



Socio-Economic Impact of Tobacco Addiction in Tripura

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Abstract:

The prevalence of tobacco addiction in society is rising daily. All facets of human life are impacted by this, which creates a society that is susceptible to sickness. Therefore, it is important to comprehend how tobacco addicts damage the social cohesion of the country, society, the individual, and the global community. The objective of the study is to find out the Socio-Economic Impact of Tobacco Addiction in Tripura. The study employs a cross-sectional survey method with a sample size of 100 (hundred) participants in the range of 15 and older and is based on social trends of tobacco consumption in Tripura through time. According to the researcher's convenience, face-to-face interviews have also been utilised to assess the many modes of intake used by those respondents in general, including smoking (cigars, beedis) and smokeless (Paan with tobacco or Zarda, Khaini, or gutka). The impact of tobacco addiction comprises of social, physical, emotional, financial, and professional life of a social being and creates hurdle on these.

Keywords: Addiction, Society, Socio-economic, Tobacco and Tripura,

Introduction:

The cultivation and use of the Nicotiana plant, which is used to make tobacco, dates back to the Americas in 5000 BC. However, the plant's medicinal benefits and ceremonial uses were more common among the populations than its pleasurable effects. It was later brought to Europe by early explorers in the 16th century, from which point it spread around the world as European civilization advanced. The use of tobacco in medicine was unavoidable and it was revered as a "holy herb" that could treat a variety of ailments.¹ Before the 1820s, people smoked, drank, or chewed tobacco. In the 19th century, the introduction of hand- and machine-made cigarettes led to a rise in tobacco use. People questioned the effectiveness of tobacco's medicinal properties even during the initial flurry of enthusiasm. The medical community started to question the use of tobacco as a general therapy after nicotine, a hazardous chemical, was isolated from tobacco leaves in 1828. Despite several reports of the harmful effects of tobacco use, the vast profits from the tobacco industry usually overshadowed the

¹ Dickson SA. Panacea or Precious Bane. Tobacco in 16th Century Literature. New York: New York Public Library. 1954.

complaints. The prevalence of cigarette smoking rose sharply in the 20th century, and doctors noticed a rise in lung cancer cases in the 1920s and 1930s.²

Studies examining the misuse potential of tobacco and nicotine in humans and animals have demonstrated the tobacco usage is a type of drug addiction. The everyday use of tobacco, which is characterised by a highly predictable pattern of drug intake, frequently results from tobacco experimentation. The biological levels of nicotine, a psychoactive component of tobacco smoke, are what regulate this pattern. Nicotine is a euphoriant that can be self-administered by both people and animals in scientific settings. Nicotine has such a strong hold over smokers' behaviour that lowering or suppressing their tobacco use results in a withdrawal syndrome marked by irritability, difficulty focusing, cognitive decline, and weight gain. Important non-pharmacologic determinants of tobacco addiction can also prevent successful quitting.³

The term "socio-economic impact of drug abuse" simply refers to unfavourable or detrimental alterations in the social fabric brought on by drug addiction. It also encompasses the detrimental effects of drug abuse on the economy of the individual, society, and government. It has numerous facets. Common people's drug use has a number of negative social effects, including family relationship instability, domestic violence, a life more likely to involve crime, and a diminished feeling of community with one's family and society. Additionally, social harmony and happiness within the family are lacking. On the other hand, a person's family plays a significant part in their lives.

Family members have a close link with one another, encourage one another, work through difficulties together, and have an impact on one another's actions and attitudes. Every member of the family suffers once they develop any kind of drug addiction. Within the family, the family can have a significant impact in preventing drug addiction. Furthermore, even if a family member does unluckily develop a drug addiction, recovery would be impossible without the family's support. Without the assistance of the family, doctors cannot successfully treat a drug addict. Any family member, who uses drugs, but especially parents and elders, harms the children. Weak family ties decrease the family's ability to prevent drug misuse. It has been discovered that drug usage by seniors influences youth use. Drug use by a family member starts a drug-using domino effect and makes society more drug-prone.

