



# Women evolving roles in substance abuse: Reason and consequence

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## ABSTRACT

In past decade the substance abuse mainly by the males in the societies. Historically, women using substance have always been frowned upon. Rules on acceptability dates back as far as laws of Hammurabi in the west and the Manusmriti in India which states that, “A wife who drinks wine ... may be abandoned at any time.” But with the pass of time women more indulged in substance abuse. The reasons are basically loneness, peer pressure, family relation and biological factor responsible. In present we will surprised to see women rehab centre that show how much women involved in drug abuse. The women used as carrier for drug transportation, female selling them self for the sake of drugs. It’s time to think for drug menace in female. In this efforts to show the real picture of female drug abuse.

## INTRODUCTION

Manusmriti mandates that where women are worshipped there the Gods dwell. However, mankind has not been able to uphold this lofty principle. Whether it is war, revolution, famine, drought, womenfolk have to bear a disproportionate burden of suffering and discrimination. That is why the Hebrew Talmud cautions-Be Very careful if you make a women cry, because, God counts her tears.<sup>1</sup> Once a male-only problem, the epidemic of drug addiction

has now gripped Punjab’s women too. With cracked lips and shriveled bodies, they are showing up in droves at the de-addiction centers. Those who once fought for the lives of their husbands and brothers are now fighting for themselves.<sup>2</sup> In The maze of data is hidden a dangerous trend: Addiction among young mothers and married women. The finding of the Punjab Opioid Dependence Survey Conducted between Februarys to April 2015 by an NGO and AIIMS were startling: of the opioid

<sup>1</sup> Dr.G.Sreekumar Menon, “Opium Brides-How The Drug Trade Has impacted women”, 292 *ELT* 31(2013)

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/epidemic-of-drug-addiction-now-grips-punjab-women-too>(last visited on August 1,2017).

dependents in Punjab, nearly 1 per cent is women.<sup>3</sup> There are twofold stories of women who are facing the trauma of drug: In one side they are having burden of the family due to the involvement of male member in substance abuse and on the other they hooked her in drug addiction.

The whole burden shifted to the female member when the male member of the family caught by the drug abuse. Recently in Punjab more than 64 women entrepreneurs have emerged as key players in the lucrative liquor trade. Even the liquor brand names have an increasingly feminine element. The Punjab made liquor (PMC) brands have name such as Chandni, Naina, Raat di Rani, Khushbo, Lal Pari, Sahni, Rano, Paro, Heer and Jugni. Many of these women are mere rubber stamps while some are earning profits in the trade. It is a worrying norm.<sup>4</sup>

#### Reason and impact of drug abuse in women:

A girl addict had been apprehended by the Paharganj police but she was let off as she was not in possession of any drugs. What are the reasons for female drug addiction? A girl claimed she took to drugs out of curiosity, having been urged to do so by her friends. Hooked on it for six months, she then sought to kick the habit and did not smoke heroin any more. Puffing away on cigarette, clad in trousers and a shirt another girl addict said that drugs gave her feeling of euphoria. Another reason for some females taking to drugs according to a doctor was as means of protest against their spouses who were already entrapped in the vice. When husbands or boyfriends refuse to listen to them then they experiment with the drug and ironically develop the habit themselves.<sup>5</sup>

#### Opium brides:

However, the saga of women's suffering continues unabated and Afghanistan is in the headlines for what is being referred to as Opium Brides". Afghan families support themselves by poppy cultivation, according to the UN office on Drugs and crime Afghan opium farmer often have to borrow money from drug traffickers for growing the illicit crop. Failure to repay the loan results

in the daughter being given to the Drug traffickers as a settlement. The Afghan government's opium eradication programme has resulted in greater misery for poor farmer. Afghans disparagingly call them, loan brides. However, moneylenders are always looking for opium flower-marriageable daughters ready for plucking if crop failure or a family emergency forces a borrower into default.<sup>6</sup>

