

1                                   **“A STUDY TO ASSESS KNOWLEDGE AND**  
2                                   **ATTITUDE REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG**  
3                                   **COLLEGE STUDENTS AT SELECTED COLLEGES IN**  
4                                   **BENGALURU”**

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6  
7   **1.ABSTRACT**

8   A study on student's knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse among  
9   college students at selected colleges in Bengaluru. Objectives of the study were  
10   to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse among college  
11   students at Bengaluru to assess the attitude regarding substance abuse among  
12   students of selected college at Bengaluru, to assess the correlation between  
13   knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse at its selected demographic  
14   variables, to find the association between knowledge and selected demographic  
15   variables, to find association between attitude and selected demographic  
16   variables. A sample of 30 participants from smt nagarathamma college of  
17   nursing students) was selected by purposive sampling technique. The data was  
18   collected by using standard knowledge questionnaire and likert scale, and data  
19   was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypothesis of the  
20   study was H0: There will be significant association between knowledge  
21   regarding substance abuse and their selected demographic variables, , H0:  
22   There is a significant association between attitude regarding substance abuse  
23   and their selected demographic variables, H1: There is a significant correlation  
24   between knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse and their selected  
25   demographic variables. The study result showed that there is a moderate  
26   correlation between knowledge and attitude of substance abuse among college  
27   students therefore H2 is accepted.

28   **KEY WORDS:** Substance abuse, knowledge, attitude, college students,  
29   Bengaluru, demographic variables, correlation, association, nursing students,  
30   purposive sampling.

31   **2.INTRODUCTION**

32   "The mentality and behaviour of drug addicts and alcoholics is wholly irrational  
33   until you understand that they are completely powerless over their addiction."

34   — Russell Brand

35 Health is a holistic concept that includes the body, mind, and soul, and is the  
36 most precious possession of humanity. Physical, mental, and social health are  
37 all equally important. The human mind, often considered a "tabula rasa," or  
38 blank slate, at birth, learns adaptive and maladaptive behaviors through various  
39 experiences and circumstances, though some genetic traits are also involved.  
40 People turn to substances such as drugs, alcohol, and tobacco for a variety of  
41 complex reasons.

42 Substance abuse is a medical condition that can interfere with a person's  
43 relationships, their ability to fulfill work, school, or family obligations, and can  
44 lead to legal problems and dangerous behavior. It is characterized by increasing  
45 use of a substance, seeking it at great lengths, experiencing withdrawal  
46 symptoms, and being unable to stop or reduce its use.

### 47 **3. NEED FOR THE STUDY**

48 The World Drug Report 2023 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime  
49 (UNODC) highlights that 1 in every 17 people worldwide aged 15-64 has used  
50 a drug in the past year, indicating a steady rise in usage. The World Health  
51 Organization (WHO, 2022) reports that harmful alcohol use is a major concern,  
52 with over 283 million people globally engaging in heavy episodic drinking. The  
53 dual burden of substance dependence and poor adherence to medical treatment  
54 increases the risk of accidents, violence, and social instability.

55 India has seen a sharp increase in substance abuse among adolescents and  
56 young adults. Recent surveys by the National Drug Dependence Treatment  
57 Centre (NDDTC) at AIIMS (2022) show that the age of initiation for many  
58 substances has dropped to as early as 12–14 years, with usage peaking between  
59 18–25 years. This trend is accelerated by peer influence, academic stress, easy  
60 availability, and exposure to digital media.

61 This growing problem poses a serious threat to physical health, mental well-  
62 being, and socio-economic development. Protecting adolescents from early  
63 initiation into substance use is a national priority

### 64 **4. OBJECTIVES**

65 Statement of the Problem: A study to assess knowledge and attitude regarding  
66 substance abuse among college students at selected colleges in Bengaluru.

#### 67 **Purpose of the Study:**

- 68 ❖ To assess the knowledge regarding substance abuse among selected college  
69 students in Bengaluru.

70 ❖ To assess the attitude regarding substance abuse among selected college  
71 students in Bengaluru.

72 ❖ To assess the correlation between knowledge and attitude regarding  
73 substance abuse.

