recommendation of the respondents to solve problems owing to drugs

Recommendations	Frequency	Percentages
Arrangement of proper treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts	20	19.23
Creating social resistance	30	28.85
Controlling illicit drug trafficking	33	31.73
Creating public awareness	10	9.62
Formulating the proper law	29	27.88
Total (N-104)	*122	

\*Multiple responses are possible

is the second reason of being addicts. From the study it is quite evident that frustration (16.35%), unemployment (5.77%), failure in love (11.54%) and family conflict (20.19%) are also influential causes of drug addiction (Table 8).

Drug addiction is such type of problem that creates dependency of men on it. If a man is affected by of drug, he cannot come out from this practice. Because the addicts are face some physical and mental reaction, if they stop taking the drug. The data shows the nature of responses of the addicts if they stop taking the drug. Most of the respondents (32.69%) mention that they get ill feelings. The remaining 10.58% of drug addicts get flowing of nose, 14.42% become aggressive, 19.23% get their body perspired, 8.65% get biting of muscles, 5.77% are affected by fever and 8.65% express their reaction in other ways (Table 9). This means if a drug addict does not want to take any drug, he can't do so easily. In other words drug addiction creates psychosomatic problems and an addicts puts him under compulsion of taking drug because of this life-killing habit.

The effects of drug addiction on society are highly negative. That means, the most of the addicts are related with various social crime. The findings reveal that 29.81% of drug addicts are involved in stealing, 28.85% in street

robbery, 19.23, 5.77 and 15.38% are involved in extorting money, pick-pocketing, visiting brothels, cruelty to women, respectively and 6.73% of drug addicts are unwilling to disclose their offences (Table 10). So it could be said that the majority of them are engaged in anti-social activities and their deviant behavior is vitiating the atmosphere of normal social life.

It is assumed that the most of drug addicts are involved in crime of collecting money. The findings of this study are consistent with that idea. The Table shows that the highest number (73.08%) of addicts are involved in crime for collecting money. 24.04, 13.46, 6.73 and 4.81% are involved in social offences for mitigation of excitement of taking drug, group feelings, separation of family life and other offences, respectively (Table 11).

The Table reveals the long listed suggestions of drug addicts to control the drug addiction. The highest 31.73% of them recommended to control the illicit drug trafficking, followed by enforcing and implementation of proper laws (27.88%), creating social resistance (28.85%), arrangement of proper treatment and rehabilitation of them (19.23%) and 9.62% of the addicts suggested to create public awareness by the publicity of mass media (Table 12).

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of the present findings we can say that, drug addiction is not a problem of addicts only it also affects their family, community and society as a whole. Even it creates many social crimes in villages and towns; specially in the Dhaka city, which hamper our traditional social system. Moreover many of the Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) like Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are closely associated with intravenous drug use. In this connection, it is obvious that the drug addicts are involved in various anti-social activities and their deviant behaviour causes many problems in our urban life and appears as obstacles to our socio-economic and cultural growth and development. Hence it is our moral and social responsibility to rectify the drug addicts and bring them back from their life-killing habit and deviant behaviour to normal life and rehabilitate them in society as productive ones. According to this study findings highlighted the following recommendations should be kept in mind of the policy makers and planners of the government and non-government organization;

- A research should be under taken about the nature of crime of the drug addicts by applying the participatory observation method.

- Social awareness should be created through propaganda using mass media and to create sense of social responsibility among the people in other words a social movement has to be induced applying social action method to cope with this situation more effectively.
- The traditional social control agents like family, school, community etc. religious institution etc. have to be strengthen so that they may play a significant role in establishing social norms, values and social rules.
- Integrated approach (coordinating efforts of Police, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Narcotics Department and local leader) should be applied to solve the problems of drug addiction.
- A specific national policy and plan should be formulated as the preventive measures of drug addiction.
- Social awareness should be created through propaganda using mass media and to create sense of social responsibility among the people applying social action method to cope with this situation more effectively.
- Community policing may help the local power structure to resist social disorganization related to drug addiction

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