Drug Addiction in Sikkim: A Sociological Study

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Introduction:

In contemporary society, the full-fledged impact of modernization and globalization, which has led to free movement of people, goods and money across the countries of the world, can be witnessed. This has also opened the economic opportunities among the individuals and the communities in the society, which has become the new of life. Society has changed over the years and activities of the people have undergone changes. Even the substances used for inebriation have changed corresponding with the dynamics of society. Traditionally used drugs, marijuana and cannabis, have been replaced by modern synthetic drugs. The proliferation of pharmaceutical industries, which manufactures narcotic drugs, has directly and indirectly encouraged the use and the abuse of the drugs due to the easy access in the market. The epidemic of illicit drug users in the global society has increased significantly and simultaneously drug use associated crimes as well in the society.

A drug is a biological substance, synthetic or natural, that is taken primarily for non-dietary needs, and it is a substance, which affects the functioning of mind and body or both. Globally according to UNODC estimate, in 2009 between, 149 and 272 people or 3.3% to 6.1% of the population aged 15-64 has used illicit substance once in previous year. Cannabis and Amphetamine Type Stimulants [ATS] are two important drugs which are commonly used world-wide. (World Drug Report, 2010; pg. 123) Within Asia, ATS ranks as the main drug abuse in Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Philippines and also China, Myanmar and Indonesia are in the second rank according to United Nations of Development Countries [UNODC] in 2004. Heroin, Cocaine and other drugs kill around 0.2 million people each year and causes health problems with incurable diseases. (Changing Drug abuse patterns and law enforcement strategies; pg. 134) The European-Monitoring Center for Drug and Drug Addiction [EMCDDA] defines the problem of Drug use as injecting drug use as ‘injecting drug use or long duration regular use of opium, cocaine and amphetamines.’ World Health Organization [WHO] defines Drug Addiction as a ‘disease’ and the American Psychiatric Association defines drug abuse as the ‘illicit consumption of any naturally occurring of pharmaceutical substance for the purpose of changing the way, in which a person feels, thinks or behaves without understanding or taking into consideration the damaging physical and mental side effects that are caused. (World Drug Report, 2012; pg. 125-126).

Drug Abuse is a global phenomena and it is also abused in India. India is a diverse nation and is like many other nations afflicted by drug use and drug addiction among the youths in the society. Drugs like opium and cannabis were traditionally used by the people, which are taken as a pain reliever by the people. ‘Ganja was consumed to worship Hindu God, Lord Shiva, during the festival of ‘Shivratri’ in India. (B. Sundas, 2011; pg. 50). According to a nation-wide survey spread over 13 states by a NGO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development found that 32.1% children below the age of 18 had tasted bhang, ganja, heroin or other forms of narcotics. (P. Mehta, 2011) In 2008, 5.3 million Indians aged 12 and older had abused cocaine in any form and 1.1 million had abused LSD at least once in the year. In 2008, 453,000 Indians aged 12 and older had abused Heroin at least once in the year. In 2008, 25.8 million Indians aged 12 and older had abused marijuana at least once in the year. In 2008, 850,000 Indians aged 12 and older had abused methamphetamine at least once in the year. (Ibid, pg. 34-40).

Northeast has been challenged by serious problem of Drug use by the youth. Nagaland and Manipur are the two states in Manipur are the two states in North-East India, which has the highest prevalence of Intravenous Drugs (IDUs). Even cultivation of opium is done in Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, and supplied to other parts of India. These are the easy routes of drug trafficking across the common borders of Myanmar and the three North-eastern States of India (Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland). There is illicit cultivation of opium and cannabis, the heroin and the amphetamines, and the pharmaceuticals are used as illicit drugs and trafficked in the North-east India. (Drug used in Northeastern States, India; pg. xiv)
Sikkim is one of the North-eastern States of India and is connected with other seven states of the northeast via Siliguri. It is sparsely populated, with lot of social changes going on because of its merger with the Indian Union in 1975. It is also witnessing problems related with modernization and urbanization. One of the glowing problems faced by the society of Sikkim due to modernization is of Drug Abuse and its prevalence among the youth is very high due to the availability and easy access.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY:

