

## DRUG ABUSE AMONG WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

\*Bahadur Ali

\*\*Dr. Tansif Ur Rehman

\*\*\*Ghulam Rasool

\*\*\*\*Rao Amin

\*\*\*\*\*Rana Danish

\* Bahadur Ali is a BA-LLB student in the Department of Law, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, Pakistan ([bahadurazizi98@gmail.com](mailto:bahadurazizi98@gmail.com))

\*\*Dr. Tansif Ur Rehman, Department of Law, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, Pakistan ([tansif@live.com](mailto:tansif@live.com))

\*\*\*Ghulam Rasool is a student of BA-LLB in the Department of Law, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, Pakistan ([ghulamrasol36700@gmail.com](mailto:ghulamrasol36700@gmail.com))

\*\*\*\*Rao Amin Ali is a student of BA-LLB in the Department of Law, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, Pakistan ([raoamin12@gmail.com](mailto:raoamin12@gmail.com))

\*\*\*\*\*Rana Danish is student of BA-LLB in the department of law, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, Pakistan([ranadaniah03112761706@gmail.com](mailto:ranadaniah03112761706@gmail.com))

### Abstract

*Drug abuse is a pressing social issue globally, and its impact on women in Pakistan is particularly significant. This article explores the prevalence, patterns, and underlying factors contributing to drug abuse among women in Pakistan. Drawing upon existing research and empirical evidence, it examines the sociocultural context, economic disparities, and psychological factors that influence women's susceptibility to drug abuse. Furthermore, the article investigates the effects of drug misuse on ladies' health, family dynamics, and societal integration. By shedding light on this underexplored aspect of substance abuse, the article aims to inform Community-based initiatives and policy interventions aimed at addressing the complex challenges faced by women struggling with drug addiction in Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** prevalence, patterns, sociocultural factors, economic disparities, psychological factors, consequences

### Introduction

The term "drug" comes from the French word "drogue," which refers to any dry herb. In general, any substance consumed is considered a drug to diagnose, prevent, relieve, or treat a medical condition. A broad definition by the World Health Organization states that a drug is any chemical other than those necessary to maintain normal health when a biological being might alter one or more of its (WHO, 1969).

Twelve5,000 injectable heroin users out of Pakistan's 500,000 total users. In just four major Pakistani cities, forty thousand street children are drug addicts (Chaudhry, 2013). In Pakistan, there are 7.6 million drug users, with 22% being female and 78% being male. The number of people with an addiction has risen by 40,000 years (Shadman, 2017).

In a survey of five million addicts, cannabis was shown to be the most often abused substance (UNODC, 2008). Heroin was found to be the most regularly

abused drug. The survey found that there were around 60,000 injecting drug users (IDUs) in the nation; by the end of 2004, that number was expected to rise to 180,000. The majority of IDUs share needles and are ignorant of the risks to their health that come with them.

Nine million people in Pakistan are not just drug users but also addicts, with over two million of them being in the 15–25 age range. The growing population of these individuals has serious social and health ramifications, particularly among young people attending college or university (Khan, 2016). Substances that potentially cause dependency alter brain neurons that control reward or pleasure. In addition to this, tobacco is widely used globally by both boys and girls (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2018).

Tobacco, alcohol, opium, cannabis, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, amphetamines, and cocaine are among the most widely used and well-known substances. Globally, tobacco is the most widely used medication for both sexes (Hindocha et al., 2016). Because of the media, Girls are using cogitating more frequently now than ever (Gilmore et al., 2004).

Such "Intervention support and treatment" programs have historically probably been designed primarily to address the requirements of males and the drugs that men use, with less focus on the unique needs of women (Andersson et al., 2021; Webb et al., 2022). However, as we already know, therapy is influenced by gender disparities (Diez et al., 2020; Fonseca et al., 2021). As a matter of fact, among drug users, women are more likely than males to become involved in drug addiction and experience detrimental effects on their health (UNODC, 2008). Such "Intervention support and treatment" programs have historically probably been designed primarily to address the requirements of males and the drugs that men use, with less focus on the unique needs of women (Andersson et al., 2021; Webb et al., 2022). However, as we already know, therapy is influenced by gender disparities (Diez et al., 2020; Fonseca et al., 2021). As a matter of fact, among drug users, women are more likely than males to become involved in drug addiction and experience detrimental effects on their health (UNODC, 2008).