#### 74 **Operational Definitions:**

75 Assess: To evaluate the knowledge and attitude of college students regarding  
76 substance abuse.

77 Knowledge: The score a student obtains in response to a questionnaire on  
78 substance abuse, including predisposing factors, effects, withdrawal symptoms,  
79 treatment, and control.

80 Attitude: The opinions or feelings of college students regarding substance  
81 abuse, as measured by a three-point Likert scale.

82 Substance: Refers to tobacco, alcohol, heroin, cocaine, inhalants, hallucinogens,  
83 and meth.

84 Substance Abuse: Disorders resulting from the use of psychoactive substances,  
85 as assessed by a questionnaire.

86 College Students: Students aged 20-24 years from selected colleges in  
87 Bengaluru.

#### 88 **Hypotheses:**

89 H0: There will be a significant association between knowledge regarding  
90 substance abuse and selected demographic variables.

91 H1: There will be a significant association between attitude regarding substance  
92 abuse and selected demographic variables.

93 H2: There will be a significant correlation between knowledge and attitude  
94 regarding substance abuse and selected demographic variables.

#### 95 **4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

96 A review of literature reveals that substance abuse is a global issue with a rising  
97 prevalence among young people. A cross-sectional study in Morocco with a  
98 sample of 1,236 students showed that male gender, older age, and a history of  
99 depressive disorders were strongly linked to alcohol use, with higher prevalence  
100 in urban areas.

101 Another cross-sectional study in Chandigarh on 206 college students found that  
102 52.7% of students aged 19-21 used substances, with law students having the

103 highest prevalence (76.2%). Alcohol was the most commonly used substance,  
104 followed by tobacco and cannabis.

105 A descriptive cross-sectional study in Puducherry found that the overall  
106 prevalence of alcohol use among individuals aged 18 and above was 9.7%, with  
107 the highest prevalence in the 46-55 age group. A third of the users started  
108 drinking before the age of 20.

109 Research on adolescents in Udaipur showed that a majority had moderately  
110 adequate knowledge (61%) and a favorable attitude (60%) toward alcoholism.  
111 Another study in New Delhi on 150 nurses found that 89.33% routinely asked  
112 about substance abuse during patient history collection, and 94% felt the need  
113 for education sessions to improve their knowledge.

## 114 **5. METHODOLOGY**

115 Research Approach: A non-experimental quantitative research approach was  
116 used.

117 Research Design: The study adopted a non-experimental descriptive research  
118 design to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse among  
119 college students in Bengaluru.

### 120 **Variables:**

121 Research Variables: Knowledge and attitude regarding substance abuse.

122 Demographic Variables: Name, age, gender, year of study, religion, history of  
123 alcoholism in the family, monthly pocket money, and place of stay.

124 Setting: The study was conducted at Smt. Nagarathamma College of Nursing,  
125 Bengaluru, selected for its accessibility and proximity.

126 Population: The target population was college students in Bengaluru,  
127 specifically those aged 20-24 years.

128 Sample: The sample consisted of 30 college students aged 20-24 from a selected  
129 college in Bengaluru.

130 Sampling Technique: A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used  
131 to select participants based on the specific characteristics required for the study.

### 132 **Inclusion Criteria:**

133 College students available at the time of data collection.

134 Students between the age group of 20-24 years.

135 Students willing to participate in the study.

136 Tool Description: The tool consisted of three sections:

137 Section A: Demographic variables.

138 Section B: A structured knowledge questionnaire with 25 multiple-choice  
139 questions.

140 Section C: A standardized Likert scale with 25 questions to assess attitude.

141 **Data Collection:** Data was collected after obtaining permission from the  
142 college authorities. A participant information sheet was provided, and the data  
143 was collected by the research group using the structured questionnaire and  
144 attitude scale.

145 **Content Validity:** The tool was validated by five nursing experts, and  
146 modifications were made based on their suggestions, including grammar  
147 corrections, adding more relevant questions, and incorporating an attitude scale.

148 **Pilot Study:** A pilot study was conducted with 10 samples to establish the tool's  
149 reliability.

150 **Reliability:** The reliability of the tool was established using the split-half  
151 method with Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient. The result was a reliability  
152 coefficient of 0.67, which was considered reliable for the study.

153 **Data Collection Procedure:** The main study was conducted on 16/09/2025.  
154 Thirty samples were selected, and the data was collected by three members of  
155 the research group.