Fig no. 1.1

Sikkim became the 22nd state of India in 1975 under the 38th amendment of the constitution of India (Das, 2002). Prior to it, the state was recognized as Protectorate state of India. Sikkim has diverse cultural heritage emerging from the three ethnic groups who settled in this region in the pre-historic period. These ethnic groups are Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese. The Lepchas are considered to be from the hills of Assam, Bhutias from Tibet and Nepalese from Nepal; however, they build a harmonious social system in the hills.(The Sikkim saga) After the British invasion, Sikkim has played a significant role in
the international trade and commerce among the nations across the state. Geographically, it is strategically located for international relations cutting across India, Tibet, China, Nepal and Bhutan. This feature of the state has attached the British as well as other communities in the region, which led to many social and structural changes in the region. There has been a change of structural change in Sikkim, from being an independent kingdom it became a protectorate state of India, later it became an integral part of the Union of India. The docile tribes and the people living in the state of Sikkim were gradually exposed to the outside world and development in socio-economic infrastructure.

The problem of drugs, covered by the media on a regular basis, is a reflection of the product of complex societal conditions. Drugs are becoming common phenomena among the youths and drug addictions is state of psychological dependence on the substance. in family, parents are the role model for their child, as changes take place in social structure, the role of parents are also changing and directly or indirectly affecting their child. Thus, ‘social change is basic to the appearance of the social problems. A change inevitably threatens strong interests, disrupts habits, creates distress, and result in the development of new social patterns. Social change generally focuses on conflicts of values’. This modern culture consequently reflects the “status frustration”, because there is unequal access to opportunity, there is greater pressure on certain groups within social structure to deviate. There is constantly increasing of anomic situation in the society, which is leading to high risk of drug abuse due to inequality and disorganization of the families in the Sikkim’s society. Cannabis (charas / ganja / bhang), heroin and pharmaceutical drugs (cough syrups, N-10, Spasmoproxyvon and Valium) are most frequently abused drugs in the state of Sikkim.

**DRUG ADDICTION IN SIKKIM:**

Young people are the ones who are indulging into drug addiction. They are more obsessed with their individual self that they do not think about anyone else. The impact of other culture is evident in the society. Drug addiction in the society is a new phenomenon. It started with the cultures being introduced to young people. Immediately after the merger with Sikkim with India people are exposed to various cultures. Through new modes of entertainment, people are exposed to “hippi” culture, the culture of protest where the use of drugs are common. One respondent said, “the inflow of foreign tourists after Sikkim’s merger with India exposed many young people to these lifestyles of the foreigners, and many adapted their life style. This also included using of drugs,” another respondent said “as we started to develop our state in the early 1980s, people started to earn money and this lead many to visit the outside world. There they witnessed many new things and some who could not make a choice between the right and the wrong also started indulging in drugs.” another respondent blamed the development of entertainment as the reason for the problem of drug addiction. He said, “Entertainment for the people became essential with time. Earlier, entertainment for the people were to visit their relatives and indulge in communal drinking, but today’s date gives us a different method of entertainment, from which one can choose his/her, wishes. Variety of movies and television programmes shows different ways of entertainments in different cultures and societies. Among which some have chose drug addiction as their mode of entertainment and ruined their lives.”