#### Date rape drug:

Predator drugs also called date rape drugs render victims unconscious or otherwise unable to resist assaults. It is a tasteless and odorless and dissolves easily in liquids. As a result it is not difficult to slip the drug into victim's drink and have it go undetected. The drug can cause dizziness, confusion, nausea, blackouts and loss of memory. The effects are intensified by alcohol and last eight to 24 hours. Traces of the drug can be detected in urine upto 72 hours after administration, although it is difficult analysis. Victims may not remember or may be unclear about the circumstances of the rape, resulting in delayed reporting or no reporting at all.<sup>7</sup> The rape and murder of a school-going girl exposes rampant drug addiction as the Dev bhoomi thi yeh humari drugs ne sab barbad kar diya. In Himachal 20 per cent crime is attributed to drug addicts. With Baddi emerging as pharmaceutical hub.<sup>8</sup>

#### Story of women in jail:

A meeting with a cross-section of inmates, after permission from the authorities, throws up interesting details about them. Since naming the inmates is prohibited, let's call them by alphabets. 'A' (35) is from Burj Lambran village in Hambraan, Ludhiana. She is among the most 'popular' and well-off inmates. Dressed up nicely, she says she is innocent "Mere sammne goliyan Kutt ke paaiyan policewaleyan ne te mere te jhootha case karta nashe da. (policeman kept powdered tablets in from of me and lodged a false drug case against me)," she says. The police have declared her husband, Gurcharan Singh, an absconder. "I was arrested in 2014 and stayed in jail for two months and seven days. My mother-in-law

<sup>3</sup> Jasmine Singh, "Her Home without drugs," *The Sunday Tribune*, Jul.23,2017.

<sup>4</sup> Aman Sood, "For Women, Liquor just another trade", *The Tribune*, May 30, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> S.K. Ghosh, *The Traffic in Narcotics and Drug Addiction* 93 (Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> *Supra* note 1

<sup>7</sup> Suzanne Bell, *Essential of Forensic science, Drug, poisons & chemistry* 98 (viva books pvt.ltd. 1<sup>st</sup> 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Bhanu P Lohumi, "The Kotkhai shame", *The Sunday Tribune*, Jul.23,2017

arranged bail for me. I was rearrested in November last year.” ‘B’ (34) is from Rajasthan serving a 10-year jail term. Arrested in 2013 with 13-kg opium, she accuses an acquaintance of implicating her. “I came to Punjab looking for a good hospital for my cancer-stricken husband. I didn’t know those who promised help were drug dealers. To save themselves and their daughter, they framed me,” she says. “Jo ye kaam karte hain wo chale jaate hain, Unhe jail nahi hoti (those involved in the trade leave. They are never jailed),”. ‘B’ has done a six-month beautician course in the jail and is currently learning stitching. ‘C’ is from Jagraon. The Enforcement Directorate recently froze her properties worth Rs. 2.5 crore after her arrest on April 21, 2017. Booked for kidnapping, she was out on bail. Drugs smuggling cases have been registered against all her family members in the past five years, except her. ‘D’ (50) is sentenced to 10 years in jail. High on medicines, she struggle to stand up straight. “Mera ilaaj chalda peya hai civil hospital which nasha chadan da. Main charas ate chitta lendi si. (I am undergoing de-addiction treatment at a civil hospital. I took cannabis and heroin),” she says. First booked in 2007, she has lost track of the number of cases registered against her. As recently as on April 15, she was brought to the jail. “My husband died after drug overdose,” says the woman as she breaks down. ‘E’ admits to snorting and injecting heroin. “My husband introduced me to drugs. He is a smuggler and an addict too,” says the 25-year-old, booked for attempting to murder her husband. Police arrested the Amarjot Kaur with 1100 tablets of aeprozolam Sali. According to police it is easier for women to operate as we can’t arrest them from dusk to dawn.<sup>10</sup>

