

# Adaptability of Substance Abuse and Non- Substance Abuse Indian College Students.

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** When a person confronts stress, it starts with the stressful events which involve the perception and then response to threatening and challenging situations e.g. interpersonal conflict, loss of a relationship, the death of a close family member etc. leading to experiences which can be challenging and activate stress responses and adaptive processes. Adaptability is important in understanding the increasing role of maladaptive behaviors such as substance abuse & addiction.

**Methodology:** It is an ex-post facto study of 300 youth who suffer from substance abuse (100 males & 50 females) and those who do not suffer from substance abuse (100 males & 50 females) college students in the age group of 18-24 years. ANOVA and Duncan multiple range test were used to analyze the result of the present study. To test the adaptability of youth MAP-A was applied.

**Result:** The mean scores on adaptability was found to be significantly higher among those youth who do not suffer from substance abuse ( $M=3.43$ ;  $F=3.58$ ), as compared to those who suffer from substance abuse ( $M=1.77$ ;  $F=2.24$ ;  $F=147.254$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Considering the gender analysis, the scores on adaptability were significantly higher among females as compared to males ( $F=6.289$ ,  $p<.05$ ). However, the interaction effect of substance abuse and gender was not significant ( $F=1.675$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Further, the post hoc comparison of adaptability, using Duncan LSD method revealed highest mean difference between male youth who suffer from substance abuse (scoring lowest) and female youth who do not suffer from substance abuse (scoring highest). This shows that adaptability is an important personality dimension associated with substance abuse.

**Conclusion:** Substance abuse is a complex problem and its prevalence is increasing day by day, especially among college youth. Today in the world of cut-throat competition there are many stressors and daily hassles which one has to fight. The person who adapts his stressful environment in a positive way is able to cope with multiple stressors. On the other hand, poor adaptability towards the environment and surrounding may take an individual to the path of maladaptive behaviours such as substance abuse as a mode of temporary relief from stress.

**Keywords:** Adaptability, Gender, Substance Abuse, Youth.

## Introduction

Young adulthood is a significant developmental period involving important role changes in multiple realms, including education, work, and interpersonal relationships (Arnett, 2000). They are a huge reservoir of energy which needs to be tapped and harnessed intelligently for the development of society and country (Henningfield, Michaelides & Sussman, 2000). Alcohol addiction among youth has taken the shape of the epidemic in states like Punjab, Haryana and establishing its jaws in Rajasthan and other states as well in India. Such a scenario exist worldwide (Bhowmick & Radhakrishnan, 2014). Drinking behaviour has been an important way to symbolize, and regulate gender roles, by making it a symbol of masculinity which promotes alcohol consumption among male population as compared to female, however, this practice is at a steep rise among young females also (Rathore, Joshi, Pareek, 2017; Sardinias-Wyssling, 1980). This may indicate a paradigm shift in values in the modern times. When a person confronts stress, it starts with the stressful events which involve the perception and then response to threatening and challenging situations e.g. interpersonal conflict, loss of a relationship, the death of a close family member etc. leading to experiences which can be challenging and activate stress responses and adaptive processes (Levine, 2005). Adaptability is important in understanding the increasing role of maladaptive behaviors such as substance abuse & addiction (Meaney, Brake & Gratton, 2002; Kain, 1999).

## Objective:

- To study the effect of adaptability of youth who suffers substance abuse and those who do not suffer from substance abuse.

### Hypothesis of the study

- Youth who suffer from substance abuse do not differ significantly in their scores of adaptability as compared to the control group of those who do not suffer from substance abuse.

### Material and method

**Study design:** The present study is a quasi-experimental research using an ex- post – facto investigation of a cross-section of a sample of college students from different cities of Rajasthan who suffered from substance abuse and a comparable control group of students who did not suffer from substance abuse. The study was conducted over a short period of three months from (August to October 2017).

**Setting of the present study:** Students from different colleges & universities from Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Ganganagar and Ajmer (registered as regular students in some educational institutions of different streams) comprised the sample of this study. The number of students contacted from each city was varied, depending on the information of availability of college students who suffered from substance abuse and were willing to participate in this study. This is not an intervention based research and no clinical trials on samples were conducted.

**Sample:** A total number of 300 college youth were selected through the screening process from same colleges & universities all in the age range of 18-24 years, including 150 students (100males & 50 females) who suffered from substance abuse and an equal number of 150 students (100 males & 50 females) who did not suffer from substance abuse to serve as the comparison group. Due to the stigma and guilt element and fear of disclosure of substance abuse behaviour, the word of mouth, referral method and snow ball technique was used to identify those college youth who suffer from substance abuse. It was non- probability (nonrandom) purposive method of sample selection. However, after contacting the youth through the above mentioned techniques, a screening test CRAFTT for adolescent substance abuse was administered on them and those, who qualified in this test were included in the study and were given other tests.

### Inclusion criteria

- Registered students in different universities & college students of different cities of Rajasthan.
- Pursuing graduation and higher education in different streams as regular bonafied students.
- Students who were suffering from substance abuse but are not hardcore substance addict taking assistance in deaddiction.
- Those students who could qualify the screening test of substance abuse.

### Exclusion criteria

- Part-time and distance learning students would not be included.
- Those who were seeking psychiatric or psychological assistance for substance addiction.
- Those who could not qualify to be included in the study on the basis of the screening test.

### Statistical tool used

Statistical techniques used were Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Post hoc Duncan multiple range test using LSD method were computed with the help of SPSS software IBM-20.