Many respondents were of the opinion that easily availability of drugs is the reason for the state drowning in this addiction. One respondent said, “Drug of any kind or form are available in Sikkim, whether it is a rural or an urban area. When it is so easily available, people will try to experiment with it and thereby get hooked to it. if we can curb this inflow of drugs then the problem can be solved.” Another respondent said, “Siliguri is so near. There anyone can get anything they want. It is the main city for the entire north-east region as it connects them as well as Bhutan and Nepal and India. Bangladesh is not very far away, and drugs from, north-east, Nepal, and Bangladesh reach Siliguri from where it is trafficked to the other parts of the country, and some make entry to Sikkim as well.” It is not the drugs entering Sikkim from Siliguri concerning most of the respondents, but the over-counter availability of many drugs which concerns them. The means for achieving success has been earning lot of money for many people in the state. In this endeavor some do not mind indulging into illegal activities, like selling drugs without
prescriptions. One of the respondents said, "The chemists sell drugs without proper prescriptions and if they know that the drug is to satiate one’s addiction, they also charge higher than the regular price. This is hampering the state of the society much more than the drugs being peddled by some paddlers.” Another respondent said, “all the drugs which an addict needs is available in all chemist shops. So it is not difficult for an addict to get what is required by them. This has further compounded the problem.” Another respondent said that, “Establishment of the pharmaceutical industries has increased the drug addiction in Sikkim. Due to their presence the local boys and girls are involved in the production of drugs. They have access to many drugs, which are even use as intoxicants. They consume these and become drug addicts. They may even supply these to their friends at a lower cost which is available in the market to supplement their merger salary which in turn affects the already volatile situation of the society.”

SIKKIM ANTI DRUG ACT’ 2006:

The Sikkim Anti Drug Act’ 2006 (Act No. 2 of 2006) popularly known as SADA’ 2006, having received the assent of the Governor on 25.03.2006; is AN ACT to control, regulate and prevent the abuse of drugs and controlled substances with abuse potential being misused by addicts and traffickers, to make stringent provisions to deal with the ever increasing phenomenon of abuse of medicinal preparations and for matters connected therewith.

The State Crime Branch office at Gangtok, East Sikkim, has provided the official data on SADA cases in the year 2011 and 2012 and there are different figures of cases according to each district of the state. The state comprises four districts and the East district has the highest number of cases recorded under SADA’ 2006, in the year 2011, followed by South, West, North Dist. The figure shows that 99 (66.44%) cases are recorded in the East District, followed by the south district where 41 (27.5%) cases are recorded throughout the year, the west district had 5, i.e. (5.36%) cases while the north district had 01 i.e.(0.67%) cases recorded under SADA’ 2006. The figure have depicted that in North district of Sikkim has been very deem in those cases as compare to others. This district has lessened population and this is also far away from the mainstream societies and the impact of modernization and globalization is not effective in those areas. The social organization of society called “Zumsha” and that has significant role in maintaining the social coherence and lead to homogeneous society rather than heterogeneous society. This society has not let their traditional values from the society and consequently that have faced problems of drug abuse. The total number of cases recorded in the year 2011 was 149 in all over the state.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

The study would focus on the relationships between the changes in socio-economic status of families as a significant factor of drug abuse among the youths in Sikkim. The role of traditional families in socializing the young highly depends on the moral values which limits the external influences on the children. Families can have mighty hands on shaping the attitudes of children, with social norms and values, but today why are peer groups more influential among the children than the families? Why there is a gap in relationships between the parents and children in the contemporary society? These are some gradually emerging problems in families and turning into disorganized institutions directly affecting the psychological condition of children. The family issues are a major contributing factor for adolescents to drug abuse. Parents are not only significant family members but also siblings, uncles, aunts, cousins; grandparents also have a very significant role to play in shaping the attitude of an adolescent. The increase in the number of drug abuse depicts the breakdown of traditional family values and social cohesion.

METHODOLOGY

The scientific method plays a very important role for the collection of data. The scientific method yields information which is relevant to the problem and suitable for the purpose. It consists of a
systematic observation, classification, coding and interpretation of data. The basic method is to design the research such that logic can be ascertained for the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses on the basis of the resulting data.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK:

The analytical framework of the present study includes a discussion on research questions and the purpose of the study followed by the objectives, the research design, sampling procedure and analysis and interpretation of data.