### Reduced productivity in young:

Ironically, talking about women’s sexual and reproductive health remains a tobacco which means that little or nothing is discussed about the impact of smoker’s tobacco on the reproductive health of women including,

infertility and delays in conception<sup>11</sup>. 40 Lakh people using Tobacco. In 1980 male used tobacco 34 per cent. In 2012 male 23 per cent, 1980 female 50 lakh and 2012-1.22 crore.<sup>12</sup> In particular, poor women in rural areas with little or no education who consume smokeless tobacco are rarely counseled about the adverse effect of continuing with smokeless tobacco during pregnancy adverse outcomes including sudden death pre-eclampsia and pre-term delivery. Neither are they informed why their babies are low weight or stunted. It is estimated that in Punjab 91 per cent of female tobacco users use smokeless products.<sup>11</sup> In fact, some surgeons opt to defer surgery on those elective cases who initially refuse to commit to quitting smoking totally after surgery.<sup>13</sup> Woman who is strongly addicted to opiates will stop menstruating.<sup>14</sup>

### Female peddler:

Women addicts “Been bajani hai?” (Do you want to play the flute?) ask the women in the crowded bylanes of Paharganj, Nabi Karim or even at the Delhi Railway Station, before striking up the clandestine business in the drug trade; this is the popular code sentence and potential customers with their tell tale signs of watery eyes, sunken cheeks and tired countenances, are immediately approached by these female peddlers. It was reported that a doctor or psychiatrists in Delhi treated on an average five to six female addicts daily. In District Tarantarn Alcohol made by female and even without checking the degree of Alcohol.<sup>15</sup>

### Body carries couriers:

A large number of couriers are dispatched who use body carry techniques or swallowing and indigestion to conceal heroin. These couriers travel aboard commercial airlines from South East Asia, Transiting through Africa and Europe, bound for the United States<sup>16</sup>. Concealment methods are to a large extent similar to that which are used to conceal cocaine, e.g. false-sided luggage,

<sup>9</sup> Deepthi Verma, Punjab’s Chitta women, *The Tribune*, June 4, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Kulwinder Sandhu, “From Caudits, Daulewala Women now drug kingpins” *The Tribune*, Mar. 20, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Swapna Majumdar, Tobacco, TB and female mortality. *The Tribune*, Dec. 16, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Jagdish Kumar, “Wake up before dead,” *Dainik Jagran*, May 31, 2014,

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Harinder Singh Bedi, “Why let good Healths go up in smoke”, *The Tribune*, May 29, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Tommie L Duncan, *Understanding & Helping The Narcotics Addict* 23 (Practice Hall: Inc England 1965).

<sup>15</sup> Harinder Singh, Ladies also making liquor *The Ajit*, May, 20, 2015

<sup>16</sup> Victor H and Virginia Vogel, *Facts about Narcotics* 15 (Chicago Science Research Associated, 1951).

containers, etc.<sup>17</sup> The Zambian woman Twala Keltho who had died a week ago was found to be having as many as 50 capsules of suspected Heroin 22 capsules in her stomach and remaining in the intestine. Each capsule weighing 15-16 g was filled.<sup>18</sup>

### Drug abuse during pregnancy:

Great concern is drug abuse by women during pregnancy. Some psychoactive drug can have profound, permanent effects on a developing fetus. The best documented is fetal syndrome, which can affect the offspring of alcoholic mother. Cocaine and amphetamine-related drugs can also cause irreversible congenital changes when used during pregnancy.<sup>19</sup> In pregnant women, alcohol easily crosses the placenta, often damage the fetus in case of moderate to excessive drinking. It can also cause spontaneous abortion due to its toxic actions. Another tragic consequence of high alcohol consumption during pregnancy is fetal alcohol syndrome which is characterized by facial deformities, growth deficiency, mental retardation and joint and limb abnormalities.<sup>20</sup> The most devastating consequence of heroin or opioid use during pregnancy appears to be physical dependence in the newborn, resulting in withdrawal symptoms usually immediately after birth. These symptoms are characterized by high-pitcher, crying, inconsolability, tightened muscle tone, tremors, vomiting and even seizures.<sup>21</sup> Dr Ajay Pal Sandhu, consultant psychiatrist at Fortis in Ludhiana told that they treat around 2,000 addicts. For every 100 cases, around 30 involve the husband and wife being treated together. He claimed that by opening rehabilitation centres for women, the Punjab government had itself admitted to the monstrous drug situation facing not only the male youth, but females as well.<sup>22</sup> Sunita a 27 aware the public about the effects of tobacco through advertisement. She was a cancer patient due to use of tobacco.<sup>23</sup>

