



PSYCHOLOGY AND CAUSES OF DRUG ADDICTION IN ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: This article examines adolescent personality and its importance as a process in personal development, and discusses the causes of drug addiction in adolescents. It also explores the role of the family and its influence on adolescent personality development during this period, as well as the relationship between parents and adolescents. The psychological causes of unlawful acts committed by adolescents with deviant behavior are assessed.

Key words: family, teenager, deviant behavior, education, social problem, character, emotion, stimulus, environment, crime, morality, nervousness, cowardice, maladjustment, behavioral deviation, emotion, mood, insomnia, stress, euphoria.

Today, the problem of drug addiction is becoming increasingly acute not only among adults but also among adolescents. Adolescents, who are in a crucial stage of physical and mental development, are at particular risk. This is because their inner world and the process of their formation as individuals are highly sensitive to external influences. The National Security Concept of the Republic of Uzbekistan notes that in recent years, the consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances has been increasing globally, posing a serious threat to the physical and mental health of the nation. As a result of chronic use of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, a person may lose their cognitive abilities[1].

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances" [2] defines drug addiction (narkomaniya) as a disease associated with mental and physical dependence on narcotic drugs. Even in a state of drug withdrawal (abstinence), addicts may commit profit-driven crimes (to obtain funds to purchase drugs) and crimes against persons, as this condition affects the human psyche and gives rise to motives of aggression, hostility, and revenge towards others [3]. On the other hand, the link between drug addiction and crime is also evident in how the corresponding demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances creates a supply. To satisfy this demand, a mechanism for the illicit trafficking of these substances is created and operates; in other words, a specific criminal activity is carried out. A branch of the shadow economy - the drug trade - develops and flourishes. Its representatives have a vested interest in increasing the number of addicts.

Adolescence covers the ages of 12-18, a period during which mental and psychological processes occur at a rapid pace. Adolescents want to feel grown-up and attempt to make independent decisions. However, due to a lack of experience, they are prone to making mistakes. An attempt to appear mature or brave by "trying a drug just once" is often observed. Teenagers are very susceptible to the opinions of their friends. The words of "authoritative" peers in their group can have a stronger impact on them than the advice of adults. Consequently, there are instances where they are encouraged to try illegal substances through recommendations, coercion, or taunts like "you're a coward." Due to hormonal changes, moods

shift frequently, and intolerance to stress increases. Some adolescents may turn to psychoactive substances to escape problems, calm themselves, or retreat into a world of fantasy.

Psychological dependence can be satisfied not only by a specific drug but sometimes also by the effects of its other types. In drug addiction, the syndrome of psychological dependence begins quite early and lasts for a long time. Even after discontinuing drug use, the patient cannot overcome psychological dependence for a considerable period. Therefore, they constantly require the help of a psychotherapist. Identifying the syndrome of psychological dependence in its early stages demands a high level of vigilance and skill from a medical psychologist.

This is because the patient uses various means to hide their drug use from others and may not even realize that they have developed a psychological dependence. The development of tolerance to the consumed substance is characteristic of all types of drug addiction. For this reason, the patient is compelled to continually increase the drug's dosage. Otherwise, euphoria does not occur, or withdrawal syndrome develops.

Chronic drug use leads to a state of intoxication. In this condition, the patient's personality undergoes pathological changes, and acute psychoses are frequently observed. This is because narcotic drugs are distinguished from other pharmacological agents by their rapid effect on the psyche. Narcotic drugs cause severe morphofunctional disorders in all organs and tissues. In particular, these substances have a devastating effect on the brain and liver. [4]

The main psychological causes of drug addiction in adolescents are as follows:

1. Curiosity, that is, the thought, "What will happen if I try it just once?"
2. Inability to cope with stress and avoidance of problems, academic difficulties, family issues, and an overwhelming sense of loneliness.
3. Low self-esteem, feelings of being unwanted, and an inability to make friends.
4. Underestimation of risks, an insufficient understanding of the consequences of drug addiction, and low legal awareness.

Social causes manifest in adolescents in the following ways:

1. A bad environment and a group of delinquent friends
2. Lack of supervision within the family
3. Conflict between parents and the absence of healthy communication
4. The main reasons include the creation of conditions in a particular area where drugs are easily accessible.

The influence of information and media negatively affects the consciousness of adolescents through the romanticization of drugs in movies, music, and by bloggers, as well as through the spread of psychoactive substances via clandestine online sales channels and counterfeit "energy" or "vape" products. The role of parents in the family is extremely important. Family factors also have a powerful influence on adolescent drug addiction. Such factors include a parent's predisposition to drug addiction or alcoholism, a lack of psychological support for the child within the family, parental indifference to the child's affairs, and instances of physical or psychological abuse against the adolescent in the family.

Parents' lack of interest in their children's lives and activities, leaving them unsupervised, also leads to illicit behavior in adolescents. Therefore, it is advisable for parents to constantly monitor their children's activities, especially during adolescence, and what they do in their free time. Another factor related to family upbringing that can cause deviant behavior in minors is excessive strictness, an authoritarian approach, and a disregard for the



children's opinions and views. Today's youth are intellectually mature, strive for independent thought, and have their own perspectives. Taking young people into account, listening to their thoughts and opinions, and providing advice where needed yields good results. [5]

The early signs of a predisposition to drug addiction in adolescents manifest as follows:

1. A sharp change in mood is observed.
2. A tendency to withdraw from family or friends becomes noticeable.
3. Instances of demanding excessive amounts of money or losing it without explanation arise.
4. Disruptions in sleep patterns are observed.
5. A loss of general interests becomes apparent.
6. An increase in the number of new, suspicious friends.

While not all of these may be signs of drug addiction, they require serious attention from parents and relatives. The problem of drug addiction in adolescents is not just a personal issue, but also a socio-psychological one. The joint efforts of the family, school, and society are crucial in preventing this problem. Most importantly, one must find a way to an adolescent's heart, listen to them, and not be indifferent to their needs. It is most important to trust the students. It is also important to pay attention to the tasks they are capable of, to encourage them after completion, and to allow them to express their own ideas on how to do the work even better. Young people should not be allowed to engage in meaningless leisure or wander the streets aimlessly. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between schools, the mahalla, the public, and families, and to take measures to involve children in extracurricular institutions as much as possible.

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