

The background of the journal cover features a top-down view of a desk. On the left, a pair of black leather brogue shoes is partially visible. In the center, an open notebook with lined pages and a silver pen lies on a light-colored wooden surface. To the right, a black leather bag with a zipper and a black leather watch with a silver face are also visible. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the journal's title and ISSN information.

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The aim of *White Black Legal – The Law Journal* is to promote excellence in legal research and to provide a credible academic forum for the analysis, discussion, and advancement of contemporary legal issues. The journal encourages original, analytical, and well-researched contributions that add substantive value to legal scholarship.

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG MINORS: A STUDY OF CRIMINAL LIABILITY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

Juvenile drug abuse is a problem in India. It is affecting the health of the public the being of children and the system of justice. More and more children and teenagers are using drugs. Getting into trouble with the law because of drugs. We need to understand why this is happening and what the law says about it.

This study looks at how many juveniles abusing substances and why they are doing it. We are talking about drug abuse and the factors that contribute to it such as friends, family problems being poor stress at school and being around people who sell drugs.

The law has rules to control drugs, like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act from 1985. This law says what will happen to people who have, use, sell or give drugs to others. When it comes to juveniles we have to think about if the punishment is fair. The Juvenile Justice Act is different it tries to help children who're in trouble with the law rather than just punishing them. This law says we should take care of children and help them become part of society again.

Sometimes these two laws do not agree, especially when juveniles are involved in drug crimes or are used by adults to sell drugs. This study looks at how these laws work and what problems come up. We also look at if the laws working to stop juvenile drug abuse and protect children. We found that there are problems, such as people not knowing about the laws not having enough places to help children who are addicted and the law not being applied consistently. We need to get law enforcement, schools, families and communities involved in stopping drug abuse.

We think that we need a system that's fair and helps children. We need to enforce the laws about drugs. We also need to make sure children are treated fairly and get the help they need. The law about drugs is important. We also need to think about what is best for the child.

At the end of this study we suggest some changes to the law and policies. We think we need rules for dealing with juveniles who are involved in drugs more help for children who are

addicted better coordination between agencies and more education about the problem. To stop drug abuse in India we need to have good laws but we also need to think about how to prevent it treat it and help children who are affected. We need to help these children get back, into society. Juvenile drug abuse is a problem that we need to solve. We need to do it in a way that helps the children.

Introduction to Juvenile Drug Abuse in India

1:1 INTRODUCTION OF STUDY:

Drug abuse in people under the age of 18 is a big problem everywhere in the world and in India. Young people often start taking drugs because of their friends. They do not know how bad drugs are or they are in a bad environment. This is not a problem for the young people's health and future but it also affects crime, mental health and the law.

The law in India wants to protect people from the terrible things that can happen when they take drugs. There are laws like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 that are meant to help people.

With these laws there are still problems because people are not doing enough to enforce them and many young people do not know about the dangers of drugs and they cannot get the help they need. This paper is going to look at how India laws are working to stop young people from taking drugs and to make sure that young people who get in trouble with the law get fair treatment.

Many young people are taking drugs these days because of changes in society and the economy. Young people are easily influenced by their friends and they are not very stable emotionally.

In years many more young people are taking drugs. The National Crime Records Bureau says that more and more young people are getting in trouble with the law for taking drugs.

Young people are easily influenced by their friends they are emotionally unstable. They are affected by what is happening in society. Drug abuse among juveniles is a problem. Drug abuse, among juveniles is something that we need to pay attention to.

1:2 Background of juvenile drug abuse:

Juvenile drug abuse is when people under the age of 18 use drugs or misuse legal ones. This is a problem that affects people all over the world especially in countries like India where many people are moving to cities and lifestyles are changing.

People used to think that only adults had problems with drugs. Now we see that a lot of young

people are trying drugs like cannabis and prescription medications. Sometimes their friends pressure them into doing it. They have problems at home. They are stressed about school. The media also plays a role in getting people to try drugs.

When it comes to the law juvenile drug abuse is a problem that involves both protecting children and dealing with crime. In India there are laws like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act that say what happens when someone breaks the law about drugs. There is also the Juvenile Justice Act that tries to help young people who get in trouble with drugs instead of just punishing them. This is because we know that young people can change and become better.