### Wife-beating sans alcohol:

The picture gets somewhat horrifying when it comes

to harbouring the belief that wife-beating is justified. Gujarat is at the top among the major states with 74 per cent men of the opinion that wife-beating is justified when wife does the following: going out without letting the spouse, neglecting children, getting into arguments, refusing to have sex, burning food, being unfaithful, and misbehaving with in-laws. The corresponding numbers for Bihar and UP are 51 per cent and 38 per cent. Given that the number is highest in Gujarat, one can potentially infer that an abstinence from alcohol may not extend to abstaining from the belief that it is alright to beat one's wife for some transgressions.

Crude data on women reporting different forms of violence – physical and sexual – suggests that with 54 per cent, Bihar tops the list and Gujarat is at 25 per cent (NFHS-3). On a national level, 46 per cent women report having experienced violence when they report that their partners consume alcohol, the number is only 25 per cent for those who report otherwise. In multivariate regressions using individual-level data, after controlling for many confounding variables, which makes it more likely to facilitate apple-to-apple comparisons for all Indian states taken together, alcohol consumption by men is associated with women reporting 17 per cent higher probability of experiencing violence. When the analyses were restricted just to Gujarat, the probability went upto 26 per cent for Bihar it was 15 per cent and for UP 17 per cent. So our analyses do support that the alcohol consumption is associated with women having heightened probability of experiencing physical and sexual violence. However, Gujarat, a State with the longest period of prohibition in place, has not only failed to make alcohol inaccessible, it looks like those who drink also beat their wives with higher probability than all-India average. Therefore, these estimates force us to make a pause and question the rationale of policy makers in India attempting to ban substance like alcohol despite good intention, because we know that the implementation will be weak.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> D.C.Jayasuriya,R.K.Nayak,*et.al.(eds.)*,*Global Drugs law118*(Har-Anand Publication,New Delhi,1997).

<sup>18</sup> P.K. Jaiswar, Zambian Woman died after excess drug intake, *The Tribune* ,July5, 2015

<sup>19</sup> Glen R.Hanson, Peter J.Venturelli, *et.al Drug and society* 39(jones& Bartlett Learning,America,11<sup>th</sup> edn.2012).

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*at200.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*at 266.

<sup>22</sup> Available at:<http://www.indiatimes.com>(last visited on july 29,2017).

<sup>23</sup> Mukesh Kejriwal, Sadda Ke liye so gaye tobacco ke *Khilaf* jagane wali, *Danik Jagran*, Apr.2.2015.

<sup>24</sup> Sanjeev Kumar,Nishith Parkash,"Bihar's Alcohol Ban", *1EPW13*(2016).

### Step toward rehab “Hermitage”:

The Hermitage is basically a family rehab home that offers family structured programme. According to Dr. Bhatia without family support, addicts cannot kick the habit. Women drug addicts at The Hermitage are brought either by their family member or victim has to one’s parents to take them to a de-addiction centre because they cannot accept the fact that their girl, or wife is into drugs.<sup>25</sup> Most disturbingly to Dr. Bhatia, many of them are multiple drug users. At hermitage, he spoke to me about one of his current patients, a 26-year-old woman, the daughter of a wealthy businessman, also a former drug user, from Hoshiarpur. She checked in seven months pregnant. She had been hooked for a long time, graduating to a deadly combo of heroin, alcohol and Tramadol tablets (which works in the brain to change how the body feels and responds to pain) to which she had added opium as well in the last two years. Her family brought her in only when they realized that her behaviour might endanger the baby.