Research Questions:

At present, the state of Sikkim has witnessed a large scale change in its socio-economic and political conditions over the years and this has had led a debilitating impact on the life of the individuals. The macro-level changes in the state have had an adverse effect on the micro-level of the individuals and the family, its values and world view. The following research questions are designed to arrive at clear picture of the presence of Drug abuse and its threat in the study area.

- Is drug abuse in Sikkim due to the ever increasing modernity and modernizations?
- Have the social changes affected the behaviours of individuals and thereby drug abuse?
- Is there any relationship between the breakage of societal bonds and solidarity and drug abuse?
- What is the relationship between drug abuse and the changing family structure in Sikkim?

Objectives of the Study:

The present study was undertaken on the following objectives:

I. To know the different categories of drug addicted people in Sikkim.
II. To find out different causes of drug addiction among the people in Sikkim
III. To explore the socio-economic factors leading to drug addiction.
IV. To study the socio-economic conditions of the drug addicted people in Sikkim; and,
V. To explain the social relations of de-addicted people.

Design of the Study:

A research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process. As the study was aimed to explore different aspects relating to drug addiction, the design of the study is Explorative in nature.

Universe and Sample:

The area of the present study was East district of Sikkim. This was carried on because of fast growing modernization and urbanization leading to growing problems of drug abuse in this district. A sample of 50 respondents comprising both males and females were selected on Snow-ball sampling method as the exact figure of drug addicted people was not known, which was comprised of presently addicted people, de-addicted people, Counselors and other functionaries in Rehabilitation Centre, particularly ‘Sikkim Rehabilitation and Detoxification Society, Nimtar, East Sikkim’ and ‘Drishya Rehabilitation and Detoxification Center, Aho Village, Pakyong Road’.

Period of Data Collection:

The data for the present study were collected during April 2015.
Methods of Data Collection:
Both Primary and secondary data were used in the present study. The primary data were collected through a Structured Interview Schedule and Questionnaire Method administered by the investigator and for the secondary data; the investigator has collected data from the booklets, books, newspapers, Journals and Periodicals and Internet. Interview Schedule Method is used for collection of data from the respondents who were ready to give their opinion openly and the respondents under treatment at the rehabilitation Centres and also the Counselors and other functionaries in Rehabilitation Centres. Questionnaire Method was also adopted for the respondents who were unwilling to disclose their identity for the collection of information / data.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:
Drug use is common occurrence in today’s society, with such use often associated with a variety of medicinal, psychological and social problems. Sikkim’s union with India has brought about a lot of changes in the socio-economic and the political arena of Sikkim. There has been democratic political system in places leading to the consciousness among the peoples about fundamental rights and duties. Sikkim has entered the field of modernization and urbanization and has developed heterogeneous forms of cultural value systems. Rapid urbanization in different parts of Sikkim has lead to traditional boundaries being cut and has given new socio-economic pattern to the people. That has lead to the movement of the people, in and out of the state looking to achieve their goals. It is distinctly noticed that cosmopolitan social cultural environment has emerged in the state.

The Indian liberalization policies of the state has transformed the economic structure of the country as well as the state and massive international companies are making their presence felt in every corner of the society, passing the values and the ethos associated with it. There is unpredicted growth of privatization in the country and that has brought new challenges. The economy has dominated every aspect of the social life and that has led to cultural lag in the society. Increasing socio-economic transformation in India has led to changes in all parts of it. There is a growing number of infra-structural developments in the state which led people of Sikkim to interact with the outside world and approach to new technology. These changes in the socio-economic structure of the society have also affected the behavioral pattern at the individual level and the age-old traditional value system of the state. One of the most pertinent changes visible among the people of Sikkim is drug abuse among the youngsters and its interrelation with modern values. There are several level of influence to adolescents drug use, including individual factors, family processes, culture, schools, colleges, communities and society.[ DiCkente Ralph j. Santelli john S., Crosby Richard A.; ‘Adolescents Health understanding and preventing Risk behaviours’ 2009]

