

**Drug Abuse among Interstate Migrants in Kerala: A Study on Perumbavur
Municipality in Eranakulam District, Kerala**

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Abstract

Introduction: The main objective of the study is to explore counter mechanisms evolved by agencies like State Governments to address events of drug abuse by interstate migrants in Kerala. The influx of them to Kerala has become a phenomenal one now. Unfortunately, some unwanted practices have also been migrated with our new guests. Of which drug abuse is found severe. However counter operations developed at State Governments is so hopeful and sustainable. ‘Operation Bhai, of Perumbavur Municipality is one among many in this regard.

Methodology: Proposed explorative study gathers data from both primary and secondary sources. For a deeper understanding of the study researcher interacted with interstate migrants, elected representatives and other relevant stakeholders. Secondary data are drawn from study reports of Municipality and newspapers published in both Malayalam and English languages. Perumbavur is selected since being for the paradise of interstate migrants in Kerala.

Results: Drug abuse among migrated labours are severe and critical. Interesting thing is that for many of the drugs are part of their life and habitual. Found many constantly using Panmasala, Hans and Tobacco. A significant share of the wage they spent on alcohol consumption. The trend of greater availability found attracting common people to being addicted especially, students.

Conclusion: Flow of tobacco products to Kerala has become a business and affects younger minds of Kerala. The current uses of tobacco products are highly prevalent among migrant workers and its spread to native peoples of Kerala.

Keywords: Drug abuse, Interstate migrants in Kerala, Native peoples of Kerala.

Drug Abuse among Interstate Migrants in Kerala: A Study on Perumbavur Municipality in Ernakulam District, Kerala

Introduction

This paper examines the drug use among interstate migrants in Perumbavur Ernakulam district. Presence of Interstate migrants in Kerala is an inevitable part. They are in every nook and corner of the Kerala society. According to the research study conducted by Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation for the Kerala Government (2013), there are over 25 lakhs domestic migrant labourers in Kerala today with an annual arrival rate of 2.35 lakhs. (Kumari, 2017). Finding accurate data among interstate migrants in Kerala is a very sedulous task, they are in the floating population. even in the 1980s when migrants were mostly from Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Since the 1990s the situation has been changed and the majority of the next generation migrants are from Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Chhattisgarh and even Manipur. Initially, they worked with the railways and as construction, workers but soon they found work in other sectors like carpentry, masonry, domestic work, hotels, eateries, and farms. An economic review of 2015 reveals that are the distribution of district wise migrated workers in the state shows that Ernakulam has the highest proportion of inter-state migrant workers (17%) followed by Wayanad (13%) and Kannur (12%). (State Planning Board, 2015) Interstate migrants are one of the highly marginalized sections of society.

Many of them are mobile, single males, between 18 – 35 years old. Many of the migrants are from other states they are ready to do hard and risky jobs. Migrants seemingly working in unorganized sectors /informal sectors. Today Keralites have too much dependence on other state workers because they are working in more than normal working hours they are working in meagre amount compared to wage given to the Kerala people. Migrants came from other states towards Kerala are especially socially- economically poor background and wage rate in the unorganized sector in Kerala is higher than other Indian states. Positive wage factor is leading attracting factor towards them to Kerala. These new guests are mainly from northeast southern states like (West Bengal, Orissa)northern states like (Bihar, Uther Pradesh and Uttharakh)and Northeastern states like Assam, Manipur) and southern states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Interstate migrants are illiterates so they are not aware of their health, their rights etc. They are a more vulnerable group in Kerala. Interstate migrants are not aware of their health conditions and their heavy and risky working nature increased the tendency of

usage of alcohol and tobacco among the migrants. Perumbavoor, a satellite town of Ernakulam, has more than 1.5 lakh migrants.(George,2014)

The high usage of tobacco and alcohol are caused to criminal tendencies like sexual abuses, rape, kidnapping other malpractices among migrants as well as of native peoples of Kerala. Migrants are prone to develop health problems due to lack of awareness about a local healthcare facility, frequent migration, food insecurity, climate and other environmental hazards (alcohol consumption). Many workers engage themselves in drinking, smoking and addictions to cope with the stress that further degrades their health.