“She was abusing multiple drugs. She gets violent when she feels the pull and goes on to punch her stomach. At that point of time, she is not in a position to understand that she is killing her own baby. Her family got her admitted here as they were determined not to lose the baby. She will be here till she delivers the child,” Namrata, a senior counselor, explains to me.<sup>26</sup> 7 In India, physical violence by family members was reported by 43 per cent of a sample of 179 women with a male family member currently using drugs and verbal aggression was reported by 50 per cent.<sup>27and28</sup>

### Suggestion:

Regulate the opium by the, first attempt was made to regulate the drugs in India by enacting Opium Act, 1857. After this Opium Act, 1878 came into force. The thrust of the Act of 1857 was mainly for the regulation of opium cultivations. The opium Act 1878 was passed in contemplation of the possible abuse of opium and therefore can be treated as landmark in the chain of drug laws. After these Act governments pass the Dangerous Drug Act, 1930. After Independence they passed the Narcotic

Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and amendment 1988, 2011, 2014. NDPS Act yet not achieves its result because there have some loop pools.

– The easy availability of the drugs, promotes drug abuse. The reduction in supply is essential to control the increasing tide of drug abuse. If the drugs are not available to the youth who are tempted to them, they can at least remain away from the drug menace.

– The authorities should be provided adequate powers to search for and seize the proceed of crime. The authorities should be provided adequate powers to search for and seize the proceed of crime.

– The authorities should be provided with ample powers to enable them to make effective search and seizure operation, whenever they have reasonable suspicion.

– The police investigation in the drug offences should be conducted in a very professional manner so as to leave no scope for any doubt. As the drug traffickers take that maximum possible benefit of the loop holes, if any in the investigation.

– The law relating to the confiscation of the property should be made more stringent and the offender or anyone else on his behalf should not be allowed to reap the benefit of income of the drug trade.

– There is a tremendous need to establish anti-drug police force in each and every state with their units in each district and other vital places like bus terminals, railway station and airport and border areas.

– In view of the international character of the drug trafficking tight border controls should be regularly monitored and mutual co-operation as envisaged under the Harare scheme for mutual assistance is required to be followed in its letter and spirit.

– The drug offenders deserve very severe penalties.

– The law should be amended from time to time to meet changing dimension of the drug offences.

– Every possible step should be taken to ensure the speedy justice.

– The drug addicts should be treated as patients and very efforts should be made to rehabilitate them.

– The drug reduction programmes should be

<sup>25</sup> *Supra* note 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Avialable at* : <http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation> (last visited July 15,2017)

<sup>27</sup> *Avialable at* : <https://www.unodc.org/> (last visited July 2,2017)

<sup>28</sup> P. Murthy, *Women and Drug Abuse: The Problem in India* (India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Regional Office for South Asia, 2002).

launched and where such programmes have already been launched should be intensified and community should be involved in such programmes.

– The mass media has equally a very vital role to play and can be used to promote the educational package concerning awareness programme highlighting the evils of drug abuse.

– There should be a close coordination between all the agencies dealing with the problem of drug abuse. The co-ordination of such agencies should be at local, national, regional and international levels.<sup>29</sup>

**Conclusion:**

Females are the homemaker if the homemaker

move in the wrong side then the whole social fabric will destroy. India has asked the global community to toughen its collection fight against the growing nexus of organized drug trafficking and terrorist network by disrupting their financial flows, as these evils threaten peace security and stability across regions. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 provides deterrent punishments for drug offences .But it seems unfruitful in the present context.<sup>30</sup> In the light of the above discussion, it is to be admitted that drug abuse has no age, class and gender or community bias. The time has shown that it is difficult to tackle the problem in its entirety, unless all the segments of the society come together and fight the drug cancer at all levels individually and collectively.



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<sup>29</sup> Dr.Kamaljeet Singh and Nutan Kanwar,A Peep into meance of Drug Abuse and Legal Provisions,50CMLJ 74(2014).

<sup>30</sup> Block drug-terror funding-India-*The Tribune*,Apr. 21 , 2016.