When a tobacco user uses it regularly and finds it difficult to stop, they are said to have a tobacco addiction. Nicotine, which is present in tobacco, is harmful. Nicotine makes people dependent. In the brain, nicotine has pleasant effects.

Even if it is just temporary in nature, an addict may be enticed to re-consume it in order to experience the same pleasant sensation. This habit is difficult to break. In actuality, it fosters dependency.

The term "tobacco" refers to a variety of tobacco products from different plants. They belong to the "Genus Nicotiana" group. There are more than 70 different varieties of tobacco in the wild. *N. tabacum* is the main crop grown for commerce. Most commonly, it is utilised in dried form, particularly in cigarettes and cigars. Many Indian variations exist, including bidi, sutta, nasa, and snuff, among others. It contains a highly addictive stimulant that causes recurrent consumption. Use of tobacco poses serious health risks to people. In addition to causing cancer, it directly harms the liver, heart, and lungs. The effects of nicotine addiction on the body, which consist of: Lung cancer; Variety of cancers; Heart and circulatory problems; Diabetics; Eye problem; Infertility

² White C. Research on smoking and lung cancer: a landmark in the history of chronic disease epidemiology. *Yale J Biol Med.* 1990; 63: 29-46.

³ Caroline Cohen, Wallace B. Pickworth, Jack E. Henningfield, Cigarette Smoking and Addiction, *Clinics in Chest Medicine*, Volume 12, Issue 4, 1991, Pages 701-710

and impotence; Complications during pregnancy; Cold, flu and other illness; Infections; Hearing loss; Chronic respiratory problem; Osteoporosis; Dental problems; and Irregular periods of women.

Other people's health is also harmed by the cigarette smoker. Passive smokers are those who live with smokers and are regularly exposed to their toxins. They are actually compelled to breathe in the poisonous smoke even though they do not smoke, and as a result, they may experience all of the aforementioned health issues. Smokers form groups of other smokers. In actuality, they compel their buddies to smoke by creating peer pressure. Over time, social smokers develop addictions. Consuming tobacco causes early death. Promoting a tobacco-free society is the sacred duty of the society.

People consume paan i.e., beetle leaf in Tripura and many other regions of India, especially in North-east India. It contains a lot of dangerous ingredients, including tobacco and beetle nuts. This is also quite damaging. Additionally, people spit out the liquid, harming cleanliness. Gutka, another tobacco product, is extremely risky.

In India, tobacco is consumed in a variety of ways. Youth in the current situation tended to smoke cigarettes first, and then use bidis. In contrast, khaini (smokeless version) and bidis (smoking form) are the items that are reported as being used the most frequently on a national level.⁴ Since it has been socially acceptable, especially in smokeless forms (paan, i.e., beetle leaf with tobacco and khaini), tobacco has been widely used in rural areas. However, it is important to note that there are regional differences in tobacco use across the nation.

Objective:

1. To find out the Socio-Economic Impact of Tobacco Addiction in Tripura

Methodology:

Based on societal patterns of tobacco consumption in Tripura throughout time, the study uses a cross-sectional survey method with a sample size of 100 (hundred) people in the age range of 15 and older. The types of smoking (cigarette, beedi) and smokeless (Paan with tobacco or Zarda, Khaini, or gutka) forms of intake used by those respondents generally have also been considered through of face-to-face interview, according to the convenience of the researcher.

Discussion, findings and conclusion:

The foundation of society is the family. The family's cohesion depends on its members. When one family member starts doing drugs, the equilibrium of the entire family is thrown off. One drug user causes suffering for the entire family. It has an impact on the family's financial situation as well as the children's lifestyle, behaviour, and personality development. The money spent on tobacco consumption may be used more wisely. Spending on tobacco consumption among the impoverished prevents others from getting food. The nation also pays a high price in terms of its workforce and from an economic standpoint because of poor performance and workplace accidents that are frequently brought on by tobacco intakers.

