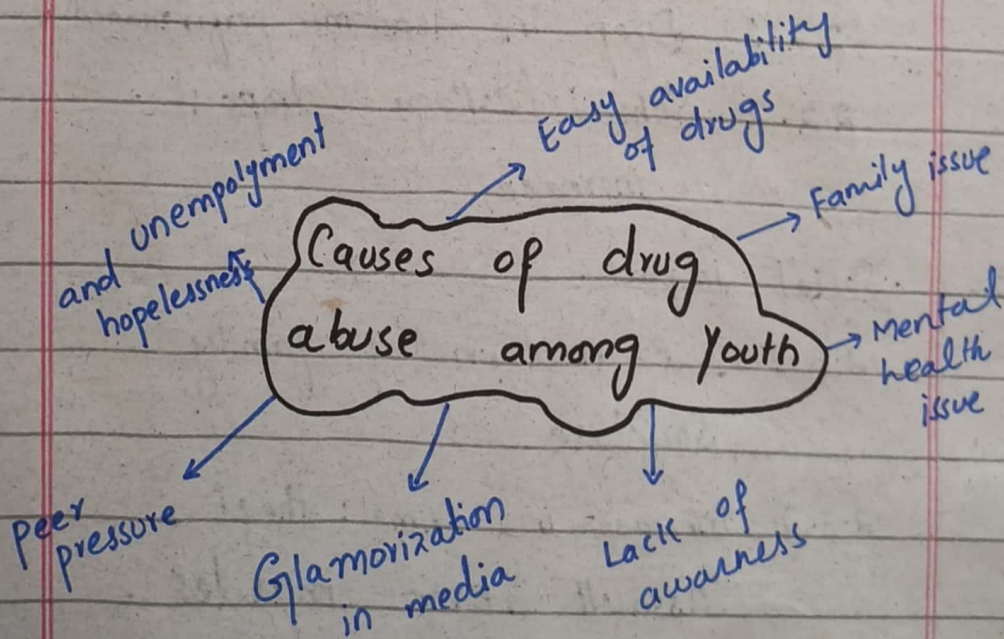
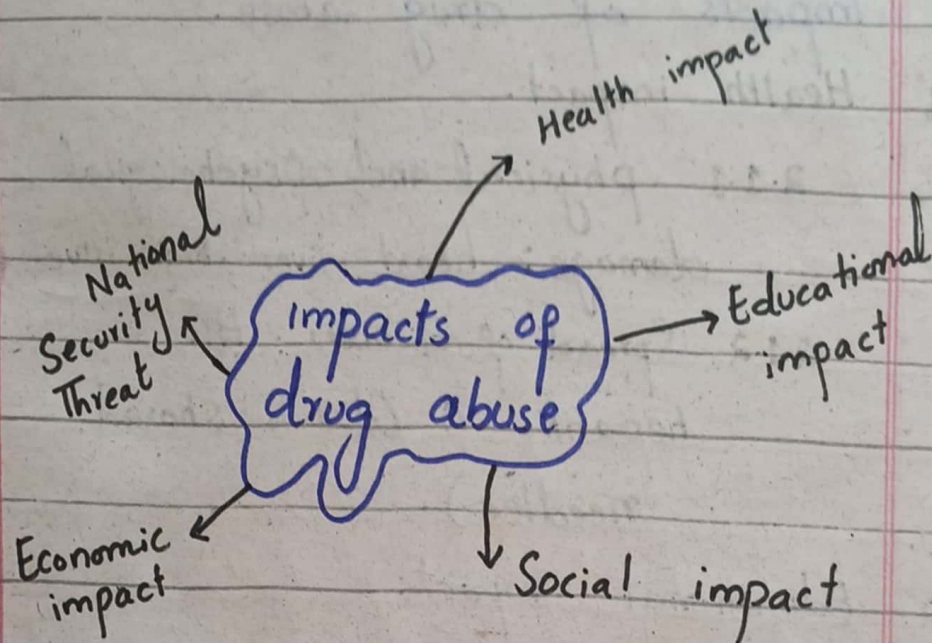


Drug Abuse: A Growing Threat to Pakistan's Young Generation.



Outlines:

1 Introduction.

2 Main body.

A Impacts of drug abuse.

2.1 Health impact.

2.1.1 physical and psychological damage: heart, liver, brain issue.