## 156 **5. RESULTS**

### 157 **STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

158 Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the baseline characteristics of the  
159 study participants. Categorical variables are presented as frequency counts (n)  
160 and percentages (%).

161 To assess the impact of the intervention on students' attitude and knowledge  
162 regarding substance use, changes between pretest and post-test scores were  
163 analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The results of this test are  
164 reported as median values with corresponding interquartile ranges (IQRs).

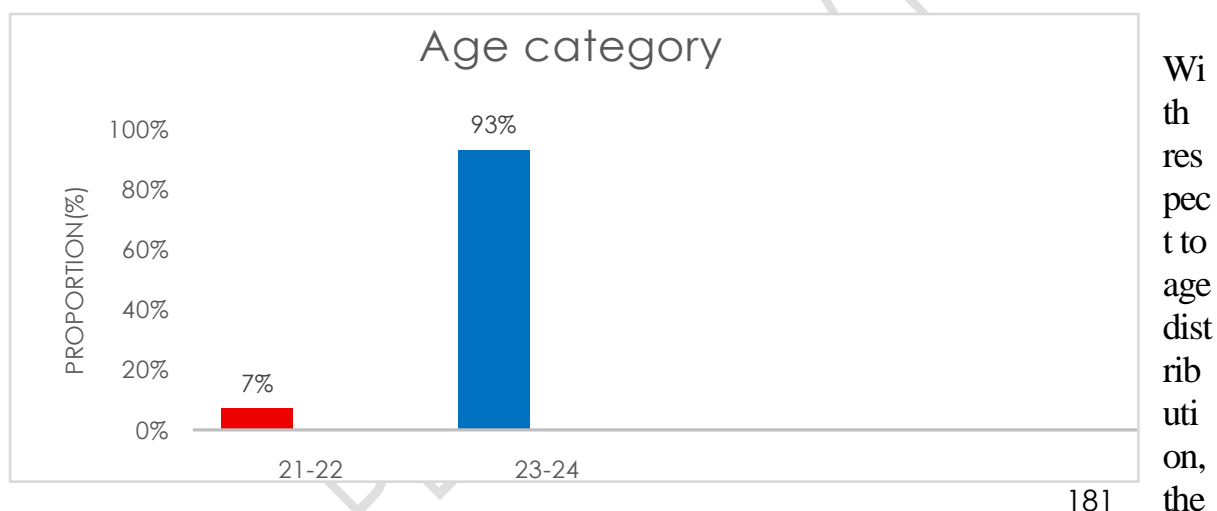
165 A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant for all comparisons.  
 166 All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26.

167 **RESULTS**

168 **Table 1: Age distribution of participants (n=30)**

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
21–22	2	7%
23–24	28	93%

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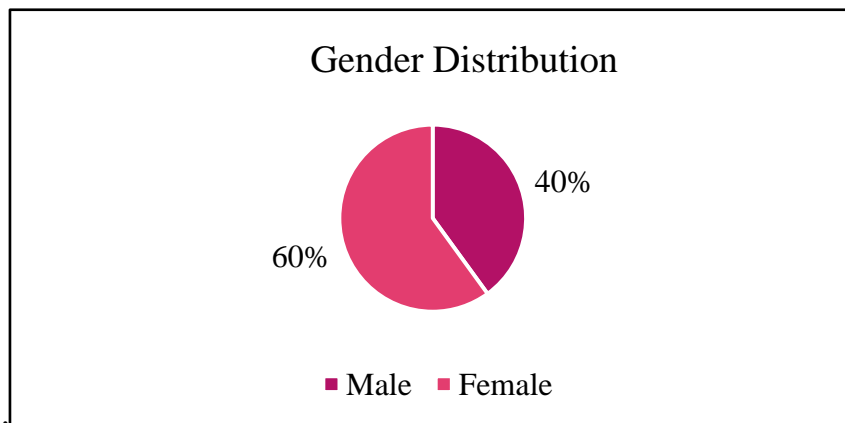
182 vast majority of participants (93%) fell within the 21-22 years age group, whereas only  
 183 a small proportion (7%) belonged to the 23-24 years category, highlighting that the  
 184 study population was predominantly concentrated in the senior age range of 23-24  
 185 years.