Drug abuse in the society of Sikkim has become a severe problem faced by the inhabitants of Sikkim. The abuse of drugs has a salient role in the rise of incidences of suicidal tendencies, school/college dropouts and thus being stigmatized and discriminated leading to indulgences of more drugs in Sikkim. Since, drugs today are easily accessible and due to higher education both the parents are employed and the urge to earn money couldn’t let them keep a closer relation with their children, they provide them with huge sums of pocket money which led the children to follow the westernize trends and consume alcohol and intake different types of drugs.

The development and the westernize culture being infused in the state of Sikkim has took over the traditional and cultural values. Youngsters today follow the westernize lifestyles which include consumption of drugs just to look “COOL” and follow the rock stars of the west, especially “BOB MARLEY” who followed the ‘hippi’ culture, knowing not how drugs are harming them physically, mentally and socially. Peer-pressure, broken love affairs, stress and sometimes curiosity drags the youngsters into this deadly addiction. But majorly dysfunctional families leads them into this, where both
the parents are busy earning money and keeping no track of what their children are doing with the excessive pocket money they provided them.

The section below discusses the major findings based on the objectives of the study and derived from the data analysis interpretation done in the previous chapter.

Drug abuse has been in vogue for time immemorial. However, the form and the substance and drug (cannabis to synthetic drugs) has been different at different stages of evolution of human society. Drugs also varied according to person-to-person, as according to different economic background people used different kind of drugs (e.g. people who cannot afford synthetic drugs use cannabis only, while people who can afford synthetic medicines, such as Spasmoproxyvon, N-10 may also not be able to afford cocaine or heroin, but there are some people who can afford all of it,) to satisfy their needs. However, people’s perceptions too vary from person-to-person about drug addiction in Sikkim. Some people see drug addiction as youngsters pleasure elements, while some other sees it as a medicine to recover from frustration. From the data it is found that both males and females take drugs in the state. They belong to different categories. The addiction starts from the age group as early as 10 and last up to the age group 50. It includes students, drivers, government and private servants, business man, even if retired government servants. It confirms the findings of Jolly (1976).

Majority of the drug addicts in the state are in younger age group, i.e. 15-35 years. There are different reasons for starting of drug addiction among these groups. These causes include frustration again sub divided into dysfunctional family, love affairs, abuse by family members, study pressure, work pressure; to relief from pain and majority of them take drugs due to their curiosity, peer group influence / pressure and also in pleasure. (International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 2004; Singh, Gupta & Jindal: 2000; Jiloha & Sain: 1992).

Drug abuse is viewed by the people as an individual affair and is not considered to be the result of the societal changes. People are still unaware that drug abuse can be cured if proper medical help is given to the individual concerned. People think that drug abuse is on the rise because young people are going outside far away from their homes for education and work. When they are far away from the social control and social network they tend to involve themselves in anti social behaviour. Staying in hostel also encourages many to engage in cigarette smoking and in many studies it has been found that students staying in hostels are smoking and doing drugs. One respondent said “a large number of students going outside to study and young people going to work are returning as drugs addicts. In the study it is found that majority of the drug addicts belong to middle class family back ground whose monthly income lies between Rs. 20000 to 50000/-. In case of availability of drugs, it is found from the study that

Drugs addicts are also to be engaged in petty crimes. Since the cost of drugs is not always met, drug abusers are found to be involved in petty crimes. One respondent said “there has been an increase in the rates of crime in our locality. Things got lost. Clothes are missing from the clotheslines and houses are burgled. These things were not common even some three years ago. These things are happening because of the rise in the number of drugs addicts.” Many think that abusing drug is a crime and selling it is a bigger crime as it not only affects the individuals but also the family. One of the respondent said “the drug peddlers are bigger criminals than the addicts. They should be killed as they are not just affecting the individual but it also affects the family and the society.” The study also confirms that for drug addiction, they steal and females are also engaged in immoral activities. Providing excess pocket money to the students is also another cause of addiction by the students. In majority cases and particularly in case of females the family members are unaware of their drug addiction.