It has been found through this study supported by more than 80% of the respondents that even parents of tobacco consumers endure great suffering. Parents are unable to confront their tobacco consuming child's strange behaviour. The younger generations generally believe that tobacco consumption is a socially acceptable

⁴ GATS-2. Global Adult Tobacco Survey-2 Factsheet India 2016-17

https://www.who.int/tobacco/surveillance/survey/gats/GATS_India_2016-17_FactSheet.pdf Published 2017.

behaviour when they see the older generations consuming different kinds of tobacco. In the end, the family members accept this while feeling angry, afraid, ashamed, and embarrassed. A family member who abuses drugs frequently engages in violent, aggressive, reckless, and selfish behaviour that is socially undesirable. Numerous addicts participate in gambling. Children are negatively affected by tobacco consumers in the household. Children fear them because of this.

When kids get older, many of them use drugs. The life of a youngster is also ruined by the unfavourable attention of society. It's imperative to break the cycle of drug addiction among parent and child. Loss of identity, despair, and low self-esteem are problems for both drug users and their offspring. Only a strong family can produce a strong society.

The tobacco consumption by parents has an impact on a child's development. There is no one else for the kids to turn to in single-parent households, so this is very problematic. Children's needs are neglected as a result of parents drifting away from their fundamental obligations to them. Many kids who have parents who abuse drugs are unable to enjoy their childhood rights. Due to financial hardship and absentee parenting, they are deprived of help for their nutritional needs, health care, and education. Their emotional and mental growth is impacted by this. Their future lives will be ruined by poverty and difficulties. There is a growing link between addiction and a higher risk of abusing children. According to research, children whose parents suffer from a substance use problem are more likely to develop a substance use disorder and an addiction in the future.

Family is built on trust. When a substance abuser enters a family, trust is broken, which makes the family dysfunctional. This leads to strained relationships between spouses and siblings, as well as broken and disorganised marriages and parent-child relationships.

When there are tobacco addicts in a family, the level of tension might occasionally rise dramatically. Focus is lost, and the family is unable to carry out its essential and regular duties for both the particular inmates and the larger community.

Families face difficulties and financial instability as a result of substance usage. Addiction depletes the family's financial resources. Additionally, the person's substance abuse issue will probably result in them losing their job due to subpar attendance or performance. This puts the families in a difficult financial situation. The fundamental requirements of the family members are not met. They frequently fall into debt traps.

A healthy family and community are strongly correlated with good health. Well-being is riches. It is properly said that a person's body is his closest friend. We need a body, preferably a healthy body. As a result, every one of us has to care for their health and mind. Wealth and wisdom come from having a healthy body and mind. Tobacco addicts experience both physical and emotional health problems. It is unacceptable for drug users to act in such a way or eat in such a way. Their immune level or capacity to fend off illnesses is low. Any drug abuse that is continued damages brain tissue and causes other physical issues. Drugs' physical effects vary depending on their chemical properties. All medications have unintended effects. In actuality, Tobacco addiction leads to ill health and this kind of health degradation is depended on amount of Tobacco intake.

The research shows that the health conditions of tobacco consumers who are respondents get affected at different points of time. The effects of the medications really weakened the biological system. It is clear that the medicine affects the body's systems and health directly. The tobacco improves one's mood, boosts one's self-esteem, and relieves one of worry, tension, and anxieties. After some time, a stage occurs when tobacco users have to take drug frequently to feel good and they become more dependent on it. It has an immediate impact on the body's central nervous system and impairs brain function in terms of cognition.

It has been found through this study that tobacco addiction has its impact on Education also. A section respondent shares their experience that when it comes to attending school, college and university classes, tobacco users are sporadic. They become less capable of learning and concentrating. Their performance on tests is negatively impacted by tobacco addiction.

