



E-ISSN: 2789-1623
P-ISSN: 2789-1631
IJRP 2022; 2(1): 23-25
Received: 16-11-2021
Accepted: 19-12-2021

Uppalapati Yogendra
Post Graduate, Department of
Psychiatry, Mamata Medical
College, Khammam,
Telangana, India

Dr. Ramana Gattavali
Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychiatry,
Mamata Medical College,
Khammam, Telangana, India

Chandra Nikitha Chowdary
Intern, Mamata Medical
College, Khammam,
Telangana, India

Koratala Anoop
Intern, Mamata Medical
College, Khammam,
Telangana, India

Correspondence
Dr. Ramana Gattavali
Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychiatry,
Mamata Medical College,
Khammam, Telangana, India

A study on students and marijuana, attitudes and beliefs: A comparative study

Uppalapati Yogendra, Dr. Ramana Gattavali, Chandra Nikitha Chowdary and Koratala Anoop

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/27891623.2022.v2.i1a.23>

Abstract

Introduction: Cannabis, also known as Marijuana has a long history of human use. The common terms for preparation include Charas (resin) Ganja (flower) and Bhang (seeds and leaves). Knowledge and awareness regarding psychoactive substances or drugs, which include licit and illicit drugs, other than which are medically indicated and its effects are still less, easy access to drugs at certain places, and other factors contribute to substance addiction. The National Survey on Extent, Pattern and Trends of Drug Use in India also found Cannabis to be the most common illicit substance of use in the country.

Aims and Objectives: Various studies indicating that cannabis is associated with various psychiatric disorders despite which is a controversy existing regarding the legalisation of cannabis by all the promoters and consumers of the substance. Our objective was to find out the knowledge and awareness among medical students and Engineering students towards the effects and experiences with the consumption of cannabis.

Materials and Methods: It was a cross-sectional study done among medical students and Engineering students, who are assessed using a structured and validated instrument, Marijuana Effect Expectancy Questionnaire-Brief (MEEQ-B) questionnaire.

Results: A total of 200 students were participated in this study. All the students belongs to either Engineering (or) Medical profession in Khammam. There were 75 engineering students and 125 Medical students. 90 females and 110 male students, out of 200, 134 were single and 66 were married i.e. 67% were single and 33% were married. Majority i.e. 31% of both groups strongly agree about the cognitive impairment effects of cannabis. Only 9% of both groups strongly disagreed to the statement that marijuana helps a person relax and feel less tense. 32% of both groups strongly agreed to the social and sexual facilitation effect of cannabis. Interestingly 76.9% has come from the students regarding craving and physical effects.

Conclusion: According to my study, medical students has more knowledge towards the effects of cannabis compared to engineer students. Male students of both groups have slightly more edge regarding effects of cannabis compared to female students. Married persons have less knowledge compared to single students as there may be change in their perception.

Keywords: Students, marijuana, attitudes

Introduction

Information and mindfulness with respect to psychoactive substances or drugs, which incorporate licit and illegal drugs, other than which are therapeutically demonstrated, and its impacts are still less, simple get to drugs at certain places, and other components contribute to substance habit. In Sanskrit the plant is called Vijaya and in Hindi known as Bhang. Bhang has been used in food and drink as early as 1000 BC in India [1]. The National Overview on Degree, Design, and Patterns of Medicate Utilize in India too found Cannabis to be the foremost common illicit substance of utilize within the country [2]. India is no stranger to cannabis. Cannabis was developed and utilized in India at slightest since 2000 BC and is recorded as one of the five 'essential plants' which as far as anyone knows offer various wellbeing benefits. Indians proceeded cannabis utilize well into the colonial run the show and post-independence India. In 1985, the NDPS Act made cannabis illegal for the first time in Indian history. However, that has not prevented rampant use of Cannabis. Gateway hypothesis which was developed by Kandel explained that the sequence of drug use occurring starts with legal drug and proceeds to illegal drugs [3].

