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## Hashish Use As Health Risk Behaviour Among Students In District Bajaur Of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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### ABSTRACT

Hashish use among high school students is one of the serious social problems in the study locale as well as all over in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It has destroyed and destroying individuals everywhere in the world. The roots of Hashish use among high school students in the area are pedalling day by day. This study basically aims at discovering the causes which lead to Hashish use and its effects on their lives among high school students of the study locale. This study is qualitative in nature and snowball sampling technique was used. The study is conducted in the public schools of two tehsils (Khar and Utman Khel) in the tribal district Bajaur. The tool of data collection was interview guide. In addition observation method also used to substantiate the interview data. The collected data was analysed through thematic data analysis technique. The findings of the study show that the basic cause of Hashish use among high school students is peer pressure, community environment favourable towards Hashish use, Curiosity, negligence of parents, the stress in the domestic environment, Failure in Love, lack of monitoring in schools, and excessive availability of Hashish in the area. Parents and family have the power to shape the attitude and behaviour of their children's. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the parents to take care of their children around the clock, and the district administration may take some steps to control the availability of Hashish in the district.

**Keywords:** Hashish, High school students, Hashish use.

### INTRODUCTION

Hashish has been used for many centuries in different regions of the world. Drug, including Hashish, use is on the rise among teenagers. Hashish use in particularly

increasing among schools', colleges' and universities' students (Asghar, 2016). Despite its widespread prevalence of Hashish use among teenagers in general and students in particular, the issue has not received due consideration. This study, thus, attempts to examine the issue of Hashish use among high school students in one of the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan.

Pakistan has a huge bulk (64 percent) youth population. 43 percent of them are under the age of 18 years. One of the major issues related to youth in Pakistan is the growing trend of Hashish use among young people in general and school students in particular (Peacock et al., 2018). "Hashish, or Hash, is a drug made from the resin (Flowering tops) of the cannabis sativa plant and is consumed by smoking a small piece" (Merz, 2018; Nisar et al., 2015; Joseph, 2011). Drug use is one of the largest social issue in South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular. Hashish are the most widely consumed drug in Pakistan with around four million users (Merz, 2018). Khan (2019) stated that a large number of people use Hashish daily without any fear and called it "Malangi Nasha" in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and their tribal districts. They use Hashish anywhere in the urban trade canter's, hostels, educational institutions, posh townships, in buses and cars, in hujras, homes and offices.

There are thousands of people addicted to Hashish in Peshawar alone. Hundreds and thousands of addicts are there in other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and rest of the country, they include a number of young boys and girls, mostly students in their teens or early 20s (Khan, 2019). There is minimal awareness of Hashish use and its effects in Pakistan, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; due in large part to the lack of prevention programs and initiatives in schools, Hashish use among high school students has been strengthened (Khattak et al., 2012). Hashish use is at the top, owing to school students smoking in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It has become increasingly common that it is no longer really viewed is a drug by the people. About 90 percent of the Hashish users are between the ages of 14 and 17 (Toorkhel, 2016). Nowadays, even students and educated youth are engaged in this lethal and damaging activity. Hashish is also smoked inside academic institutions (Nisar et al., 2015).

According to research studies (Selpher et al., 2016; Soomro et al., 2014; Dal et al., 2009) There are a number of factors that are considered risk factors which raise the propensity of the students to use drugs. These factors include peer pressure, easy availability of drugs, parental pressure, household matters, lose school authorities and control, and mass media exposure. In this regard, this study is an attempt to know the factors that contribute to prevailing the use of Hashish among the school students of District Bajaur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Hashish contains Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) which is connected with the sentiment of unwinding, rapture, and happiness (Hall, 2006). At the point when Hashish is smoked the THC gets delivered into the blood and swims rapidly upstream, arriving at the mind surprisingly fast (Resignato, 2010). THC then imitates cannabinoid synthetic compounds that happen normally in the body appends itself to the cannabinoid receptors. These zones are found in the cerebral cortex, cerebellum, and basal ganglia and are associated

with the cycles of reasoning, memory, engine developments, delight, coordination, and fixation (Isaac, 2016).