2.1.2 Spread of diseases: HIV, hepatitis C (due to shared needles).

2.2 Educational impact:

2.2.1 Drop in academic performance.

2.2.2 School/college dropout increase.

2.3 Social impact.

2.3.1 Breakdown of family structure.

2.3.2 Increase in crime: theft, assault, even murder.

2.4 Economic impact.

2.4.1 Burden on health care.

2.4.2 Loss of productive work force

2.5 National Security Threat.

2.5.1 Drug mafias linked with terrorism and militancy.

2.5.2 Narcotics used to fund illegal arms and insurgencies.

B Causes of drug abuse among Young's Generation:

2.1 Peer Pressure

2.1.1 Trying to fit in or impress friends.

2.2 Unemployment and hopelessness.

2.2.1 poor education system

2.2.2 Corruption and nepotism in job recruitment.

2.2.3 Technological automation reducing manual jobs.

2.3 Easy availability of drugs.

2.3.1 Geographic and political factors.

2.3.2 Weak law enforcement

2.3.3 Online and social media access.

2.4 Family issues.

2.4.1 Broken families / Divorce

2.4.2 Domestic violence

2.4.3 Neglect or absence
of parents

2.4.4 pressure to succeed
academically or socially.

2.5 Mental health issues:

2.5.1 Depression, emotional pain, sadness

2.5.2 Anxiety, fear, emotional
instability.

2.5.3 Trauma, loneliness, low self-esteem

2.6 Lack of awareness:

2.6.1 unawareness of addiction

Symptoms and early sign.

2.6.2 No proper drug education in
School or college

2.7 Glamorization in media.

2.7.1 Glamorization of drugs
in movies, music and
Social media.

2.7.2 Youth misled into thinking
drugs are cool or harmless.

3 Conclusion:

The Essay:

Drug abuse is one of the gravest social issues confronting Pakistan today, particularly affecting its youth, who constitute more than 60 % of the country's population. As the future custodians of Pakistan's development, the young generation is increasingly becoming the victim of the substance abuse, ranging from cannabis and heroin to synthetic drugs like methamphetamine (ice). The rising trend of addiction is not merely a health issue but a multidimensional national crisis threatening public safety, educational progress, and economic growth. According to the United Nations Office on drugs and crime (UNODC), Pakistan has nearly 9 million drug users, with

the majority falling between the ages of 15 to 35 years. The alarming rate of increase, particularly in educational institutions and urban centres, has transformed drug abuse into silent epidemic. Pakistan is geographically positioned next to Afghanistan the world's largest opium producer making it a major transit and consumer state in the global drug trade. While initially a route for smuggling, Pakistan has now become a consumer country, especially among the youth. Drug has spread across universities, hostels, streets, and even elite educational institutions. The availability of narcotics, combined with social pressures and weak institutional responses, has worsened the situation.

The Anti-Narcotics force and Ministry of narcotics control have reported a surge in Synthetic drug use, particularly ice (meth), among high school and college students.

Unfortunately, public awareness, parental involvement, and institutional frameworks remain insufficient to counter this rise. Family plays a foundational role in shaping the psychological and moral framework of an individual. When this structure is unstable or broken, youth often turn to drugs as an escape. Children from separated families often experience emotional insecurity and loneliness. The absence of one or both parents result in poor supervision and emotional neglect. Exposure to violence at home

can traumatize children, posing them toward substance abuse to numb emotional pain. Generation gaps, lack of emotional parenting style leave youth misunderstood and isolated. With growing urbanization, many parents are too busy to monitor their children. Some youth, raised by domestic staff or left alone for long periods, are more vulnerable to external influences. Children growing in homes where drug use is normalized are more likely to experiment with substances themselves. According to the study published in Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences, family dysfunction is directly associated with high-risk behaviours including drug use. Mental health is another

Significant but overlooked contributors to drug addiction. Academic pressure, societal expectations, and relationship issues can lead to chronic stress and cause depression and anxiety. Drugs become an outlet to cope. Victims of abuse, bullying, or neglect may develop post-traumatic stress disorder, leading to drug addiction as a coping mechanism. Children struggling with self worth or cultural confusion may resort to drugs to gain confidence. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 10-20% of adolescents globally experience mental health conditions, many of which is undiagnosed in developing countries like Pakistan.

Due to stigma around mental health, these youth are more likely to use drugs than seek help. Unemployment among youth in Pakistan stands at over 91%, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, but the under-employment rate is significantly higher. Lack of job opportunities and bleak economic prospects result in frustration and despair, especially among educated youth. Inability to support themselves or their families leads to feelings of worthlessness. Lack of production engagement makes youth susceptible to drugs. Failure to meet family or societal expectations often pushes young people to use drugs as an escape route.

This economic hopelessness not only destroys individual but also affects national productivity. According to the Asian Development Bank, failure to integrate youth into work force contributes to crime and instability.

