

DEVELOPING AN INTERVENTION PROGRAMME FOR ENHANCING AWARENESS ON DRUG ABUSE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The epidemic of substance abuse in young generation has assumed alarming dimensions in India. Changing cultural values and increasing economic stress are leading to initiation into substance use. Drug use, misuse or abuse is also primarily due to the nature of the drug abused, the personality of the individual and the addict's immediate environment. The present study is aimed at developing and finding out the effectiveness of the Intervention Programme in enhancing awareness on Drug Abuse among secondary school students. Experimental method was followed. Thirty 9th standard students from a vocational higher secondary school in Ernakulam District were treated as the sample. The Intervention Programme was proved very effective in promoting awareness on drug abuse among secondary school students.

Key terms: *Intervention Programme, Drug Abuse Prevention.*

Introduction

Alcohol and substance abuse have become common in schools nowadays, among both boys and girls. Schools are no longer safe zones for children. The extensive use of narcotics within and outside educational institutions has become a serious concern. Drug dealers target students both as carriers as well as clients. A well-developed drug network functions around schools to hook adolescents. There is an ever increasing need to be vigilant against this anti-social force. It's high time for teachers and parents to work against and eradicate this evil force.

The highly energetic youth can be guided by educating and at the same time by warning against the adverse effect of narcotics. Prevention is better than cure should be the motto in this endeavour. Anti-Narcotic activities are to be formed propagated by the community for this purpose.

It is very difficult to change the mindset of those who had turned criminals at a young age. Once branded a criminal, a person can do little to get back his dignity and the respect of society. For a child, the stigma follows him/her throughout life. So it is very important to spread anti narcotic

activities. Since teachers are social engineers, teacher educators and student teachers have to shoulder this responsibility.

Need and Significance of the Study

Research shows that every 12 seconds a new school-age child experiments with illicit drugs for the first time. To combat this epidemic, the investigator has involved in the anti-drug information and prevention campaign in Schools. It has been conclusively proven that when young people are provided with the truth about drugs—factual information on what drugs are and what they do—usage rates drop commensurately. There is still, however, much more to be done. Thus the study was initiated in Ernakulam District to contribute the investigator's mite to this cause.

Statement of the problem

Developing an Intervention Programme for Enhancing Awareness on Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students

Definition of terms

Intervention Programme

An **intervention** is a combination of **programme** elements or strategies designed to produce behaviour changes or improve health status among individuals or an entire population. **Interventions** may include educational **programmes**, new or stronger policies, improvements in the environment, or a health promotion campaign.

In the present study the investigator developed an intervention strategy that includes different educational methods with interactive sessions and activities for developing awareness on drug abuse among secondary school students. This programme is a simple, effective and a sincere initiative for awakening and empowering students to choose a life without drugs.

Awareness on Drug Abuse

Awareness means the state of being conscious of something.

In this study the investigator developed an intervention programme to make the students aware of the aftermath of drug abuse.

Objectives

1. To develop an intervention strategy that includes drama techniques like role play, puppet show and conscious alley, Music, video lessons and Game for developing awareness on drug abuse among secondary school students
2. To give training to the students to perform the programme as an intervention strategy
3. To find out the effectiveness of Intervention Programme for developing awareness on drug abuse among secondary school students

Hypothesis

Intervention Programme is effective for developing awareness on drug abuse among Secondary School Students

Methodology

Since the Intervention Programme is a new strategy to be used in the secondary school classrooms, this has to be tested experimentally. Therefore experimental method, the most important, strictly from the scientific point of view, was adopted to find out the effectiveness of the Intervention Programme for drug abuse prevention.

Design Selected

In the present study the pre test-post test non-equivalent single group design was used.

Variables

The independent, dependent and controlled variables involved in the study are given in table 1.

Table 1
Variables of the study

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Controlled variables
Intervention Programme	Awareness	Standard Teacher

Sample selected for the Study

The population consisted of secondary school pupils of government school following State Syllabus of Kerala. Keeping in view the experimental nature of the study and its demands and limitations, the investigator selected one 9th standard class from a government Vocational Higher

Secondary School in Ernakulam District. A group of 30 students from 9th standard was treated as sample.

Tools Used for the collection of data

1. Intervention strategy -Lesson Transcripts on Drug Abuse
2. Awareness Test

Phases of the Study

The study included three phases. Pre-testing was the first phase. In this phase, the experimental group was tested to find out their awareness on the drug abuse and the significance of its' prevention. The second phase was the treatment phase. The intervention programme was introduced in this stage in which the experimental group was enlightened with the aftermath of drug abuse. Post-testing was the third phase. In this phase, the experimental group was tested on their awareness on drug abuse.

Statistical techniques Used

The test score was collected and compared with the help of paired t- test.

Analysis and interpretation of Data

To find out whether there is significant difference between the pre test and post test scores among students, the mean and standard deviation of the pre test and post test scores of the students were obtained and their 'paired t' value was calculated. The data and result of the test of significance of difference between means are given in the table 2.