Among injectable drug users (IDUs), the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic in Pakistan is already well-established. According to the national AIDS control programmer's 2008 estimate, about twenty-one percent of Pakistan's 100,000 street-based IDUs were HIV positive. In recent times, there has been an early indication of pandemic transmission by male and transgender sex workers, especially in places where they have the highest level of sexual interaction with IDUs. There is not much indication of HIV spreading to the general public right now, and it is not apparent which subgroups will act as a conduit for HIV transmission from IDUs to the general public.

The Global Gender Gap Report 2020 from the World Economic Forum placed Pakistan at an alarming 151st out of 153 countries, highlighting significant disparities. The report revealed Pakistan's low rankings in education, health, and women's wellbeing. Beyond statistics, there are unaddressed issues, such as the plight of sexually exploited women facing social stigma and substance abuse, often

linked to PTSD. Drug dependency becomes a coping mechanism for many women dealing with traumatic experiences. Recovery from trauma varies, influenced by the severity of the experience and individual coping abilities. In essence, the inability to cope with stress leads many victims to seek solace in medications for psychological comfort (Iqbal et al., 2018).

#### **Research Justification**

In Pakistan, more women are using drugs, which is a big problem. Women face many difficulties because of drug use, and it is causing problems in families and communities. Poverty, stress, and cultural issues push women toward drugs. Women addicts often hide their problems because they fear society will reject them. Families suffer a lot when women use drugs, and children also suffer and have unstable lives.

We need to talk openly about drug abuse among women and provide more support and treatment options for them. Community programs should empower women and offer them better choices. Government and society need to work together to solve this problem. By helping women, we can make families and communities stronger. It is essential to give women hope and a chance for a better life without drugs. Impact and Consequences.

The effects of drug misuse in females in Pakistan are multifaceted and severe. Beyond physical health deterioration, women face social ostracization, marital discord, economic instability, and legal repercussions. Moreover, poses dangers to throughout pregnancy maternal and fetal health, which might result in issues including low birth weight, neonatal abstinence syndrome, and developmental delays.

Numerous challenges hinder efforts to address drug abuse among women in Pakistan. Limited access to rehabilitation services, societal stigma, patriarchal attitudes, and inadequate governmental support impede effective intervention strategies. Moreover, cultural barriers often deter women from seeking help, perpetuating the cycle of substance dependence and marginalization.

#### **Research Methodology**

The systematic review approach constituted the basis of this study. This approach establishes the study objectives, and a thorough literature assessment is done (Komba&Lwoga, 2020). Based on the substance of the subject, the study findings are categorized (Hiver et al., 2021; Petticrew& Roberts, 2006). The study incorporates classified data by arranging it into headings (Gan et al., 2021; Pawson et al., 2005). The study's foundation is the assessment of titles and categorized data (Page, 2021; Rahi, 2017). Accordingly, integrity is guaranteed by assessing the contents of the study topic (Egger et al., 2022; Victor, 2008).

#### **Literature Review**

Because of their chemical effects, drugs are compounds that change how the human body naturally functions biologically (Hamid, 2002). Any chemical that is purposefully used to produce desired results is referred to as a drug. While some medications are used for medicinal purposes to cure illnesses, others are used for their

recreational benefits (Iversen, 2016). Prescription medications could be helpful, but certain non-medical medications have negative side effects (Tuwei, 2015).

The following symptoms should alert parents to potential behavioral changes in their children: rapid weight loss, lack of appetite, breathing difficulties, fatigue quickly, preference for staying outside the home, frequent demands for money, feelings of happiness when alone, prolonged sleep, laziness, pale face, trembling fingers, stomach problems, particularly constipation, irregularities in work and studies, lack of interest in daily tasks, red eyes, slurred speech, and dark circles under the eyes (Qasim, 2015).

Illegal drug usage can result from a variety of factors (Glantz&Hartel, 1999), including stress related to any aspect of life, sadness or dissatisfaction stemming from personal or professional circumstances, hanging around with people who take drugs, and attempting to pursue a modern lifestyle, lacking a job, absence of parental involvement, a hint of boredom, an inclination to try new things and enjoy leisure time, as well as inexpensive and straightforward access to drugs (Masood&Sahar, 2014; Qasim, 2015).

The leading cause of Pakistan's startling rise in drug usage is that those in positions of authority, money, and power fully encourage the drug trade. The fact that alcohol is inexpensive and widely accessible in our nation is another factor. Drugs are now both imported and exported from Pakistan. Between 25% to 44% of students in Pakistan use illicit substances (Khattak et al., 2012).