Ignorance about the dangers of drug use remains a critical cause. Most youth experiment with substances without knowing the short-long term consequences.

Drug awareness is not part of most school or college curricula. Students remain uninformed about addiction, withdrawal or treatment. Discussions about drugs are taboo in many households, preventing youth from seeking help. Movies and social media often portray drug use as

fashionable or empowering, misleading impressionable minds. Friends or seniors may introduce drugs under the false claim of increased focus, energy or confidence. An ANF youth survey found that over 50% of drug users in Pakistani universities were unaware of the health risks associated with even casual drug use. Drug abuse severely damages the physical health. Substance abuse leads to liver failure, health diseases, respiratory issues and weakened the immune systems. Intravenous drug can cause hepatitis and HIV/AIDS. Users consume higher doses, a increasing risk of accidental overdose. a common cause of death among young addicts. According

to UNODC, over 700 people in Pakistan die annually due to drug-related complications many of them in their youth. Addicted students often show reduced concentration, lack of motivation, and irregular attendance resulting in poor academic outcomes.

Addicted individuals are often jobless due to erratic behaviour, absenteeism or reduced efficiency. Treating addiction and related illness strains already overburdened public hospitals and mental health facilities. Many drug addicts resort to criminal activities, become financially dependent on family members, or fall into homelessness and extreme poverty. Drug dependency drive

youth toward theft, robbery, drug peddling, and in some cases violent crimes to support their addiction. Drug traffickers and criminal groups exploit youth, recruiting them for illegal activities and even extremist violence. Rising drug crimes overburden the police, courts and correctional facilities. A nation with a drug addicted youth can not achieve its human development goals or compete in a globalized economy.

Drug abuse is not merely a health or social issue it has evolved into serious threat to Pakistan's national security. The intersection of drug trafficking, organized crime, terrorism, and youth addiction create a dangerous nexus that weakens

the state internally and externally. Drug mafias operate with transnational links, and their networks fuel arms smuggling, human trafficking and corruption. These mafias often bribe officials, infiltrate institutions and challenge law enforcement. They fund local gangs and criminal syndicates, undermining the rule of law. The UNODC and Financial Action Task force (FATF) have both flagged Pakistan's drug financed terrorism risks.

Militant networks in border regions are believed to profit from heroin smuggling to sustain insurgencies. This directly compromise national security and regional stability. A drug addicted youth population become a soft target for terrorist

recruitment. Unemployed, addicted individuals are easily lured into criminal or militant activities in exchange for money or drugs. Youth under the influence are often used for dangerous tasks, including smuggling and suicide bombings, due to impaired judgment.

Drug corruption weakens police, judiciary and customs institutions through bribery and infiltration.

When law enforcement is compromised, national sovereignty and governance are undermined from within. Social media and encrypted messaging apps have become convenient channels for drug traffickers to reach vulnerable youth with alarming ease. The platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Telegram groups are increasingly being used to

promote and deliver narcotics often under the disguise of code words, emojis and digital slang. This anonymous and discreet access removes traditional barriers such as physical contact with dealers, making it easier for teenagers and students to experiment with dangerous substances. The threat is intensified by lack of digital regulation and poor cyber law enforcement in Pakistan. Moreover, the absence of parental controls, digital literacy, and awareness campaigns makes youth particularly susceptible. Government should empower ANF, police, and Customs to intercept drugs at borders and in cities. Enforce harsh penalties for traffickers, including those

using online channels. Incorporate
drug education into school
and university curricula.
Launch mass media

Campaigns using television,
radio and social platforms.
provide psychological services
in all academic institutions. Train
teachers and staff to detect
early signs of drug use. promote
open communication in families.

Encourage parents to monitor
online activity and peer groups.

Ban over the counter sales
of addictive substances.

Work with tech companies
to flag and remove illicit
drug content. Increase the

number of affordable,
government run rehab centres.

Introduce reintegration programs
for recovered addicts.

Drug abuse is a growing,

multifaceted threat to the youth of Pakistan. If not urgently addressed, it could erode the country's social, economic, and national foundations. The challenge is daunting but not insurmountable. With coordinated action from the state, families, educational institutions and media, Pakistan can protect its greatest asset: its youth. A drug free generation is not just a health goal, it is a national imperative for country's stability and progress. Drug abuse among Pakistan's youth if not addressed with urgency, it threatens to paralyze the nation's future. The youth of Pakistan deserve hope, guidance and opportunity not isolation, addiction and despair.

It is shared responsibility of government, civil society, families and educational institutions to protect and empower them. As Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah once said "Pakistan is proud of her youth, particularly the students, who are nation builders of tomorrow" let us not fail them.