The World Health Organization says that when young people start using drugs it can cause them a lot of harm that can last their lives. They might get. Have mental health problems or have trouble learning and thinking. When you are a teenager you are still. Developing and you are more likely to do things that are not good for you like using drugs.

Nowadays it is easier for young people to get drugs because of the internet and other digital platforms. This has made the problem of drug abuse even worse especially in cities. But it is not a problem, in cities. It can happen anywhere.

1:3 Statement of the Problem:

We have a problem. Even though we have laws like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 more and more young people are getting involved in drug-related crimes. This is an issue for both the law and our society. It makes us wonder if our current laws are really working to help children.

The law is meant to stop people from doing drug crimes by giving them punishments. When it comes to young people it is hard to decide between punishing them and protecting them. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 says that we should help children change their behaviour but sometimes young people who do drug crimes are treated like adults. This is a concern. First we need to think about if our laws too harsh and do not consider that children are vulnerable and still developing. Second we need to ask if we are focusing enough on helping them get better and become a part of society again of just punishing them. Third we need to consider if young people who use or sell drugs are being treated unfairly as criminals when really they are victims of circumstances peer pressure and exploitation by drug gangs.

These problems keep happening because there is a gap between what the laws intends to do and how it is actually applied. So we need to take a look at our policies to see if they really balance enforcing the law with protecting and helping children. The drug problem and the

juveniles involved in drug offences, like the drug crimes need to be addressed in a way that considers the juveniles and the drug offences.

Government and other institutions to make laws and programs to help young people.

1:4 Meaning & Definition:

What is Juvenile Drug Abuse?

Juvenile drug abuse is when kids under 18 use take or get dependent on drugs or misuse legal ones. This includes trying out drugs using them sometimes or getting hooked on stuff like cannabis, inhalants, prescription medicines and fake drugs. It's a social and legal problem because it hurts kids and teens bodies, minds and feelings.

Defining Juvenile Drug Abuse

There isn't one definition but here's what experts and laws say:

Academic View: Juvenile drug abuse is when minors use drugs that affect their minds in a - medical way or illegally. This use cause's harm to their body, mind or social life. Might lead to addiction.

Indian Law: The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 doesn't directly mention "drug abuse." However it says that making, having or consuming drugs is a crime. If someone, under 18 does these things the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 helps them get back on track of punishing them.

World Health Organizations Take: The World Health Organization says substance abuse is when someone uses drugs that harm them or make them dependent. For minors this is extra dangerous because their brains are still growing.

1:5 Scope of the Study:

This study is about drug abuse in India. It looks at how big the problem's what causes it. The study also checks what the law says about drug abuse. It looks at the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

The study sees how the courts have interpreted the laws about drug abuse. It also checks what kind of help is given to juveniles who're addicted to drugs. This help includes rehabilitation. Getting them back into society. However this study only uses information that's already available. It does not include surveys or fieldwork.

This study is about India. It checks how the law deals with juveniles who are involved in drug-related crimes. It tries to find a balance between punishing them and helping them to reform.

1:6 Objectives of the Study:

This study is going to look at the problem of kids using drugs from a social point of view. The main goals of this study are as follows:

1. Does the law in India do a job of dealing with young people who commit drug crimes especially when it comes to the NDPS Act of 1985 and the Juvenile Justice Act of 2015?
2. Do the current programs that are supposed to help young people recover from drug addiction and become a part of society again really work?
3. What are some of the problems that come up when we try to put these laws into action like people not knowing about them the laws not being enforced well and the bad way people look at kids who are affected by drug addiction.
4. Whether is the way India handles this issue to what other countries do and what changes need to be made so that we can have a system that is better, for kids and tries to prevent these problems from happening in the first place.

1:7 Significance of the Study:

This study is important because many young people in India are getting addicted to drugs. This is a problem for their health and their future. We need to understand this problem so we can make laws to prevent and fix it.

The study checks if the laws we have now, like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 are working well. It sees if these laws are helping juveniles to reform and become citizens.