186

187 **Table 2: Gender distribution of participants**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	12	40%
Female	18	60%

188 In terms of gender distribution, the study revealed that a greater proportion of  
 189 participants were females, accounting for 60% of the total sample, whereas  
 190 males constituted the remaining 40%. This indicates that female representation  
 191 in the study population was relatively higher compared to their male



192 counterparts.

193 **Table 3: Distribution of participants by religion, history of alcoholism in**  
 194 **the family, pocket money, and place of stay.**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Religion</b>	Hindu	16	53.33%
	Christian	10	33.33%
	Muslim	4	13.33%
<b>History of Alcoholism in family</b>	No	26	86.67%
	Yes	4	13.33%
<b>Monthly Pocket Money</b>	Below 500	1	3.33%
	500–1000	10	33.33%
	1000–2000	14	46.67%
	Above 2000	5	16.67%
<b>Place of Stay</b>	Others	21	70%

	Paying guest	8	26.67%
	Hostel	1	3.33%

195

196 More than half of the participants were Hindus (53.33%), followed by  
 197 Christians (33.33%) and Muslims (13.33%). The majority (86.67%) reported no  
 198 relevant history, while only 13.33% did. Regarding monthly pocket money,  
 199 nearly half (46.67%) received ₹1000–2000, followed by 33.33% who received  
 200 ₹500–1000, 16.67% above ₹2000, and only 3.33% below ₹500. As for the place  
 201 of stay, most participants (70%) lived with family/relatives (‘Others’), while  
 202 26.67% stayed in paying guest accommodations, and just 3.33% stayed in  
 203 hostels.

204 **Table 4: Comparison of Knowledge and Attitudes on Substance Abuse**  
 205 **between Pretest and Post-test**

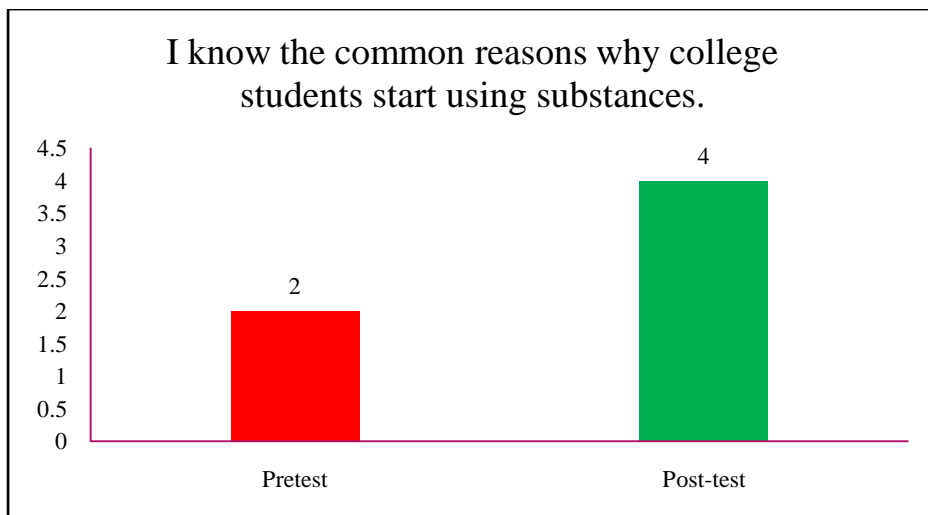
Variable	Pretest Median (IQR)	Post-test Median (IQR)	p-value
I know where to seek help or counseling for substance abuse	2.5 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I can identify different types of substances commonly abused	2 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I know the common reasons why college students start using substances	2 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I am aware of the physical health effects of substance abuse	3 (2,3)	4 (3,4)	<0.001

I am aware of the psychological effects of substance abuse	2.5 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Substance abuse is a serious problem among college students	2 (2,3)	4 (3,4)	<0.001
A hospital is the best place to treat an alcoholic or drug addict	2 (1,2)	3 (2,3)	<0.001
I know legal consequences of using illegal substances	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Withdrawal symptoms can be shown when a drug is stopped	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I am aware of government programmes/campaigns against substance abuse	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I know that peer pressure can influence substance abuse	2 (1,2.75)	4 (3,4)	<0.001
I know that early intervention can prevent dependence	2 (1,3)	4 (3.25,4)	<0.001
Students who use substances should be punished	2 (2,3)	2 (1,2)	<0.001
Students who use substances need support and counseling	3 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
It is acceptable for students to use substances to relieve stress	2.5 (2,3)	1 (1,1)	<0.001
Peer pressure makes it difficult to	2 (2,3)	4 (3,4)	<0.001