Table 2

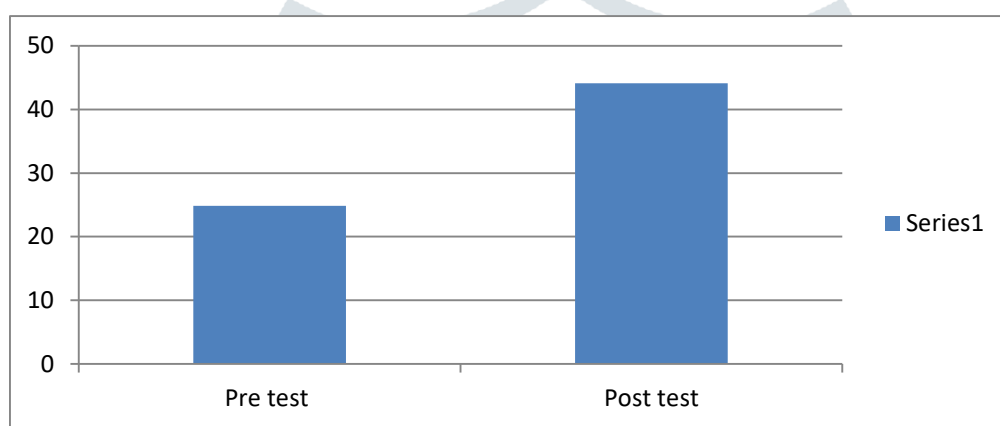
Result of the test of significance of level of effectiveness of drug abuse prevention programme

Method	Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Paired 't' value
Drug abuse prevention programme	Pretest	30	24.83	.91	**86.07
	Post-test	30	44.09	.84	

** indicates the significance at 0.05 level

The Table shows that Arithmetic mean of pre test scores of test is 24.83 and arithmetic mean of post test score is 44.09. Standard deviation is .91 and, 84 for pre test and post test scores respectively. Table shows that the t value is 86.07 which is statistically significant at 0.05 levels. This shows that there is significant difference between the means of pre test and post test scores of students. The result shows that the pre test and post test scores differ significantly with respect to their awareness. Thus the Intervention programme proved to be effective in developing awareness on drug abuse among secondary school students. The means of the pre test and post test scores are graphically represented in the following figure I.

FIGURE 1
Graphical Representation of the means scores of the pre test and post test scores of secondary school students



Educational Implication of the Intervention Programme

This package against Drug Abuse is a noble endeavour to educate the children and youth about the dangers of drugs and what havoc it can do to an individual. As we know, more and more people are being a prey to this social evil, specially the school going children and youth. Realizing the importance of our role in the society as teachers we need to act as substance abuse educators in a variety of settings, such as schools, community and outreach centers.

Suggestion

It is necessary to undertake substance abuse prevention research activities to help the society, eradicate drug abuse that may be a cause for robbery, rape, or any other crime that impinge on the well-being of society. Here comes the need for everyone to team up with others to scale up efforts to fight against drug abuse.

Efforts to control the problem in this age-group should also target their parents and other family members, by means of the media. The school being an essential part in a student's life can include and promote an effective and healthy life-style. Interventions that enhance parental self-efficacy in conveying and enforcing attitude shaping for their children could reduce adolescent substance use.

Healthy substance use control programs, focusing on youth, are essential, to reduce the burden of related diseases. Repeat surveys would help in monitoring the tobacco epidemic in schools and in evaluating the efficacy of state level tobacco control programs. The government should conduct a national survey to determine how widespread the problem is, and include education about drugs in the school curriculum.

Conclusion

In spite of being aware of the harmful effects of substance use, adolescents take up this habit. This requires comprehensive prevention and control programs in schools and the community, targeted toward adolescents and their parents and other family members. Effective measures are required to encourage shaping the attitude of school children toward self-confidence and adequacy, as also to prevent risk behavior among adolescents. It has been noted in different studies that drug abuse is affected by knowledge and attitude toward drugs. To change a behavior, at first knowledge and attitude toward that particular behavior should be corrected.

Using the obtained results of this research, knowledge, attitude, and practice of students toward drug abuse are identified. The organized continuous decision makings and programmes can be implemented to raise knowledge and attitude of the students toward drug abuse and to decrease the rate of dependence to drugs. Considering the importance of adolescent age in forming personal behaviours in the future and the opportunity provided at schools, paying more attention to related interventions in teenagers can have a significant role in decreasing drug abuse in this age group and consequently in the society by increasing their knowledge and correcting their attitude toward drug abuse.

Studies show that there is relationship between drug abuse and psychological disorders, escape from home, aggressiveness and violence, theft, delinquency, academic failure and reluctance to study, suicide, etc., since people's knowledge and beliefs have an important role in the tendency toward drug abuse, being aware of your knowledge and attitude, authorities and policy makers can plan accordingly.

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