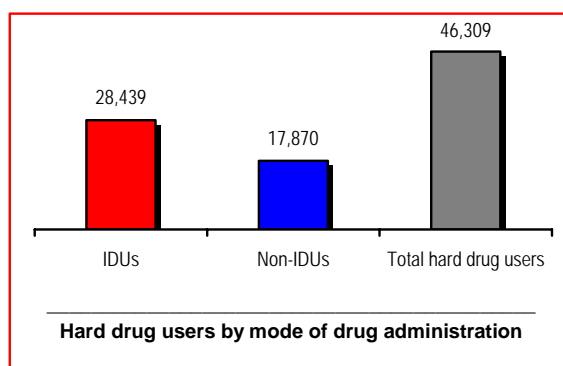


Hard Drug Users in Nepal

Some Statistical Facts: 2063



Government of Nepal
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Introduction

The practice of consuming intoxicants by human beings is prevalent among almost all communities of the world. In Nepal, consumption of some intoxicants such as marijuana (*ganja*), *bhang*, alcohol was in practice since a long time. During that time, consumption of these substances was limited to certain sections of the population mainly among holy persons (*Jogis*) and aged persons; and few consumed these substances on certain festivals like *Shivaratri*, *Holi* for pleasure. Such substance users were very few at that time. Thus consumption of intoxicants in old days was not a big social and economic problem in Nepal.

However, since last few decades, types and mode of drugs intake have been changed. Beside marijuana, *bhang*, people started to intake opiates and chemical drugs like Heroin, Nitrazepam, Buprenorphine, etc. Also the mode of drug administration changes from smoking or ingesting to injecting which becomes one of the major causes of HIV infection in Nepal. So, drug abuse nowadays in Nepal has become a multi-dimensional problem and drug control, a challenge for the government.

To overcome this situation, Ministry of Home Affairs and different national/international organizations have been working rigorously. But the lack of reliable information on level and patterns of drug users was the bottleneck in formulating effective plans/programs. Considering these facts and upon the request of the Ministry of Home Affairs,

the Central Bureau of Statistics conducted a survey on hard drug users in Nepal in the FY 2063/64.

Methodology

Indirect method of estimation (Multiplier Method) was used to estimate the number of hard drug users. Household survey technique was not used because of the two major reasons: it demands very large sample size due to the low prevalence rate and respondents will not willing to respond because of the sensitivity of the topic itself.

The multiplier method has two components: benchmark and multiplier. For the benchmark data, complete enumeration of all hard drug users under treatment in all rehabilitation centers operated in different parts of Nepal were carried out. For multiplier data, 1319 random representative samples of current hard drug users were interviewed in different spots where they used to intake drugs. Through this, proportion of the total hard drug users represented by the benchmark data (rehabilitation centers) is estimated.

Hard drug users defined in the survey

Person who intakes opiates and chemical substances like Cocaine, Heroin, LSD, Morphine, Buprenorphine etc. is defined as hard drug users in this survey. Similarly, those who inhale adhesive substances like dendrite and other polishing substances are also considered as hard drug users. Those who consume only marijuana and alcohol are

not considered as hard drug users. But, if a person consumes marijuana or alcohol with one of the other hard drugs as mentioned above, then he/she is considered as hard drug user.

Area coverage

The survey covered 17 municipalities from 15 districts spread over all five development regions of the country. These areas were selected as the domains of study since they are marked as drug affected areas by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Reference period of the survey

The reference period of the survey was Paush 1, 2062 to Mangsir 29, 2063.

Major findings

Total number of hard drug users. Altogether there are 46,309 current hard drug users of which 92.8% accounted to male and 7.2% accounted to female.

Area	Total	Male	Female
Kathmandu Valley	17458	15580	1878
Kaski	5112	4794	318
Jhapa	3523	3378	145
Sunsari	3186	2854	332
Rupandehi	2588	2454	133
Chitwan	2071	1880	191
Morang	1316	1267	50
Parsa	1301	1212	89
Makwanpur	481	462	19
Other areas	9274	9074	200
Total	46309	42954	3356

Age distribution of the hard drug users. The average age of the current hard drug users is 25.2 years. Most of them are of age 18 years with median age being 24 years. Youth 15-24 years comprises 53% of the total hard drug users.

Age distribution of the current hard drug users	Percent
<15 years	1.2
15-19	21.6
20-24	31.1
25-29	21.8
30-34	12.8
35-39	7.4
40 years & above	4.2

Age at first time drug intake. Nearly three fourth (73.1%) current hard drug users had experience of first time drug intake before they reach 20 years. Some of them have started to take hard drugs at the age of 8 years and on the contrast some had started at the age of 40 years. The average age at the first time drug intake is 17.7 years with median age 17 years and mode value 16 years.

Age at first time drug intake	Percent
<15 years	19.7
15-19	53.4
20-24	18.2
25-29	6.2
30-34	1.6
35-39	0.8
40 years & above	0.2

Work status. Nearly around half (49%) hard drug users are engaged in income generating work.

Work status	Percent
Own business	19.0
Service	18.9
Transport works	11.4
Study	13.0
No work	37.7

Marital status. Nearly two third drug users (65%) are never married. Those who are either divorced or separated accounted to 4%.