Further, it is found from the study that addicts are well aware of the facts related to de-addiction. They have the opinion that besides medical help and proper counseling, love and care from the family
members are very much required for de-addiction along with the changing positive attitude from the society towards them.

CONCLUSION:

Drug abuse among the young people has become a genuine social problem in Sikkim. The problem of drug abuse is increasing everyday in Sikkim as in the other parts of the world and this indicates the increasing social crisis in the society. There are many changes taking place in the society and in the nature of the people due to drug addiction, which is drastically changing the younger generation and massively harming the future of the society. This changing nature of the society due to this deadly addiction brought by the western urbanization into Sikkim’s ethnic society is has a strong correlation with the socio-economic and political changes that took place in the state since its merger with the Indian Union in 1975.

The socio-economic development started in Sikkim after its merger with India which led to several changes in the society. Increasing urbanization in the state led the people to settle in the urban areas and leaving the rural areas for a better livelihood. It also led to the establishment of new offices, bank system and jobs which led to the economical progress of the state. Employment and their development schemes have made people busy in their professional life which has also brought substantial changes in the social life and the family structure of the population. Agriculture, the mainstay of Sikkim’s economy had become the secondary source and education and employment became the primary source of earning among the people of Sikkim. There are families where both the husband and the wife is earning which improved the economic status and the situation of the family.

Corresponding with the gain in economic capital, people today has lost their social and cultural capital. This led to the loosening of familial and societal bonds and solidarity. This has led to decrease in the social control and support among the people. People have become more individualistic and materialistic and the old traditional values are not taken seriously. In the absence of these social controls and supports, isolation of the young people is evident. The young people are more prone to drug and substance abuse these days. This has become evident especially for those children, where both the parents are working and have less or no time to spend with their children.

There is also a declining trend in family values of love and care and also the coordination of the children and parents have been lost. This is making the children frustrated and isolated from the family. This has been found to be one of the reasons for many to indulge in drug abuse. Isolations and frustration are making the children not responsible towards their parents and therefore they are not afraid of their reactions and have become more adventurous to drug use and abuse. The society is also responsible for what is happening. The solidarity and the collective consciousness evident in the earlier time is absent and the individualism has become the mantra. The care and the control of the earlier times of the members of the society is absent in today’s society. The community members do not act as a impediment for the youngsters to fear them if they are to indulge in such behaviours. In the families, where parents are not working and hardship is the way of the life, children fail to achieve their goals, they tend to be dependent o drugs.

Peer groups play a vital role in one’s life. It can make or mar one’s life. Peer pressure has been found to be an important element in one choosing to abuse drugs and substances. The pressure to show that they are the part of the group and equally capable to be a member of the group makes it very convenient for the young people to indulge in drugs. being masculine and that they do not lack the qualities which the group adheres to also makes them vulnerable to drug abuse. Proving masculinity and that they do not lack qualities is another reason for the youth to indulge into drug abuse. As money is not
a problem for them, due to both of their parents earn a lot of money and give them more than required as a pocket money, they visit bars and get exposed to alcohol and drugs, which soon they get addicted into. Communications of doing drugs has been made easy by the certain restaurants, hotels, bars and discos, which allows them to indulge in their habits.

Emergence of pharmacies and other industries has brought drastic changes in Sikkim in terms of market, transport and communications as well as many youths earning money. The people have become more achievement driven and economic associability of young people has given them the decision making authority. The establishment of such industries has increased the availability of pharmaceutical drugs and alcohol in the state and easily the young people are stepping into drug abuse in the society. More young youths indulge into drug addiction due to the failure in socialization due to various family problems.