### **Statement of the problem**

A number of studies have been conducted on the causes and consequences of Hashish issue in different socio-cultural contexts (Merz, 2018; Nisar et al., 2015; Zaman et al., 2015; Benjamin et al., 2006; Malik & Sarfaraz, 2011). Most of these studies are either done in urban areas of Pakistan with a focus on drug use among people. Some of these have focused on universities' students' (Khattak et al., 2012; Usman et al., 2017). The use of Hashish among schools' students have not received due academic consideration. Similarly, the use of drugs are so widely diversified that requires to be studies from the varying cultural context of the phenomena. Keeping in view the increasing use of Hashish by high school students in tribal areas, this study attempts examine the increasing use of Hashish among school students in district Bajaur of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study will be carried out with the following objectives.

### **Objective of the study**

The main objective of the study was to unpack the reasons of Hashish use and its effects on health among high school students in District Bajaur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The word "Hashish" is originated from Arabic root word "hasis" which means hemp or dried herb. "Hashish" or "Hash" is a drug made from the resin of the flowering tops of the female cannabis plant which is later pressed into brown or black blocks (Merz, 2018; WHO, 2016; Nisar et al., 2015; Joseph, 2011; UNODC, 2012). Hall & Degenhardt (2009) stated that Hashish is typically smoked in a hand-rolled cigarette or "joint", which may include tobacco to assist burning. A water funnel or "bong" is also a popular means of smoking Hashish. It is generally accepted that the female plant is significantly more powerful than the male plant when smoked. The resinous exudates from the blooming tops of the female plant contain a large portion of the ingredients called Hashish or "Chars". The dried leaves and blooming shoots are called Bhang. The resinous mass from the little leaves and sections of inflorescences called Ganga (Nisar et al., 2015).

Statistics of United Nations Organization on drugs and crime (UNODC, 2019) indicates that 14.6 million Europeans youth aged 15–34 years, used Hashish in the most recent year, with 8.8 million of these aged 14–22 years are school students (consisting 60.2 % of this age group). According to (EMCDDA, 2015). In the central European countries cannabis are grown domestically and Hashish are easily available locally around the schools, colleges and universities. Most of these students start using Hashish in the age of 13-14 because of the locally grown cannabis.

United States of America (USA) also suffered from the issue of Hashish use among school students. (WHO, 2016) pointed out that in the USA, the level of school students aged 12 years or more who were currently Hashish users is 8.4% rose each year between 2002 and 2013. Resignato (2010) states that in high income countries like USA, Hashish

use for the most part starts in the mid-to-late teens. Heaviest use happens in the mid-twenties and decays all through the late twenties into the mid-thirties. About 10% of individuals who use Hashish become every day users and another 20–30% use it week by week.

To summarize the above discussion it is concluded that the first world nations were the absolute first victim of drugs. Review of empirical studies uncovered that in spite of better expectations of life in the developed world, the Hashish use made its way into their schools, universities and colleges. The current scholarship shows that Hashish use among school students is on the top in the developed nations, different analysts and researchers around the globe doing work to explore the causes and consequences of the issue. Studies conducted around the Europe and United States strikingly uncover that the issue isn't explicit to one area yet and conveys a worldwide presence.

Morocco students has no exception regarding Hashish use, in 2013 the Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (MEDSPAD) indicated that, among 15–17-year-old secondary school students, lifetime use of Hashish was 9.5% for young boys and 2.1% for young girls, and past-month use was 5.8% for boys and 0.6% for girls. Hashish use increases with age and was reliably higher among boys than females. The mean period of beginning in the 2013 MEDSPAD test was 14.9 years (El Omari and Toufiq, 2015).

