

# DRUG ABUSE AMONG EGYPTIANS.

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for M.Sc degree in ,  
Neuropsychiatry

by

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

”وَقُلْ .. رَبِّي زِدْنِي عِلْمًا.“

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**TO MY GREATEST LOVE ,--  
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## **-I- Review**

The review gives a detailed account on the different aspects of the problem of drug abuse. It will take most of the thesis and the field study will be discussed separately.

\* \* \* \*



## Introduction .....

" ... Besides 'The Pill' , we have pills to sedate us when we are nervous, excite us when we are dull, slim us when we are fat, fatten us when we are thin, wake us when we are sleepy , put us to sleep when we are awake, cure us when we are sick, and make us sick when we are well.."

'GLA77, 1974'

## INTRODUCTION.

Drug abuse is a symptom of a very complex social malaise reflecting the uncertainty, insecurity and frustration that many young people feel . It has become one of the major vehicles for expressing anger at the present form of society - especially in western countries. The tendency toward its spread is increased by a toxic environment, the social conflicts and pressures that center around today's suspicion, alienation and rejection of social and political institutions.

(FARNSWORTH,1973)

What is the most striking about the problem of drug abuse is the fact that it tends to occur in epidemics, that contagion is a basic factor and that newly involved cases are more contagious than chronic cases. Thus, the appearance of a new case of drug abuse has a community emergency aspect that calls for the assistance of experts with public health skills. Because of the contagion factor drug abuse epidemics involve - different drugs at different times. (KAPLAN & SADOCK 1983).

Although drugs in the usual sense of the term are mainly intended for medical users, they have also been used for many non-medical purposes. However in the broad sense, a drug may be defined as ..." any substance that when taken into the - living organism, may modify one or more of its functions.

( ISBELL, 1970).

While Parry, 1981, goes to define the drug as 'a substance which alter perception'. It may become heightened, diminished or changed ; and as a result , the users appericiation of reality is modified . A drug is misused when not being pharmacologically or physiologically neccessary. "

#### TERMINOLOGY: =====

The various terms used in connection with drug abuse to some extent have been confusing and modified through the years.  
(MAURER, 1973).

Drug abuse has been defined by W.H.O. Expert Committee 1965, as .." .. The consumption of a drug apart from medical need or in un-necessary quantities.."

Yet, doctors often disagree as to what constitute medical need. This is not only at varying times in history, but also at the age in different countries and even between doctors in the same country.

On the other hand , drug habituation , is defined as "a habit-forming drug is one which is or may be taken without the production of all the characteristic outlined in the definition of addiction..and which is generally considered to be determined to the individual and to society.."

An earlier W.H.O Expert Committee, 1957 had named 4 characteristic features of , and as distinguishing features between what is called addiction and habituation (terms later

replaced by the more embracing term dependence). Features of addiction were :-

1) Desire or compulsive need to continue taking the drug and to obtain it by any means.

2) A tendency to increase the dose.

3) A psychic and physical dependence on the effects of the drug.

4) A detrimental effect on the individual and society.

So it is clear that drug habituation was thought to be characterized by a desire but not a compulsion to continue taking the drug, little or no tendency to increase the dose and some degree of psychic dependence but absence of physical dependence and hence no abstinence syndrome.

While drug addiction was characterized by "craving", tolerance and psychic and physical dependence as shown by the development of psychological and physical abstinence symptoms respectively. (HOFMANN, 1980).

These old definitions have confusing meanings.

Anyhow, we can sum up, according to Parry, 1981 he defined psychological dependence as "... Inability of the individual to live a normal life without the substance. For example the heavy smoker will take a cigarette as a preliminary to every task he undertakes, however familiar, when the task is unfamiliar or creates an undue anxiety, he is likely to take

a larger quantities of the substance more frequently, when stress passes he returns to his previous dose."

Change of tolerance is usually in the direction of increase in tolerance so that the addict may take a dose which could be many times that considered to be fatal in the nonaddict. For example, the morphine addict may take a dose of 2 gm. whereas 40 to 50 mg. may be fatal to the non addict. Also, in the latter stages of alcohol addiction, there is a paradoxical decrease in tolerance.

#### Abstinence syndrome:

Is a pathological system reaction, presumably of biochemical origin which occurs when a substance is abruptly and completely withdrawn e.g. in alcohol addiction, the abstinence syndrome is delirium tremens. , for barbiturate addiction an acute confusional state usually occurs and ushered by epileptiform fits. So we can go further to define ADDICTION as a clinical syndrome characterized by psychological dependence, change in tolerance and a specific abstinence syndrome.

( PARRY, 1981).

#### Drug dependence:

Is a term was introduced by W.H.O. (1969) to overcome the confusion engendered by the previous terms addiction and habituation. It is...." ...a state , of psychic and sometimes physical resulting from interaction between a living organism and a drug, characterized by behavioral and other

responses that always include a compulsion to take the drug on a continuous or a periodic basis in order to experience its side effects and sometimes to avoid the discomfort of its absence. Tolerance may or may not be present . A person may or may not be dependent on more than one drug.."..

An interesting example of physical dependence without any psychological component is said to occur with the diuretic drug frusemide.

#### AVAILABILITY: =====

The substance may not be legally available in the addict's country of residence(e.g. heroin in Egypt) supplies can therefore be obtained only by illegal means. Most of the drugs to be considered are available only on the prescription of a physician others are freely available, and addiction or dependence may occur without any illegal act (e.g. alcohol).

#### WHY PEOPLE TRY DRUGS..??!! =====

When a group of young people is surveyed and one of the survey questions was.. "...Why did you start to use marijuana or heroin!??.." The most frequent reasons given are curiosity, boredom, and peer group pressure. Curiosity is a fairly general human trait that aids in the learning process.

(COHEN, 1977).

# WHAT MAKES AN ADDICT..?..!!

=====

What kind of people are chronic users?. One group consists of those who used to be called "addiction prone personalities" upon the assumption that only such individuals become addicts. The immature or inadequate personality rather unstable person for frustration remains well represented. Such an individual is generally anxious and tense, unhappy , and distraught. When this person discovers the relaxing effects of some sedatives, it magically dissolves the worries and dreads of the day. (WIKLER, 1953)

Another kind of person vulnerable to the euphorant effect of the abusable drugs is the one who is chronically depressed. Robbins, 1985, assessed the depressive symptoms and suicidal behavior in 64 adolescent psychiatric pts., who are involved in alcohol and drug abuse. He found that these pts. have depressed mood, negative self evaluation, insomnia, poor concentration, indeciveness, lack of reactivity of mood and psychomotor disturbances.

Some , as Cohen 1977, suggests are constitutionally sad persons, perhaps with a genetic or other biochemical basis for their affect disorder. Others, are hopeless about their condition and hopeless about finding way out. Chronic depression is a painful state for many reasons. Self-esteem hardly exists the future is grim and without a hope. It is easy to understand why anyone in such a situation would seek out and continue to use a drug that provides releif from depressive