An important issue that has an impact on young people's education is tobacco addiction. Many educators were aware that student drug and alcohol addiction posed serious obstacles to achieving educational goals. The truth is that smoking cannot be outlawed in schools or colleges but the authority can only able to raise awareness, instruct pupils on the preventative procedure, and attempt to monitor student behaviour. Tobacco addiction among students or the young mass must be prevented; one must consider the roles of instructors, parents, and mentors. The next generation needs to be educated and inspired to live a healthy lifestyle and build a society rid of tobacco addicts. Tobacco addicts' health issues first have an impact on the person.

The tobacco addiction has its impact on economy also which has been revealed through the study. Nearly all the respondents (94 percent) agreed that the cost of consuming tobacco is considerable on a monthly basis is an issue of economy or finance. The majority of the time, the user is unable to cover the cost and must handle the money requested from parents or other family members. And occasionally it puts a strain on the individual and the family.

Moreover, the tobacco addiction has its impact on public also, though smoking in public places are prohibited by the government, but it is still in practice. Even taking paan, one cannot spit anywhere in public places, rules and regulation are there to combat such practices. But in reality, it is still an ongoing process and tobacco consumers hardly care about it. Public health and safety are directly affected by tobacco use. It impedes the peaceful advancement and efficient operation of society. If it is smoking, tobacco addiction is also becoming a significant problem for public safety. Smoking in public places, such as offices, hospitals, and industries, causes the general population to inadvertently become smokers. Smokers can start fires even at home, which increases the risk of accidents. It is a challenge for everyone to limit tobacco use in order to maintain public safety and the smooth operation of society.

From the study it has also been found that physical and emotional health issues are common for smokers. The amount and frequency of tobacco use by the abuser determines the effect of tobacco on the body. The body and brain of a tobacco addict are also affected if they regularly take the drug. The precise physical effects of tobacco usage can differ from person to person. There are two categories of physical effects: 1) Physical effects over time 2) Instantaneous physical impact. Tobacco addicts may face alterations in the coordination of bodily parts, alterations in blood pressure and heart rate, Heart attack, liver disease, and pancreatitis. A person's look may change, they may feel tired or overexcited, and they may be tobacco dependent at a certain moment, degradation of Immune system or dysfunction in its nature, can lead to cancers and can face Digestive issue.

Tobacco has a variety of effects on the body. From one to person, it differs. Smoking's short- and long-term consequences have a direct impact on the body's systems and erode mental fortitude. When the body becomes dependent on any type of tobacco, nicotine takes control of the mind, the will, and the body. Smoking addiction quickly has an impact on one's mental and physical well-being. It is crucial to understand that using tobacco is never safe. It has an impact on the central nervous system of the body, which regulates things like thought, emotion, and behaviour. Therefore, after some time, tobacco addicts may eventually lose the mental and physical stamina to combat any disease. Those respondents are aware about the pros and cons of tobacco addiction hardly find it feasible to cease themselves from such vicious circle of addiction.

The family depends on the money, which comes in the form of a salary, wage, or other form of compensation, to meet everyone's needs. Tobacco purchases will account for a sizable amount of revenue. A smoker loses a significant amount of their income and spends more on tobacco might ultimately lose his ability to earn a living.

The study reveals that the kind of addiction have its effect on civic status, where sometimes loses it due to their ill addiction habit, supported by more than three-fourth of the respondents (76%). Every person lives a respectable and dignified life on the platform of society. He discovers who he is and lives a confident life. Some people in society don't respect people who use tobacco. Those who take tobacco are never welcome. When a tobacco addict finds themselves in a location where no one uses tobacco, they occasionally find themselves alone and leading a detached life. At this point, they feel uncomfortable. He thus loses his standing in society. Addiction to tobacco has its impact on a person's whole social, physical, emotional, financial, and professional well-being.

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