In order to determine the proportion of college students who misused drugs, Zaman et al. (2015) selected a sample of fifty individuals. The findings indicate that a sizable portion of pupils abuse drugs. Numerous elements, such as anxiety, despair, peer pressure, or any psychological instability, were at play here. Cannabis, hashish, heroin, opium, alcohol, and cocaine are commonly used substances. It is more common for men than women to misuse drugs. Students in the private sector misuse drugs at a higher rate than those in the public sector. According to Usman et al. (2017), 90.6% of male university students previously knew about drugs through peers, while female students learned about them from online media. Most college students believe that drug misuse is morally and legally wrong.

Personality attributes like honesty, amiability, dependability, compatibility, and timeliness are typically linked to pupils. Living in dorms teaches them to balance their social lives with those of others, broadening their tolerance. Their time spent in boarding helps students become more equipped to handle life's obstacles. Hostels housing a variety of student demographics encourage drug addiction among their peers. The study's findings significantly impact Pakistani hostel services (Iftikhar & Ajmal, 2015).

### **Discussion**

Drug abuse among women in Pakistan is a concerning issue that needs careful discussion and action. Firstly, it is essential to recognize that women face unique challenges when it comes to drug abuse, including social stigma and limited access to support services. In many cases, women use drugs as a coping mechanism for stress, trauma, or difficult life circumstances. Poverty, lack of education, and cultural norms also play significant roles in pushing women towards drug abuse.

Additionally, the effects of drug misuse on females can be severe. They may experience deteriorating emotional and physical wellbeing, strained relationships with

family and friends, and even violence or discrimination from society. Drug abuse among pregnant women can also harm the health of both the mother and the unborn child. Addressing drug abuse among women requires a multifaceted approach. It includes increasing access to healthcare services and rehabilitation programs tailored to women's needs. It is also crucial to raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding drug addiction, encouraging women to seek help without fear of judgment.

Furthermore, empowering women through education, economic opportunities, and supportive community networks can help prevent drug abuse and provide alternative paths to healing and recovery. By fostering understanding and support for women struggling with drug addiction, Pakistan can endeavor to build a society that is more secure and welcoming to all.

### Conclusion

Some of the critical problems that have never been addressed before about female drug usage in Pakistan were examined in this study. The results of this study offer verifiable, scientific proof that drug usage negatively impacts women's and their families' health and wellbeing. Since addiction illnesses in women are preventable, there is a growing morbidity rate from them, which calls for more focus in public health policy, service delivery, and research.

When comparing the vast majority of male drug users in the nation to the relatively small number of female drug users, the issue of drug use among women appears to be a minor and unimportant public health concern. However, the effects of drug use among women extend beyond the individual to include families as a whole and have a more detrimental influence on children. There is a need for a prompt and immediate response, as research indicates that women may be more susceptible than men to the inevitable repercussions associated with drug abuse.

Since the community views women's drug usage as more deviant than that of men, female drug users provide a difficult demographic to reach. Drug use is viewed negatively and defies social standards on appropriate behavior. Women are particularly affected by the stigma attached to drug use, which makes them more likely to hide their usage to appease others. Among female drug users, the stigma attached to drug use frequently results in intense emotions of guilt and shame, which can lead to severe mental health issues. A lot of female drug users experience feelings of helplessness, loneliness, sadness, and low self-worth. FDUs also exacerbate the situation by not using resources that are available to them or seeking aid to lessen the stigma.

### Recommendations

- 1. Increase Access to Healthcare Service:** Ensure that women in Pakistan have access to affordable and comprehensive healthcare services, including addiction treatment and mental health support.
- 2. Promote Gender-Specific Rehabilitation Programs:** Develop rehabilitation programs explicitly tailored to the needs of women, considering their unique experiences and challenges.