refuse substances			
Talking openly can reduce prevalence of substance abuse	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
It is the responsibility of colleges to create awareness	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
I would support my friend if they want to quit	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Seeking help for substance use is not shameful	2 (1,2)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Substance abuse can be prevented through awareness programmes	2 (1,2.75)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Students can play a role in preventing substance abuse	2 (1,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Substance abuse negatively affects relationships/social life	2 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Substance abuse is a serious problem among college students	3 (2,3)	4 (4,4)	<0.001
Using substances occasionally is harmless	2.5 (2,3)	1 (1,1)	<0.001

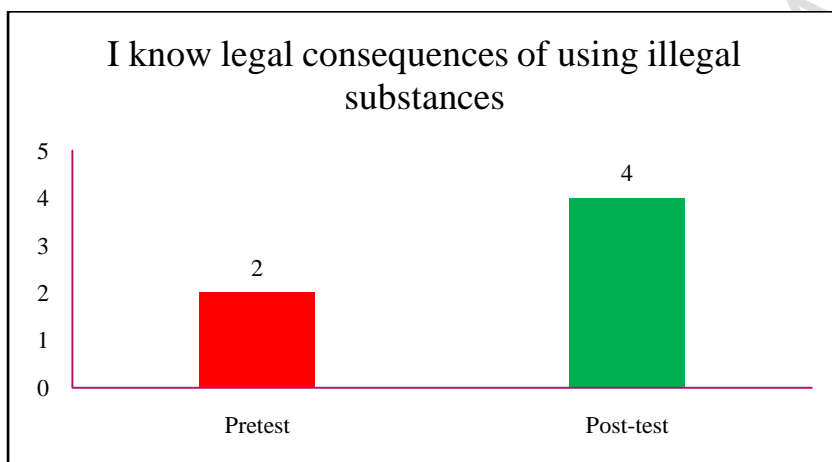
206 P Values obtained using Wilcoxon signed rank test.  $P < 0.05$  is considered  
207 significant

208 **Figure 3: Change in students' knowledge of common reasons why college**  
209 **students start using substances before and after the intervention.**



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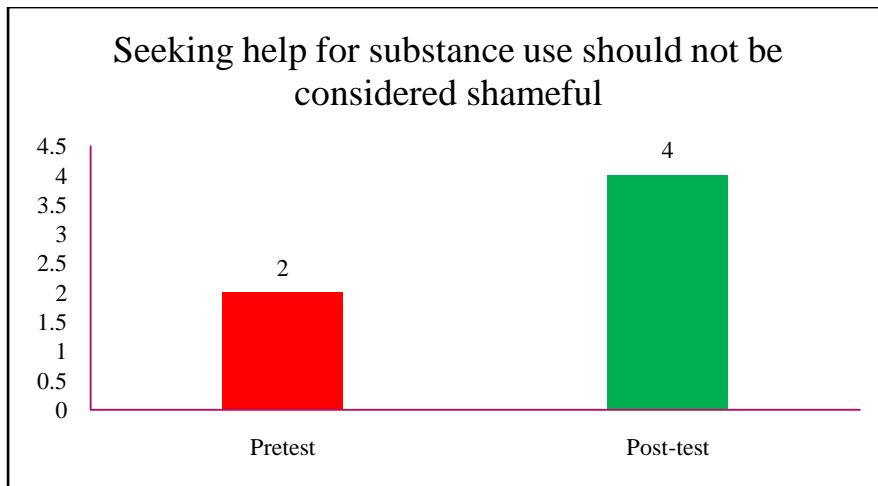
211 **Figure 4: Change in students' knowledge of legal consequences of using**  
 212 **illegal substances before and after the intervention.**