### Test to be used:

**Screening tool-** CRAFTT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Family or Friends, Trouble)- It consists of 9 items screening tool of potential involvement with alcohol and other drugs during the past 12 months. Scoring and Interpretation: Part A: If “yes” to any questions in Part A, and “no” to Part B of the screening test are to be assigned one score each. Norms: Score 0-1 No problems reported, 2+ Potential of a significant problem. This test is available as an open access from the authentic website <http://www.coloradohealthpartnerships.com/provider/care/CRAFTT.pdf>. It has been used in several studies (Dhalla, Zumbo & Poole, 2011; Knight et al., 1999).

**Personality- Multi -Dimensional Assessment of Personality Series (MAP Form Adult):** This test is constructed by “Sanjay Vohra” (2011). It measures 20 primary dimensions of personality. One of the dimension of this MAP form is adaptability it has 147 questions. This test is appropriate for the age group of 18 years and above and takes about 45 minutes to complete. The split-half reliability was reported to be adaptability (.72). The Factorial Validity Coefficients in adaptability is (.83).

## Result

**Table 1.1 Mean, SD, F ratio, Duncan multiple range (LSD method) and Level of Significance of Adaptability of youth who suffer from substance abuse and those who do not suffer from substance abuse.**

Youth who suffer from substance abuse & do not suffer from substance abuse		Mean	Standard Deviation	F	"p" value
Substance Abuse	Male	1.77	.694	147.254	.00***
	Female	2.24	.916		
	Total	1.93	.803		
Non Substance Abuse	Male	3.43	1.350		
	Female	3.58	.810		
	Total	3.48	1.197		
Gender Analysis	Male	2.60	1.356	6.289	.013*
	Female	2.91	1.093		
	Total	2.70	1.281		
Interaction Substance Abuse & Gender				1.675	.197
Substance Abuse Male Substance Abuse Female		-.470			.008**
Non Substance Abuse Male Non Substance Abuse Female		-.150			.392
Substance Abuse Male Non- Substance Abuse Male		-1.660			.00***
Substance Abuse Female Non Substance Abuse Female		-1.340			.00***
Substance Abuse Male Non- Substance Abuse Female		-1.810			.00***
Substance Abuse Female Non- Substance Abuse Male		-1.190			.00***
Significant at=.05 level*; .01 level**; beyond .01level*** N=300 (Male=100 substance abuse; 100 non-substance abuse ;Female=50 substance abuse;50 non-substance abuse					

The mean scores on adaptability (personality dimension) was found to be significantly higher among those youth who do not suffer from substance abuse (M= 3.43; F=3.58), as compared to those who suffer from substance abuse (M=1.77; F=2.24; F= 147.254,  $p<.01$ ). Considering the **gender analysis**, the scores on adaptability were significantly higher among females as compared to males (F= 6.289,  $p<.05$ ). However, the **interaction effect** of substance abuse and gender was not significant (F= 1.675,  $p>.05$ ). Further, the post hoc comparison of adaptability, using Duncan LSD method revealed highest mean difference between male youth who suffer from substance abuse (scoring lowest) and female youth who do not suffer from substance abuse (scoring highest). This shows that adaptability is an important personality dimension associated with substance abuse.

## Discussion

Adaptability is important in understanding the increasing role of maladaptive behaviors such as substance abuse & addiction (Meaney, Brake & Gratton, 2002; Kain, 1999). One of the studies found that youth in families characterized by low cohesion and low adaptability were more likely to have problems with addictions than other non-substance youth (Vedhara, 1998). Those individuals who score low on adaptability do not have a harmonious relationship with their family (attachment) and are unable to obtain satisfaction for most of their needs and they also fail to meet the demands of their physical and social surroundings. Out of unfulfilled desires and failures, a person reverts to substance abuse or addiction as a temporary relief for him/her self (Meaney, Brake & Gratton, 2002). On the other hand, a person scoring high on adaptability readily accepts the challenges, meet environmental demands, settles down for conditions for work or learning with the elimination of unnecessary maladaptive behaviors (Tafa & Baiocco, 2009). To the role expectations and life experience in the social environment patterned by the influence of traditional Indian culture and the conditions of contemporary reservation in life, for example, it is pertinent that the adaptive pattern for the males differs markedly from that of the females (Young, 1941). Women are trained

to change readily and easily, by marriage and by the adaptation of the behaviors, among social systems because right from birth, they are taught to do so (Young, 1941). Another explanation lies in the relationship between traditional and contemporary role expectations, values, and their psychological corollaries. Historically speaking, Indian culture was male-oriented, with most public activities such as hunting, warfare, ceremony, and ritual, centering around the male. On the other hand, women's roles, almost by default, were loosely defined and flexible (Bennett & Linton, 1941). During the acculturative process, women continued to adapt and become more flexible than men (Cline, 1933). It seems that male youth revert to substance abuse due to lack of adaptation and female youth indulge in such behaviour as an expression of their adaptability and flexibility to create new social norms.

**Conclusion:** Substance abuse is a complex problem and its prevalence is increasing day by day, especially among college youth. Today in the world of cut-throat competition there are many stressors and daily hassles which one has to fight. The person who adapts his stressful environment in a positive way is able to cope with multiple stressors. On the other hand, poor adaptability towards the environment and surrounding may take an individual to the path of maladaptive behaviours such as substance abuse as a mode of temporary relief from stress.

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