Methodology

In-migrant workers are visible in every nook and corner of the Kerala society. They are working in unskilled semi-skilled sectors of Kerala or mainly concentrated in unorganized sectors as construction workers, casual labourers, agricultural and plantation workers, road workers, domestic workers, carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians etc. They are working more difficult, hazardous and menial jobs without any hesitation. The study was mainly based on field study and interviews with migrant labourers and information collected from contractors, local employers, local government representatives, officials of state government etc and newspaper reports, and other relevant documents. The study examined the drug use among interstate migrants in Perumbavur Ernakulam district. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. It is an exploratory study. A structured interview was done as part of the data collection. Find out the exact number for interstate migrants in Kerala is a sedulous task, because, they are in a floating nature. The latest estimate shows that 8 lakhs migrant workers in Ernakulam district. Finding the exact number of migrant workers in Ernakulam district is a very difficult task. A study reveals that Perumbavoor, a satellite town of Ernakulam, has more than 1.5 lakh migrants. (George,2014).Therefore, the researcher selected Perumbavur municipality as the study area. Samples of 80 workers were selected from different sectors conveniently. The age group of migrant workers, sex, marital status, sectors, education, type of alcohol and tobacco products etc variable are used for the study. Primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data collected through personal interview and secondary data collected through Government reports, research papers, survey reports etc. Simple statistical tools were used for the study.

Results

Table 1: Socio economic profile of the migrants

Parameters	Total Number of migrant workers (n = 80)
*Gender	
Male	80
*Age Group	
18-28	32(40%)
29-38	22(27.5%)
39-48	16(20%)
49-58	10(12.5)
*Marital status	
Married	23(28.75%)
Unmarried	57(71.25%)
*Education	
0-5	52(65%)
5-10	21(26.25%)
10-12	4(5%)
12& above	3(3.75%)
*Tobacco products & alcohol users -76 (95%) *Tobacco products users -54(71.05%) *Alcohol users-22 (28.94%) *Smokeless form tobacco users -34(62.96%) *smoking form tobacco users-20(37.03%)	

Table 2: Situations of usage of tobacco products &alcohol

Table 2:

*situations of usage of tobacco products & alcohol		
Situations	Users of tobacco products	users of alcohol
With friends	17(31.48%)	8(36.36%)
During working Intervals	12(22.22%)	nil
After meals	8(14.81%)	nil
Morning hours	3(5.55%)	nil
Working time	2(3.70%)	nil
During tensions or anxiety	7(12.96%)	3(13.63%)
At night	5(9.25%)	11(50%)

Table 3. Types of tobacco products and alcohol

*Type of tobacco	Number of users
Supadi Pan	7(12.96%)
Ghutka	11(20.37%)
Pan Masala	9(16.66%)
Khaini	4(7.40%)
Stuff	3(5.55%)
Beedi	8(14.81%)
Cigarette	12(22.22%)
*Type of alcohol	Number of users

ol	
Beer	11(50%)
Brand y	7(31.81%)
Toddy	4(18.18 %)

Table 4
Age wise distribution of Tobacco and alcohol users

*Age	Users of smokeless Products
18-28	17(50%)
29-38	11(32.35%)
39-48	4(11.76%)
49-58	2(5.88%)
*Age	Users of smoking Products
18-28	3(15%)
29-38	7(35%)
39-48	9(45%)
49-58	1(5%)
*Age	Users of alcohol Products
18-28	9(40.90%)
29-38	4(18.18%)
39-48	6(27.27%)
49-58	3(13.63%)

Table 5
Tobacco users in different occupations

*Occupations	Tobacco users	Alcohol users
Construction	22(40.74)	9(40.90%)
Marble work	12(2.22)	3(13.63%)
Ply wood factory	14(25.92%)	6(27.27%)
Hotel	6(11.11%)	4(18.18 %)

The table reveals that a total of 80 male migrant workers was included in the study. The majority (40.90%) of migrant workers belonged to the age group 18 to 28 years. 71.25% were unmarried, within the study 28.75% of the migrants are married, 65% were in primary level education and illiterate.

In this study, 76 (95 %) were using both tobacco and alcohol products.

Among the total tobacco users 54(71.05%), (62.96%) used a smokeless form of tobacco, (37.03%) used a smoked form of tobacco. 28.94% of the migrants were alcohol users.