The National Survey of Youth Risk Behavior shows that 12.8% of South African students in grades 8–10 (13–15-year old) have use Hashish, and 9.2% did as such in the previous month (Lester, 2016). In a survey of students in grades 8–10 in the Western Cape in South Africa found that lifetime use of Hashish is 25.7%. The South African Stress and Health Study (SASH) reviewed more than 4000 students aged 18 years and up in a family study and discovered 8.4% lifetime use of Hashish. In all studies summed up by Lester (2016), boys were bound more likely to use Hashish than females, and urban tenants more likely to use Hashish than their non-urban partners.

Spindler, Woll, & Schober (2018), found that Delhi is one of the cheapest places in the world to buy Hashish. Currently, India legalizes the cultivation of cannabis for commercial desires. According to the United Nations office on drugs and Crimes report (UNODC, 2018), Hashish is the most common drug use by school students in the main cities of India. They didn't consider Hashish is a drug. Most of the Hashish users are between the ages of 14-24 which is the alarming factor for the people of India, especially the teenagers.

Afghanistan is one of the largest producer of Hashish in the world. According to the Afghanistan National Drug Use Survey (2015), 41% of the Afghan rural population use Hashish as a recreation. In some provinces, the ratio has been higher and more than 86% of the population use Hashish due to the cultivation of opium. The survey states that 21% of youth aged between 12-24 uses Hashish on daily basis. It is concluded that almost half of the Afghanistan population uses Hashish without any restriction in the country. Youth in Pakistan are the most addicted by Hashish, the number of these addicts is expanding at the pace of 40,000 consistently making Pakistan one of the most Hashish addicted nations on earth while the most upsetting the truth is that larger piece of

Hashish addicts is younger than 24 years. Hashish are the most widely consumed drug in Pakistan with around four million users (Merz, 2018). The developing pattern of Hashish use in education institutions has represented an authentic risk to the lives and wellbeing of students as the school and college students use Hashish uninhibitedly and straightforwardly. Asghar (2016) indicated that one out of each 10 school/college students is a drug addict someone who is addicted and very nearly 50 percent students of various educational institutions especially first-class schools/universities in Islamabad/Lahore are dependent on Hashish, and dominant part of these students have a place with exclusive class, having no issue of reasonableness.

According to Khan (2019), school students in Peshawar and its adjacent tribal districts use Hashish on daily basis, they use Hashish without any fear everywhere in the area. Despite the fact that Hashish has stayed extremely mainstream among drug users across Peshawar making it second biggest city for devouring Hashish on the planet. There are a huge number of individuals, including countless students, who have dependent on Hashish and use it normally. The Hashish, produced using the ascended of cannabis, is moderately modest and is effectively accessible in the urban, rural and rustic zones. Many among the law-implementers don't consider puffing hashish-filled cigarettes as a genuine crime and avoid action against the users. A huge number of addicts of hashish go for ice, heroin and different medications in the following stage when they need something more serious. Not many beginning smoking ice or heroin straightforwardly (Toorkhel, 2016; Khattak et al., 2012).

It is concluded that Pakistan and especially Tribal Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is geographically vulnerable to drug trafficking due to its border with Afghanistan, the world's biggest maker of illegal opium. In 2016-17, the report included, Pakistan held onto a sum of 2,860 metric huge amounts of various kinds of opiates drugs in which Hashish are on the top of the table (Hussain, Aziz, Hassan, Aziz, & Raisham, 2020).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study was carried out with the help of qualitative research methodology. The reason of using qualitative methodology is based on the premise that the issue of grade inflation need to be studied in detail from insider perspective: from the view point of high school students. The study was carried out in the public schools of two tehsils (Khar, and Utman Khel) in district Bajaur of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Exploring Hashish use among school-level students is linked to persistent rise in Hashish use among the area's students and steadily increasing dropout from schools. High School students were the unit of analysis. The data was collected from public school students in the aforementioned tehsils. I used the snowball sampling technique for the selection of sample size. The snowball sampling was continued till I reach the point of data saturation.