The study is also important because it shows that we need to address the root causes of drug abuse. These causes include being poor having friends not having an education and having a broken family. The study says that we need to help these people by giving them counselling and rehabilitation. This will help them to not get addicted to drugs

So this study helps us to understand drug abuse better. It gives us ideas that can help the government and other institutions to make laws and programs to help young people.

1:8 Research Hypothesis:

The study has some goals and a problem that needs to be solved. So we have come up with some ideas to work with.

The first idea is that the laws about drug crimes in India are too harsh on people. This is especially true for the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985. These laws

do not work well with the ideas of the Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 which wants to help young people change and become better.

The second idea is that things like being poor not having an education having a home life and hanging out with the wrong friends can really affect how many young people use drugs.

The third idea is that the programs to help people who use drugs are not working very well. This is because these programs are not being used enough. So they are not very good, at stopping people from using drugs again or helping them get better for a long time.

1:9 Research Methodology:

Type of Research:

This study is about drug abuse. The present study adopts a doctrinal method of research, focusing on the analysis of existing legal principles, statutory provisions, and judicial decisions relating to juvenile drug abuse.

Primary Sources:

The study looks at the laws and court decisions about juvenile drug abuse. This includes laws like the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The study also looks at what the courts have said about these laws.

Secondary Sources:

The study also uses information from books, legal journals, research articles and reports from groups like the World Health Organization. These sources help us understand the issue of drug abuse better.

Method of Analysis:

The study uses a way of analysing the information. It looks at the laws and court decisions about drug abuse very carefully. The study also compares the laws. How they work to see what is good and what is not so good, about them. This helps us see how the laws can be made better to deal with drug abuse. The study looks at drug abuse and how the law deals with juvenile drug abuse to find out what works and what does not work.

1:10 Aim of the Study:

The main goal of this study is to take a look at drug abuse among young people. We want to understand how widespread it is, what it looks like and what patterns we can see. We also want to check if our current laws and justice system are doing enough to help kids and teenagers who are involved with drugs.

We are trying to figure out if our laws are doing a job of balancing two important goals. First we want to discourage people from using drugs. Second we want to protect children.

Some specific laws we are looking at are:

* The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

* The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

We want to see if these laws are using a mix of punishment and help to get young people back on track. We also want to make sure they follow the principles of justice and child welfare.

Another thing we are trying to find out is if our current laws and systems are enough to help people who are vulnerable, to drug abuse. We want to know if we need to do more to prevent drug abuse fix the problems it causes and help young people recover.

1:11 Review of Literature:

The literature on drug abuse in India tells us that more and more young people are using drugs because of their friends, family and where they live. It is also because drugs are easy to get. The NCB and Ministry of Social Justice did some studies. They found that a lot of young people are using things like inhalants, cannabis and synthetic drugs especially in cities.

Some people who study the law looked at the NDPS Act from 1985. They think it is too harsh. They also think it does not do enough to help children who use drugs. On the hand the Juvenile Justice Act from 2015 is better because it tries to help children instead of just punishing them. It wants to help them get better and become a part of society again.

A lot of researchers talk about the problems between the NDPS Act and the Juvenile Justice Act. They think we need to make sure the laws work together and that we prioritize helping children. Some countries like the US and the UK use approaches. They try to help people who use drugs of just punishing them.

The literature shows that there is a difference between what the law says and what actually happens. We need to make sure the laws are working that we have places for people to get help and that we do more research on young people who use drugs in India. Juvenile drug abuse in India is a problem and we need to do something about it. The literature on drug abuse, in India is very important.

Year-wise Trend of Juvenile Involvement (Approximate NCRB-Based Data)

Year	Total Juvenile Crime Cases	Remarks / Trend
2013	43,506	Peak level of juvenile crime cases
2014	38,455	Declining trend begins
2015	33,526	Continued reduction
2016	35,849	Slight increase
2017	35,849+	Stable but high involvement
2018	31,591	Decline resumes
2019	32,235	Marginal increase
2020	29,768	Drop (pandemic impact)
2021	31,170	Increase post-pandemic
2022	30,555	Slight decrease
2023	31,365	Recent increase observed

Source: NCRB *Crime in India* reports (compiled trend analysis)