3. **Raise Awareness and Education:** Launch nationwide campaigns to increase knowledge of the risks associated with drug abuse among women and educate communities about available support services.
4. **Address Socioeconomic Factors:** Implement measures to lower poverty and increase access to education and employment opportunities for women, as poverty and lack of education are often underlying factors in drug abuse.
5. **Train Healthcare Professionals:** Provide training for healthcare professionals to recognize the signs of drug abuse in women and provide appropriate interventions and support.
6. **Create Safe Spaces:** Establish safe places where women can go for support and assistance without worrying about being judged or discriminated against by society or their families.
7. **Provide Counseling Services:** Offer counseling services to women struggling with drug abuse, addressing underlying issues such as trauma, domestic violence, and mental health disorders.
8. **Involve Community Leaders:** Engage community leaders, religious figures, and local organizations in addressing drug abuse among women and promoting supportive environments.
9. **Strengthen Law Enforcement Efforts:** Implement measures to crack down on drug trafficking and hold drug dealers accountable while also prioritizing rehabilitation over punishment for drug users.
10. **Support Pregnant Women:** Develop programs to support pregnant women struggling with drug addiction, ensuring access to prenatal care, addiction treatment, and social support services.
11. **Promote Peer Support Groups:** Facilitate the establishment of peer support groups where female members can hold one another accountable for their recovery journeys, encourage one another, and share their stories.
12. **Integrate Mental Health Services:** Integrate mental health services into drug rehabilitation programs, recognizing the importance of addressing co-occurring mental health disorders in women with substance abuse issues.
13. **Offer Vocational Training:** Provide vocational training and job placement assistance to women recovering from drug addiction, empowering them to rebuild their lives and secure stable employment.
14. **Encourage Family Support:** Educate families on the effects of substance misuse on women and encourage them to provide emotional support and understanding to their loved ones struggling with addiction.
15. **Monitor and Evaluate Programs:** Continuously evaluate the efficiency of initiatives designed to prevent and treat drug abuse targeted at women, making necessary adjustments to improve outcomes and ensure resources are used efficiently.

#### **Research Limitations**

1. **Limited Data Availability:** One significant limitation is the scarcity of reliable and comprehensive data on drug abuse among women in Pakistan.
2. **Limited in scope or outdated,** making it challenging to understand the problem completely.

3. **Social Stigma and Underreporting:** Drug abuse, especially among women, is often stigmatized in Pakistani society. As a result, many women may hesitate to disclose their substance abuse due to fear of judgment or repercussions, leading to underreporting and skewed data.
4. **Cultural Sensitivities and Barriers:** Cultural norms and societal expectations in Pakistan may pose barriers to researching sensitive topics like drug abuse among women. Researchers may encounter challenges in gaining access to participants and eliciting honest responses due to cultural taboos surrounding substance abuse.
5. **Sample Representation:** Recruiting a diverse and representative sample of women from different socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and age groups can be challenging. This limitation may affect the generalizability of research findings to the broader population of women in Pakistan.
6. **Language and Literacy Issues:** Language barriers and low literacy rates among specific population segments may hinder effective communication and data collection during research studies, potentially leading to misinterpretation or incomplete responses.
7. **Ethical Considerations:** Research involving vulnerable populations, such as women struggling with drug abuse, requires careful consideration of ethical guidelines and protection of participants' confidentiality and privacy. Ethical constraints may impact the depth and scope of research investigations.
8. **Longitudinal Studies and Follow-Up:** Longitudinal studies tracking the long-term consequences of drug misuse in females in Pakistan may be limited by logistical constraints, including funding, participant retention, and resource availability over extended periods.
9. **Cross-Cultural Validity:** Findings from research conducted in Pakistan may not always apply or be generalizable to other cultural contexts. Cultural nuances and societal dynamics unique to Pakistan may influence the prevalence and patterns of drug abuse among women differently compared to other regions.

#### **Research Implications**

1. **Policy Development and Implementation:** Research on drug abuse among women in Pakistan can inform the development and implementation of evidence-based policies aimed at addressing the root causes of substance abuse, improving access to healthcare services, and promoting gender-sensitive interventions.
2. **Prevention and Awareness Programs:** Research insights can guide the design and implementation of prevention and awareness programs targeted at women, their families, and communities. Programs can include informing people about the dangers of drug usage and encouraging healthy coping mechanisms and alternatives.
3. **Tailored Treatment Approaches:** Understanding the unique needs and experiences of women struggling with drug abuse can inform the development of tailored treatment approaches and rehabilitation programs. These programs should address underlying issues such as trauma, mental health disorders, and socioeconomic barriers to recovery.
4. **Integration of Mental Health Services:** Research findings can advocate for the integration of mental health services within drug rehabilitation programs, recognizing the

high rate of mental health co-occurring disorders among women with substance abuse issues.

**5. Capacity Building and Training:** Research implications can highlight the need for capacity building and training programs for healthcare professionals, social workers, and community leaders to recognize better and respond to the needs of women affected by drug abuse.

**6. Community Engagement and Support Networks:** Research can emphasize the importance of community engagement and the establishment of support networks for women recovering from drug addiction. These networks can provide emotional support, encouragement, and resources for women on their journey to recovery.