The interview guide was used as a tool for data collection. In addition to the interview guide, observations were used to substantiate the interviewed data. In-depth interviews were conducted with participants of the study. It was attempted best during the interviews to accomplish detailed and comprehensive responses. The data was

analyzed in line with the thematic analysis technique. Interviews were transcribed. Relevant ideas and meaningful words were categorized. Similar ideas and categories were coded and clubbed together to the meaningful theme. Finally, themes were developed from the similar ideas and categories.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data was analyzed, interpreted and presented through four main themes. The themes are actually the main findings of the study.

### **Peer Pressure and use of Hashish among school students**

Peer pressure is one of the key factor responsible for increasing Hashish use among school students. Social behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, and social norms are learned through relationship with others individuals and this relationship are stronger in youth formative age. The study found that friends are the primary source for the first time to offer such a recreational drugs. One of the study participant asserted that:

“I started using Hashish because of my friends, I don’t know about Hashish before but once when we all three friends are gone for a picnic, they introduced me to Hashish and tell that Hashish is enhancing the feeling of belonging and brings the fun. This is how I started using Hashish”.

Majority of the study respondents upheld the view that peers have a strong influence on the decisions they make. Mothibi (2014) also observed that teens have a relatively strong influence on one another behaviors, they are more likely to use Hashish in groups rather than alone. My research finding further the argument of Mothibi (2014). An extract from some of my study's participant's responses has been given here to further highlight the issue.

“Friends have a big role to play in Starting Hashish use because when friends use Hashish they invite you to smoke them and the invitation of friends cannot be thwarted. The fun of using Hashish with friends is something that is not found in anything else. I also sat down with a friend and use Hashish for the first time and now it is not easy to get rid of it”.

The study affirms the argument of Mothibi (2014) that school students are more likely to use Hashish in a group rather than use alone. Two of the study participants added:

“I use Hashish mostly with friends. There is more fun of using Hashish in a group with friends. Friends entertain me when I smoke Hashish and gossip. Smoking Hashish with friends are most memorable moments in life. I always want to use Hashish with friends because friends give me the real fun you want from Hashish”.

The participants who were found sceptic to use Hashish under the influence of peer pressure proposed that school students should be careful about friend’s selection in school and off the school. From the above responses it is concluded that peer pressure in school and off the school is the most contributing factor to accelerate using Hashish among school students.

### **Easy availability of Hashish and its use among school students**

When the accessibility of Hashish is easy in an area, the chances of adolescents trying out and consequently being addicted to Hashish are increased. In order to obtain better income, Hashish syndicates are becoming more creative in tempting school students to be involved in Hashish use and consequently be addicted. Few of the study respondents claim that the main reason for the increase in Hashish addiction in schools is the easy availability of Hashish in the area. One of the participants expressed his view that:

“The Hashish sellers are everywhere in the area. Hashish is easily available to everyone even if one wants Hashish in school they can get it easily because some students who use Hashish also sell them among other students and get profit”.

Another respondent stating about the availability of Hashish argued:

“Hashish is easily available in the main markets and also available in shops in the villages. First time when you go to buy they give you a bit of free Hashish for the purpose to come again. There have no one to ask from you that for whom you buy? Or anything else, just go to the specific shop give the money and receive the Hashish”.

Most of the participants anyhow repudiated the above proponent's perspectives. They argued that Hashish is available in the area but not so easily. It is clear from the above discussion and respondent views that Hashish is easily available in the area and anyone can get it easily, even some students are involved with Hashish sellers and sell Hashish to school students in the schools. This is how the issue needs serious measures from the authorities and need an academic debate.

### **Failure in love and the use of Hashish**

A unanimous finding of the study was the failure in love in this age. Love is an unpredictable circumstance, a blend of feelings, practices, and convictions related to solid sentiments of attraction, defence, warmth, and regard for someone else. In most parts of the world, most teenagers do suicide because of their failure in love. The study's participants argued that love is one of the prime factor of Hashish use among school students. One of the respondent stated that:

“I started using Hashish because of the failure in love. I knew what real pain felt like. When you fail in love everything in the world seen guilty and bad. I have no choice except to use Hashish, This is like a pain killer, this is the thing that keeps me away from such thinking and helps me to concentrate on my routine life”.