New Delhi and Mumbai rank third and sixth, respectively, globally in the number of users. The first national survey conducted by National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre established that in 2018 2.83% (31 million) Indians were current cannabis-users (2000 UNODC report showed 3.2% cannabis prevalence of usage) while another study reported that 7.2 million Indians consumed cannabis annually. Understanding the perspectives of medical students would be helpful to find their perceptions, which might have an impact on their practices as clinicians.

Aim

A study on Students and Marijuana, Attitudes and Beliefs: A Comparative study

Materials and Methods

Study design and sample

It was a cross-sectional study done among medical students and Engineering students in Telangana state, who are assessed using a structured and validated instrument, Marijuana Effect Expectancy Questionnaire-Brief (MEEQ-B) questionnaire.

Confidentiality of privacy was assured to all participants, and verbal consent was taken from each participant.

Data collection tool

The tools of the study were social demographic profile and Marijuana Effect Expectancy Questionnaire-Brief (MEEQ-B)

The MEEQ-B is a 6-item index scale that purports to measure adolescents’ marijuana effect expectancy during interventions and provide a sensitive but briefer tool for use in fast-paced correctional/ clinical environments. The wording of each item on the MEEQ-B corresponds to the six original scales of the MEEQ: (a) cognitive and behavioral impairment, (b) relaxation and tension reduction, (c) social and sexual facilitation, (d) perceptual and cognitive enhancement, (e) global negative effects, and (f) craving and physical effects. A scaled score closer to 5 reflects more potential in negative experiences for marijuana on a likert scale [4].

Statistical analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis has been carried out in the present study. The Statistical software, namely SPSS 22.0 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY) and R environment ver. 3.2.2 were used for the analysis of the data and Microsoft Word and Excel have been used to generate graphs

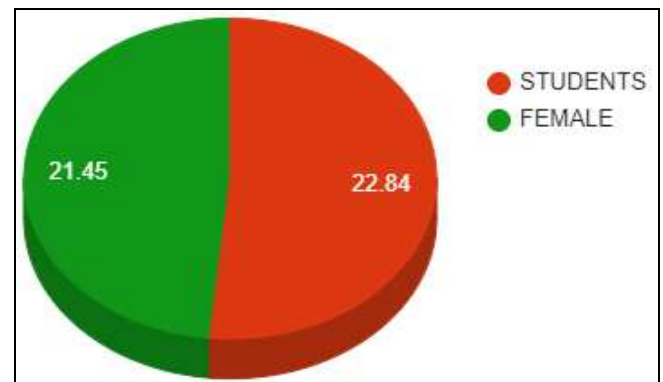
Results

A total of 200 students were participated in the study. All students belongs to either Engineer or medical profession in khammam. Out of those 200 there were 75 engineering students and 125 medical students students, 90 females and 110 male students, 134 were single and 66 were married. Both the engineering and medical medical students in our study had different attitudes and beliefs about the various adverse effects of cannabis, especially on all the six parameters of the MEEQ-B questionnaire (a) cognitive and behavioral impairment, (b) relaxation and tension reduction, (c) social and sexual facilitation, (d) perceptual and cognitive enhancement, (e) global negative effects, and (f) craving and physical effects. Majority i.e 31% of both group

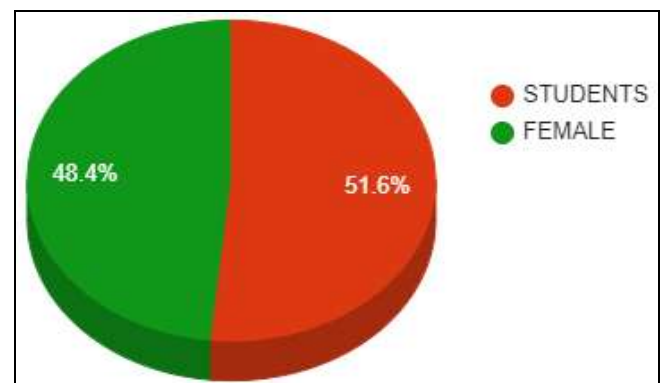
students strongly agree” about the cognitive impairment effects of cannabis. Only 9% of both the groups “strongly” disagreed to the statement that marijuana helps a person relax and feel less tense and 32% of both groups strongly agreed to the social and sexual facilitation effect of cannabis. Interestingly 76.9% has come from the students regarding craving and physical effects of cannabis.