East and south districts of Sikkim have largely been facing the problems of drug abuse among the youth. The areas are highly urbanized and cosmopolitan culture or trends among the people are very high, the youth are influenced by such trends of life in these areas. The achievements driven lifestyles is putting a lot of pressure on the people to do well. As the leisure activities in Sikkim is very limited and the support and care for the traditional quarters like the family and community is missing, people only have bars and hotels to go. The young people these days are not agreeable with the lifestyles of the older generation and take the risk to follow the ways of the West, which includes drinking liquor and doing drugs with the peers as a source of celebrating, enjoyment and communication.

The families of those indulged in drug abuse have served all ties with their children due to the social stigma and discrimination. The society, along with the families had failed to provide any kind of meaning support and care to those who are indulged in drugs. This is also because many people doesn’t understand that drug abuse is a physical disorder and nothing anti-social and shall be treated with medical intervention. In such a situation, the rehabilitation centers in Sikkim are playing a pertinent role. They provide care, medications, and support to the addicted youth and people. However, the rehabilitation centers lack trained personnel to carry forward the work, which leads to not a proper treatment to the addicts and various relapse cases.

All the modern values like urbanization, individualism, growing materialistic culture, connectivity and the growing market system making things avail for the people which have led to increasing incidences of drug abuse in Sikkim. Therefore, the research hypothesis that social changes in society have led to the problem of drug abuse in Sikkim is proved to be true.

Alcohols, opium, cannabis, weeds, are the traditional drugs of abuse. With the changing time, the choices of drugs of abuse among the people have also changed. More potent drugs like heroin and cocaine have become the common choice of drugs for the people to abuse. This has led to proliferation of drug traffickers in the world. The devastation effects of drug trafficking across the world led to the United Nations Convection against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic drugs and Psychotropic substances in 1988. However, for the traffickers, this convection has not acted as a deterrent whereas; the market of their business has been ever expanding. Drug abuse and its market have expanded immensely and have become the phenomena of the smaller town.

Sikkim is one of the many new markets of drugs and many people are found to be dependent on it. Drug abuse in Sikkim is on the rise and it is a recent phenomena. The situation has become grave because of the modern values being the guiding principles in the life of the people. Individualistic and materialistic values took over the traditional norms and values. Family and other social organizations have failed to control the problem of drug abuse in Sikkim. There are more complex choices among the
people living in the modernized society due to the changes that are taking place in a regular basis due to the urbanization. The technology also to a great extent contributes in building social relations unstable and there is a gradual change in the attitudes and the behaviours of the youth of the society. There is a vast gap between the contemporary trends and the traditional values of the Sikkimese society, which have led to serious social issues like drug abuse among the youth today.

However, changes in the state of Sikkim were also visible in the last couple of years. A few years ago, the government started allowing the private companies to take over the land for hydropower projects. This has largely effected the social and the physical environment of Sikkim. There has been a constant flow of outside population and the people started getting exposed to the outside world and the western lifestyles and earning money which increased substance and drug abuse among the youth.

Sikkim, today, is facing a huge problem of drug abuse and it needs to solve this at the earliest. There is an increase in the cases of HIV/AIDS in the state and also suicide rate increased to a certain level. HIV/AIDS will kill many and the state is at the verge of losing its human recourses. The state needs to change its policy. The availability of drugs needs to be checked.

Sikkim as a new entrant to the Union of India and due to its state of underdevelopment under the monarch, needed to be developed in terms of infrastructure and the quality of the life-style of the people. Nevertheless, development doesn’t necessarily means to give up traditional norms and values. The loss of traditional norms and values and the acceptance of modernity and modernism without any evaluation have led the state to drug abuse. It cannot afford to let the human resources to be dependent on drugs and loose the years of development it has gained on these drugs.

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