Marital status	Percent
Never married	65.4
Currently married	29.7
Divorced/separated	4.1
Others	0.8

Hard drug user's family structure. Although majority of the hard drug users are living in joint family and living with both parents, yet a large number of hard drug users 19,872 (43%) in total are living in families where either one or both parents are absent. Among the interviewed hard drug users, 7% reported that there are other members in their families who are also hard drug users.

Family structure <i>Family Type</i>	Percent
Nucleus	20.5
Joint	79.5
<i>Living with</i>	
Both parents	57.1
Alone/Friends	17.8
Mother only	13.3
Other relatives	8.3
Father only/father with step mother	3.5
<i>Other members of the family who are also hard drug users</i>	
Yes	7.0
No	93.0

Educational status. Majority of the hard drug users have level of education below SLC. Among those who have formal education, 70% accounted up to secondary level of education only.

Educational status	Percent
Illiterate	4.7
Informal education	3.0
Primary (1-5) th grade	21.2
Secondary (6-10) th grade	48.9
SLC	15.1
Certificate level	6.5
Bachelors & above	0.7

Students who are the users of hard drugs. Significant number of students are also found as hard drug users. This is accounted to 6,671 students (14.4%) in total.

Currently attending any school/campus	Percent
Yes	14.4
No	85.6

Hard drug users by type. Around three fourth hard drug users are poly user i.e. who uses more than one type of drugs.

Hard drug users by type	Percent
Single user	24.1
Poly user	75.9

Types of drug ever used. Multiple drugs are being used by the hard drug users. Among those, cannabis and chemical drugs are the most commonly used drugs (86~87%) followed by the brown sugar (61%).

Drugs used by types	Percent*
Cannabis	86.9
Chemical drugs like Heroin, Nitrazepam, Buprenorphine, etc.	86.0
Brown sugar	60.5
White sugar	14.3
Opium	7.1
Inhalation of adhesive and other polishing substances	2.6

* Percentages are based on multiple responses.

Sources of drug. More than half (57%) of the hard drug users are getting drugs through their own hard drug user friends. Medical stores, mobile drug sellers and Indian border sides are other substantial places where hard drugs are supplied.

Supply sources	Percent*
Through drug user friends	56.6
Medical stores	21.3
Mobile drug sellers	18.6
Indian border sides	13.0
Paint shops	0.2
Others	16.5

* Percentages are based on multiple responses.

Reasons for drug intake. Peer pressure is the major cause of drug intake reported by the hard drug users. Majority of the respondents gave more than one response for reasons behind drugs intake.

Reasons	Percent*
Peer pressure	82.6
Curiosity	28.1
Family problem	7.0
Fun	1.6
Others	3.3

* Percentages are based on multiple responses.

Injecting drug users (IDUs). Large number of hard drug users are IDUs. This accounted to 28,439 hard drug users (61.4%) in total. Furthermore, among the IDUs, 29% share used needles with their friends.

Mode of drug administration	Percent
Injection	61.3
Oral	38.6

Sharing of used needles among IDUs	Percent
Share	29.0
Not share	71.0

Number of years drug intake. Total number of years that have been spending by the current hard drug users in taking drugs ranges from less than one year to 31 years. The average number of years that has been spending by the current hard drug users in taking drug is 6.8 year. The median year of drug intake is 6 years and the mode is 2 years.

Number of years drug intake	Percent
Upto 1 year	6.5
2-3	23.4
4-5	19.9
6-7	15.5
8-9	10.2
10-11	8.6
12-13	5.2
14-15	3.0
Above 15 years	7.7

Frequency of drug intake. Practice of drug intakes per day ranges from 1 to 9 times. However, majority of them (67%) are taking drugs up to two times a day. The average number of times drug intake per day is 2.3 with 2 times per day as the median and mean value.

Number of times drug intake per day	Percent
One	23.9
Two	42.8
Three	21.3
Four	7.3
Five & more	4.8

Amount spent for a single dose. The amount spent by the drug users for a single dose of a hard drug goes up to NRs.750. However, such cases are very few. Majority of them are spending NRs.150 for a single dose. The amounts spent for a single dose of hard drugs are symmetrically distributed with average value being NRs.150.

Amount spent for a single dose of hard drugs (NRs.)	Percent
Up to 50	17.3
51-100	26.8
101-150	20.6
151-200	15.5
201-250	8.4
More than 205	11.3

Status of the rehabilitation centers visits. Around one fifth (21%) hard drug users had ever visited the rehabilitation centers for seeking treatment. Only 5.4% of the current hard drug users had visited the rehabilitation center in the last one year reference period.

Visit to rehabilitation centers	Percent
<i>Ever visited</i>	
Yes	21.1
No	78.9
<i>Currently visited (in last 12 months)</i>	
Yes	5.4
No	94.6

Supports seeking from the Government. To enhance the life of the hard drug users and to quit the drug taking habits, majority of the current hard drug users demand for getting free treatment centers and employment opportunity from the Government.

Supports seeking from the Government	Percent*
Free treatment centers	40.0
Employment opportunity	36.8
Positive attitude of the society	13.8
Not to allow drugs in the country	3.3
Skilled training opportunity	2.7

* Percentages are based on multiple responses.