Table 1: Salient social demographic variables of medical and engineering students

Variable	Mean±SD
Age	
All participants (n=200)	
Male (n=110)	25.91±4.98
Female (n=90)	21.45±2.12
Sex	
Male (n=110)	22.44±4.28
Female (n=90)	21.84±4.54
Educations	
Medical (n=125)	22.4±4.16
Engineering (n=75)	21.54±4.71
Marital status	
Married (n=66)	21.62±4.83
Single (n=134)	22.35±4.21



Mean MEEQ-B Responses among male and female students



Mean MEEQ-B Responses among male and female students

Discussion

There are hardly any studies done on medical students comparing with engineering students. We believe ours is the first study of this kind on this regard in the country and worldwide. This is the highlight of this study. Marijuana users experience “mild euphoria, relaxation, and perceptual alterations, including time distortion and intensification of ordinary experiences such as hunger, eating, and listening to music.” Structural differences are present in the brains of

adolescents who are chronic marijuana users when compared with nonusers. White matter, gray matter, the limbic system, and the cerebellum all showed abnormalities with cannabis use. Similar study concerning the risk perception about medical marijuana in medical students of Mexico found that the students underestimated the risk with marijuana in a study done in 2017^[5]

A cross-sectional observational study, done in 2018 in India only on 2nd-year medical students, regarding the knowledge and awareness toward substance addiction in a rural district in Valsad, Gujarat, India, reported that they had little knowledge about various drugs causing addiction and clinical features of various addictive drugs^[6]. As per NDDTC about 2.8% of Indians aged 10-75 years (31 million individuals) are current users of any cannabis product and about 0.66% (7.2 million individuals) are problem users and 0.25% (2.5 million individuals) are dependent users^[7].

Conclusion

According to my study medical students has more knowledge towards the effects of cannabis compared to the engineer students. Male students of both the groups have slightly more knowledge regarding the effects of cannabis compared to the female students. Married persons have less knowledge compared to single students as their perception may varies. Recent reports about the legalization of cannabis for medicinal purpose is promoted by the recreational users and drug addicts with huge financial interests in mind rather than real patients who are on palliative care for recovery or curative purpose. Extensive and elaborative teaching regarding substance use and its implication must be updated in the curriculum of both profession. Medical students must be frequently sensitized about harmful effects of cannabis by conducting continuing medical education symposiums in their academic curriculum.

Limitations of the Study

Internal consistency of MEEQ-B (0.42–0.60) is lower than the original version and replication with different sample sizes is recommended. Our study was conducted among medical students and engineering students who are residing in Khammam and limited study sample has been taken.

References

1. Staelens, Stefanie. The Bhang Lassi is How Hindus Drink Themselves High for Shiva. Vice.com. Accessed on April 28, 2019.
2. Ray R. editor. The Extent, Pattern, and Trends of Drug Abuse in India- National Survey. New Delhi: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2004.
3. Kandel DB. Stages and Pathways of Drug Involvement: Examining the Gateway Hypothesis, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.
4. Schafer J, Brown SA. Marijuana and cocaine effect expectancies and drug use patterns. *J Consult Clin Psychol.* 1991;59:558-65.
5. Arredondo-Mendoza JC, Alcalá-Alvarado OV, Alonso-Bracho SA, Becerril Gaitón DA, González-Santiago O. Risk perception of medicinal marijuana in medical students from northeast Mexico [version 1; peer review:

{ approved with reservations, 1 not approved}. *F1000Res* 2017;6:1802. <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.12638.1>

6. Meruelo AD, Castro N, Cota CI, Tapert SF. Cannabis and alcohol use, and the developing brain. *Behav Brain Res.* 2017;325:44-50.
7. Ambekar A, Agrawal A, Rao R, Mishra AK, Khandelwal SK, Chadda RK. On behalf of the group of investigators for the National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India. Magnitude of Substance Use in India. New Delhi: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, 2019. Available from (<http://socialjustice.nic.in/writereaddata/MagnitudeSubstanceUseIndiaReport>).