



DRUG USE AMONG UNIVERSITY FEMALE STUDENTS WORLDWIDE: TRENDS, CONSEQUENCES, AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN PREVENTION

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 24 th July 2026 Accepted: 20 th August 2026	This article examines drug addiction among higher education women students globally and it does not only provide trends (increase and decrease), but also depicts on social, health and educational effects and the role of education in prevention. Consuming drugs undergraduate female students suffer from stress, depression, health issues. Besides, it influences their behavior, study and their addiction becomes more severe, and they gradually lose their interest in living, studying, and doing activities or hobbies. As a result, they become socially isolated. In some countries, drug use rates are relatively high in some countries, while in others it is low. Once women start using drugs, they can develop extremely strong dependence on them because drugs-alcohol, heroin, cocaine are very addictive. It may seem ordinary to show it on the outside, but inside bringing a healthy younger generation into the world depends on female individuals. Therefore, the role education plays pivotal role in preventing and governments are implementing a wide range of ways in education systems to solve this obstacle.

Keywords:

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, drug addiction is a growing concern among females at university internationally. Around the world, substance abuse and drug dependence is expanding serious problems in some countries, affecting not only men, but also women. At the same time, the National Anti-Drug Agency (2020) also reported the number of cases of drug and substance abuse among youth aged 19-39 years, which is the category most involved in drug and substance abuse activities which is 83,401 people or 65.0 percent with a decrease of 13.8 percent compared to 2019. Moreover, drug consumption has been causing dangerous issues (health problems, depression, lack of attending lessons in higher education, losing interest in living and studying, especially a decline in the birth rate) in each year worldwide. As a consequence, it leads to demographic shifts in societies, there may be little or no progress, and some countries' development could slow down significantly. At all levels- international, national and local - the issue of women and substance use is increasingly being recognized, as is the important role of women (Bergendahl & Hsu, 1995). In addition, after the graduation they will work in different work places as a accountant, customer service representative, translator, especially teacher and they will shape or

influence both younger and older people during their jobs. Women make up one third of drug users globally and account for one fifth of the global estimated number of PWID (World Drug Report 2018). Therefore, preventing of this problem is one of the most important goal globally.

Global trends (increase and decrease)

Drug addiction is relatively high in some countries, whereas it remains low in others. These years, an increasing number of women are consuming alcohol, e-cigarettes, heroin, cocaine, morphine. In one African country, tobacco, alcohol, tranquilizers, cannabis and stimulants are now increasingly used by women, and more recently cocaine and heroin are also available (Bergendahl & Hsu, 1995). In Germany, it was reported that 18.2% of females had tried drugs at least once in their lifetime, while 6.2% were current users. According to a study in Hungary, nearly one in every two students (male and female) had tried substance and drugs at least once. In Slovakia, the study of using illegal drugs – marijuana – among 33.4% of undergraduate women students has been reported. However, drug consumption among female students has not surged around the world, and some countries still have relatively low rates of substance use. Indonesia, Singapore are countries where drug use



rates may differ from those European countries. That is, in these countries, there strict laws, which contribute to lower consumption rates. It stands at 0.004% in Singapore and 0.5% in Indonesia.

Health, Social, and Educational consequences

Drugs can affect seriously not only women's present life, but also their future – family, health, interests, and job.

1. Health consequences

Toxins in the female body can raise sensitivity to psychoactive substances:

Declining health – drugs can disrupt the hormonal system in women. It leads to disruption of the menstrual cycle, pregnancy loss, and having a child with birth defects.

It may weaken the immune system and contribute to getting infections. Alcohol is a depressant, if women consume a lot, they become nervous.

2. Social consequences

Drinking or drugs are commonly used in social situations; some students use substances to relax more easily in social situations or as a result of social pressure (American Addiction Centers [AAC], 2024).

Poor academic performance- substance abuse reduces concentration, decision-making, and brain activity. Consequently, these occasions expand the risk of being expelled from university or failing exams.

Family conflicts – people who struggling with drug addiction may try to hide their condition and they socially isolated from their family member or relationships.

3. Educational consequences

Drug consumption has linked to decrease in academic performance .

A loss of motivation and giving up personal aims – drugs disrupt dopamine and their interest in studying and being professional teacher, doctor, engineer and everything gradually fade away.

Frequent class absenteeism and lack of responsibility- the effect of substance and the time spent seeking them may contribute to female students absenteeism.

The role of Education in Prevention

In preventing the place of education is crucial, which is an important factor in helping young women students overcome substance use issues and enhance their quality of life and study. Education is thing that changes effectively people's mind, behavior, appearance, horizon. Therefore, governments should take into account solving these problems and implement prevention interventions and policies in education because female students are experiencing difficulties with self-control, dropping out of universities,

aggressiveness, delinquency, risky behaviors, isolation from their family, close friends, and vulnerability factors. That is why, if governments introduce stricter laws in higher education, these obstacles could be reduced as Singapore, Malesia, and Indonesia. In addition, at universities, psychological training sessions should organized and conducted to raise their awareness. Besides, Campus nurses should provide students with important information about health risks and effects associated with drug use. Furthermore, volunteer students should work with each female student and prevent them to go into these ways (the drug and substance abuse).

CONCLUSION

Drug addiction has been becoming serious issue among young female students in the last decades and the substance abuse rates is rising than past. It may be concern not only academic performance, but also family relationships, life, and career. The place of education in immeasurable to prevent them. In the modern world, being indifferent to these situations leads to a decrease in future generations and the quality of work, study. That is to say, education does not only provide educating, but also realizing the environment and themselves.

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