The majority of the study respondents explore that we use Hashish to forget those who cheat them in love. An extract from their responses are:

“I started using Hashish when I was in love with someone, because every time she were in my thoughts, so I decide to try Hashish for forgetting her. When I use Hashish, they bring me into a world where I am the king and I am the judge. I don't worry about anything, I don't worry about anyone,

and I do whatever I want in my thoughts. I feel very happy when I smoke Hashish. It's the only thing that makes me happy and makes me feel like I'm the luckiest person in the world”.

Some of the study's respondents assume that Hashish brings the user to a utopian world where everything is imaginary and perfect but the reality is anything else and the user cheat their self but there is no way for them except Hashish use. It is clear from the above statements that when Hashish is smoked the user experience extreme type of happiness, distortion of time they may not realize how much time has passed. Failure in love is one of the basic factor promoting Hashish use among high school students in the area.

### **Community environment, Curiosity and use of Hashish among school students**

The data reveals that Community environment plays a vital role in shaping teenagers behaviour, character and attitude. Students at high school age see other people, their general outlook, and their moral values. They feel curious about the specific behaviour of someone they see's in their community settings and want to do the same act to know the feelings. Mondimore and Kelly (2015) also observed that numerous youngsters start copying different things which they seem in their community settings, they feel curious and want to know what it feels like. One of the study participant argued that:

“Some people in our community use Hashish openly. I almost see him every day using Hashish, I became curious and wanted to try it once, as to what is the characteristic of Hashish that these people smoke it every day and then laugh and dancing. First time when I used Hashish, I feel weird, everything looked beautiful and my heart was pounding. Now I'm used to it and use it every day, even in school”.

Another respondent added:

“I often go to the village stream to play cricket. I see a lot of young people smoking Hashish. After using Hashish, they have fun and raging each other. One day I decided to try Hashish once that why does a guy do this after smoking it? So I bought Hashish from the market and smoke it. From then I use Hashish every day”.

The present study findings also affirms the arguments of Mondimore and Kelly (2015) that community environment make adolescent curious about specific behaviours and they want to try the same thing to know the feelings. A study participant added:

“I was always wondered why people in our neighbourhood smoke Hashish, what is so special about it that people feel happy after using it. One day I also went and used hashish and found out it is too amazing thing”.

The above held discussion clearly indicates that community environment plays a vital role in the adolescent's decision making process. Furthermore my study's findings and Mondimore and Kelly (2015) argument clarify that adolescents at high school age attract to everything happening in their community and become curious about such activities Like Hashish use.



## **CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that Hashish use among high school students in the tribal district Bajaur have different causes but the root causes are peer pressure, easy availability of Hashish in the area, Failure in love, curiosity and community environment. Friends influence are the prime factor for the increasing Hashish use among high school students in the area. Hashish brings its user to experience extreme type of happiness, distortion of time and they may not realize that how much time has passed, and that's why most of the school students use Hashish in a group to bring pleasure and fun. The findings of my study completely resonate with previous studies findings that Hashish use among high school students are pedalling day by day because of the easy availability of Hashish in the area. The study unpacked that failure in love in this age made the high school students emotional and as a result, they start using Hashish. Hashish user lives in the utopian world, in simple words lives in an imaginary world. The study findings reveal that families have a powerful influence on shaping the behaviour, attitudes, and values of their children. Similarly, the study reinforces the fact that instability in the family environment brings an adolescent on the way towards Hashish use.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of the study findings and conclusion the study recommends that Teachers, particularly in the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, should be provided with sufficient opportunities for training. They should be informed about how to properly keep students away from drugs and how to control it. The following measures need to be taken.

1. The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) laws may be followed with its true sense in the tribal areas and should be more active.
2. The district administration may take measures to prevent the availability of Hashish in the area.
3. The school administration may take necessary measures to supervise the children well, and point out those addict students.

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