**7. Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns:** Research findings can catalyze advocacy efforts aimed at raising awareness about the effects of drug misuse on females in Pakistan. Advocacy campaigns can mobilize stakeholders, policymakers, and the general public to prioritize resources and support for women affected by substance abuse.

**8. Longitudinal Studies and Evaluation:** Conducting longitudinal studies and program evaluations can help assess the long-term effectiveness of interventions and policies aimed at addressing drug abuse among women. These studies can give insightful information on the results of different strategies and educate future decision-making.

#### **Future Research Directions**

**1. Longitudinal Studies:** Subsequent investigations may concentrate on carrying out extended analyses to monitor the course of drug abuse among women in Pakistan over time. These studies can help understand patterns of substance use, factors influencing relapse, and the effectiveness of interventions in the long term.

**2. Exploring Cultural Influences:** Further research should delve into the cultural factors that contribute to drug abuse among women in Pakistan. Understanding how cultural norms, beliefs, and societal expectations shape women's experiences with substance abuse can inform culturally sensitive interventions.

**3. Impact of Technology and Social Media:** Investigating Social media and technology's contribution to drug usage among women is essential. Future research could explore how social media platforms influence drug-related behaviors, peer influences, and access to information about substance abuse.

**4. Intersectionality and Vulnerable Groups:** Research should examine the intersectionality of elements, including gender, location, race, and socioeconomic status, in shaping women's experiences with drug abuse. Understanding how these intersecting identities influence vulnerability and access to resources is crucial for targeted interventions.

**5. Mental Health and Coping Mechanisms:** Future studies could explore the relationship between mental health disorders, trauma, and coping mechanisms among women who abuse drugs in Pakistan. Understanding how mental health issues contribute to substance use and vice versa can inform integrated treatment approaches.

**6. Family Dynamics and Support Systems:** Investigating the role of family dynamics and support systems in women's recovery from drug abuse is essential. Future research could explore the impact of family relationships, social support networks, and stigma on women's ability to seek help and maintain sobriety. **7. Barriers to Treatment**



**Access:** Research should identify and address the barriers that prevent women in Pakistan from accessing treatment and support services for drug abuse. Understanding structural, financial, and cultural barriers can inform policy changes and improve service delivery.

**7. Evaluating Community-Based Interventions:** Future research could evaluate the effectiveness of community-based interventions, peer support groups, and outreach programs in addressing drug abuse among women. Assessing the impact of community level initiatives can guide the development of scalable and sustainable interventions.

### References

- Andersson, C., Wincup, E., Best, D., & Irving, J. (2021). Gender and recovery pathways in the UK. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, 28(5), 454–464. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687637.2020.1852180>
- Chaudhry, P. D. (2013). *Drugs use in colleges and universities is growing*. Interface.edu.pk.com: <https://www.interface.edu.pk/students/June-09/Drug-use-in-colleges-universities-growing.asp>
- Diez, M., Pawlowicz, M. P., Vissicchio, F., Amendolaro, R., Barla, J. C., Muñiz, A., & Arrúa, L. (2020). Entre la invisibilidad y el estigma: Consumo de sustancias psicoactivas en mujeres embarazadas y puérperas de tres hospitales generales de Argentina. *Salud Colectiva*, 16, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.18294/sc.2020.2509>
- Egger, M., Higgins, J. P., & Smith, G. D. (Eds.). (2022). *Systematic reviews in health research: Meta-analysis in context*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Fonseca, F., Robles-Martínez, M., Tirado-Muñoz, J., Alías-Ferri, M., Mestre-Pinto, J. I., Coratu, A. M., & Torrens, M. (2021). A gender perspective of addictive disorders. *Current Addiction Reports*, 8(1), 89–99. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-021-00357-9>
- Gan, J., Xie, L., Peng, G., Xie, J., Chen, Y., & Yu, Q. (2021). Systematic review on modification methods of dietary fiber. *Food Hydrocolloids*, 119, 106872. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodhyd.2021.106872>
- Gilmore, A., Pomerleau, J., McKee, M., Rose, R., Haerpfer, C. W., Rotman, D., & Tumanov, S. (2004). Prevalence of smoking in 8 countries of the former Soviet Union: Results from the living conditions, lifestyles, and health study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94 (12), 2177–2187.
- Glantz, M. D., & Hartel, C. R. (1999). *Drug abuse: Origins & interventions*. American Psychological Association.
- Hamid, G. (2002). *Drugs and addictive behavior: A guide to treatment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hindocha, C., Freeman, T. P., Ferris, J. A., Lynskey, M. T., & Winstock, A. R. (2016). No smoke without tobacco: A global overview of cannabis and tobacco routes of administration and their association with intention to quit. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, 7(1), 104.
- Hiver, P., Al-Hoorie, A. H., Vitta, J. P., & Wu, J. (2021). Engagement in language learning: A systematic review of 20 years of research methods and definitions. *Language Teaching Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211001289>
- Iftikhar, A., & Ajmal, A. (2015). A qualitative study investigating the impact of hostel life. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health Human*