Table 2 reveals that situations of usage of tobacco and alcohol. 17(31.48%) of the Migrants were using tobacco products with friends. 12(22.22) of migrants were using tobacco products during working intervals. 8(14.81%) migrants were using tobacco products after meals. 5.55% of the migrants opined that they are using tobacco products in morning hours. 3.70% of the migrants were using pan masala during working time. 12.96% of the migrants were using pan masala more in anxiety and tensions conditions then 9.25% of the migrants using pan masala at before sleep. 36.36% of the migrants were using alcohol within the friends. 13.63% percentage of the migrants using alcohol during of their anxiety or tension times. 50% of the migrants using alcohol at night times.

Table 3 reveals that among the study Ghutka was used by 20.37%, pan masala by 16.66 %, and Supadi pan by (12.96%). 62.96% of migrants are using smokeless tobacco and 37.03% of migrants are using smoking tobacco products. Among the 28.94% of migrants is using alcohol.

Table 4 reveals that, in the age group of 18-28, 50% of migrants are using smokeless products. In the smoking tobacco products are widely used (45%) in the age group of between 39-48. Among the alcohol, product users understood that in the age group of 18-28 are highly using alcohol products (40.90%).

Table 5 reveals that migrants who are working in the construction site moreover using tobacco and alcohol products.

Discussion

The current study was carried out through the drug use among interstate migrants in Perumbavur Ernakulam district. In Kerala, the government strictly prohibited the tobacco products however; such products are available in markets of Kerala. Kerala government initiated a programme called Vimukthi (Vimukthi). for complete evacuation of tobacco products due to these situations sellers in Kerala are illegally sell such products at higher prices rather than its original prices. Some of the migrants are the sellers of tobacco products. Among the peoples of Kerala are purchasing such products through migrants. Migrants in the age group 18-28 are more addicted to tobacco products. Migrants are illiterates groups they have no idea about the bad sides of the tobacco products. Heavy and risky working nature increased the tendency of usage of tobacco and alcohol among the migrants. Usage of Smokeless tobacco is highly prevalent among the migrants. From the study, we understood that the majority of the migrant workers are using Ghutka, one of the smokeless form of tobacco product. Some of the studies understood that heavy usages of this Ghutka affect the function of heart, create some psychological problems, dry mouth, amnesia, Oral problems, asthma, hypertension, stroke etc. (Yasmeen, 2013). Good proportions of migrants are highly spending their money on liquor. Study understood that the people belong to the age group of 18-28 are highly used such tobacco products especially younger groups are more attracted towards such products. Moreover, especially the younger migrants are moreover migrated to Kerala and the majority of them came in Kerala as bachelors such groups moreover depend on such products for their pleasure and happiness within their hectic work nature. Lack of recreational facilities and peer groups are influenced by the heavy usage of liquor. The trend of greater availability found attracting common people to being addicted especially, students. Tobacco products are available in the markets, especially it highly demands among the migrants. Today the state government introduced some measures for the complete evacuation

of the tobacco products in Kerala, therefore the smokeless tobacco highly used among the migrants as well as of native people of Kerala. Study understood that most of the migrants are using a smokeless form of tobacco rather than a smoking form of tobacco. Native peoples of Kerala are attracting such products especially a trend shows that smokeless tobacco products are highly available.

State government and concerned authorities are taking viable initiatives for the evacuation of tobacco products among interstate migrants in Kerala.

Conclusion

Interstate migrants are an unavoidable part of Kerala. Their labour is positively benefits to the Kerala economy and society. They are illiterate's peoples; they had no idea about the bad sides of the usage of tobacco and alcohol products. The flow of tobacco products to Kerala has become a business and affects younger minds of Kerala. These tobacco products are both negatively affect both natives of Kerala and interstate migrants in Kerala. Highly usages of such products among the peoples increased day by day. Strict regulations need for the evacuation of the tobacco products in Kerala otherwise this high usage is destroyed the human beings. There are some of the initiatives introduced by the state government called Operation Bhai its targets to prevent the migrant worker's usage of tobacco products. Its initiatives are conducted at the Ernakulam district. Its aims to a total ban of usage of tobacco products among the migrant workers.

Today migrants are spread all over Kerala so the evacuation method is tried to spread all over Kerala. Required a complete ban of tobacco products in Kerala otherwise, both native peoples and the migrant workers are going to be an addiction of the tobacco products.

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