- Resilience*, 17(2), 511-515.
- Iqbal, T., Yousafzai, M. T., Ali, S., Sattar, K., Saleem, M. Q., Habib, U., & Khan, R. (2018). There is no such thing as free lunch but envy among young facebookers. *KSII Transactions on Internet & Information Systems* 12(10), 4724- 4737.
- Iversen, L. (2016). *Drugs: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Khan, S. (2016, November 19). Drug abuse. *Pakistan Observer*.  
<https://pakobserver.net/drug-abuse/>
- Khattak, M. A., N. I., Khattak, S. R., & Ullah, I. (2012). Influence of drugs on student performance: a qualitative study in Pakistan university students. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research Business*, 826-838.
- Komba, M. M., &Lwoga, E. T. (2020). *Systematic review as a research method in library and information science*. 10.4018/978-1-7998-1471-9.ch005.
- Masood, S., &Sahar, N. U. (2014). An exploratory research on the role of family in youth's drug addiction. *Health Psychology & Behavioural Medicine*, 2 (1), 820-832.
- National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2018, July). *Drugs, brains, and behavior: The science of addiction*. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-scienceaddiction/drugs-brain>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., &Moher, D. (2021). Updating guidance for reporting systematic reviews: Development of the PRISMA 2020 statement. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 134, 103- 112.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2021.02.003>
- Pawson, R., Greenhalgh, T., Harvey, G., &Walshe, K. (2005). Realist review - A new method of systematic review designed for complex policy interventions. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*, 10(1), 21-34. 10.1258/1355819054308530
- Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic reviews in the social sciences: A practical guide*. Blackwell Publishing. 10.1002/9780470754887
- Qasim, M. (2015, June 26). *Addiction continues to be on the rise among Pakistani youth*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/47959-addiction-continues-tobe-on-the-rise-among-pakistani-youth>
- Shadman, A. (2017). *ProPakistani*.  
<https://propakistani.pk/2017/01/09/drug-abuse-control-pakistani-schools-universities/>
- Rahi, S. (2017). Research design and methods: A systematic review of research paradigms, sampling issues, and instruments development. *International Journal of Economics & Management Sciences*, 6(2). 10.4172/2162-6359.1000403
- Tuwei, P.C. (2015). *Influence of drug abuse on students academic performance in public universities. A case of UasinGishu County in Kenya*.  
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Influence-of-drug-abuse-on-students-academic-in-A-Tuwei/b64b972e1cf9c5d4acecd0eadf47657c30c8d6d7>
- UNODC. (2008). *Rapid situation and response assessment of drug-related HIV in Pakistan*.  
[https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/archive/documents/topics/hiv-aids/UNRTF/PAK\\_CAB\\_29\\_Mar\\_10\\_.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/archive/documents/topics/hiv-aids/UNRTF/PAK_CAB_29_Mar_10_.pdf)

- Usman, H. B., Atif, I., Pervaiz, T. B., Muhammad, A. B., Satti, A., & Bukhari, S. I. (2017). Practices and reasons for recreational drug use among college and university students of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. *Isra Medical Journal*, 9 (1), 9-14
- Victor, L. (2008). Systematic reviewing in the social sciences: Outcomes and explanation. *Enquire*, 1(1), 32-46.
- Webb, L., Fox, S., Skarner, A., & Messas, G. (2022). Women and substance use: Specific needs and experiences of use, others' use, and transitions towards recovery. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 13, 1078605– 1078605.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2022.1078605>
- World Health Organization. (1969). *WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence 16<sup>th</sup> Report (technical report series 407)*.
- Zaman, M., Razzaq, S., Hassan, R., Qureshi, J., Ijaz, H., Hanif, M., & Chughtai, F. R. (2015). Drug abuse among the students. *Pakistan Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, 41-47.