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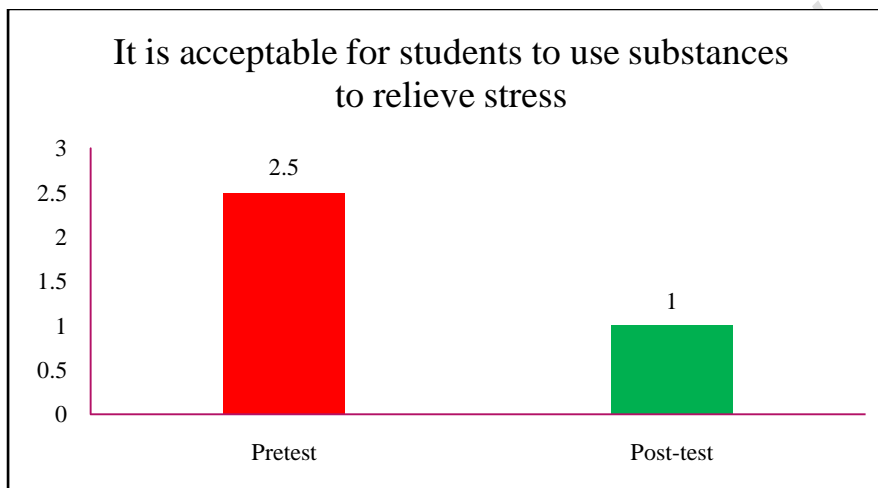
214 Attitudinal changes were also evident. Agreement that talking openly can  
 215 reduce substance abuse, that it is the responsibility of colleges to create  
 216 awareness, and that seeking help is not shameful shifted markedly from median  
 217 scores of 2 to 4.(Figure 5) Importantly, misconceptions also declined: the  
 218 median score for “It is acceptable to use substances to relieve stress” dropped  
 219 from 2.5 to 1, (Figure 6) and the view that “using substances occasionally is  
 220 harmless” shifted from 2.5 to 1, indicating reduced acceptance of risky  
 221 behaviors.

222 **Figure 5: Change in students' attitude toward seeking help for substance**  
 223 **use without feeling shame before and after the intervention.**



224

225 **Figure 6: Change in students' acceptance of using substances to relieve**  
 226 **stress before and after the intervention.**



227

228 Taken together, these findings suggest that the intervention led to a significant  
 229 enhancement of knowledge, awareness, and positive attitudes toward substance  
 230 abuse prevention, while simultaneously reducing misconceptions and punitive  
 231 perspectives toward students who use substances.

232 **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

233 The study included 30 participants. The majority of participants (93%) were  
 234 between 23 and 24 years old, with only a small portion (7%) in the 21-22 age  
 235 group. The sample was predominantly female, accounting for 60% of the total,  
 236 while males constituted the remaining 40%.

237 More than half of the participants were Hindus (53.33%), followed by  
 238 Christians (33.33%) and Muslims (13.33%). A significant majority (86.67%)

239 reported no family history of alcoholism. Regarding monthly pocket money,  
240 nearly half (46.67%) received between ₹1000–2000, while a third (33.33%)  
241 received ₹500–1000. Most participants (70%) lived with family or relatives,  
242 26.67% stayed in paying guest accommodations, and only 3.33% lived in a  
243 hostel.

## 244 **DISCUSSION**

245 The findings indicate a statistically significant improvement in both knowledge  
246 and attitudes regarding substance abuse from the pretest to the post-test  
247 ( $p < 0.001$ ). The intervention was highly effective in enhancing key areas of  
248 understanding.

249 Students showed a substantial increase in their knowledge about substance  
250 abuse, with median scores rising from 2 to 4 for several critical questions. This  
251 included the ability to identify different types of substances, knowledge of the  
252 reasons for substance initiation among college students, and awareness of the  
253 legal consequences and withdrawal symptoms. Similarly, awareness of  
254 government campaigns and the psychological effects of substance abuse also  
255 improved from a median of 2 to 4.

## 256 **7. CONCLUSION**

257 The study successfully assessed the knowledge and attitude regarding substance  
258 abuse among college students in Bengaluru. The non-experimental descriptive  
259 design, along with the structured questionnaire and attitude scale, proved to be  
260 an effective method for evaluating the study objectives.

261 The key findings highlight a significant and positive shift in the participants'  
262 understanding and perspective after the intervention. The students demonstrated  
263 an enhanced awareness of the various aspects of substance abuse, including its  
264 effects, the reasons for its initiation, legal consequences, and the importance of  
265 seeking help.

## 266 **SUMMARY**

267 This study was a non-experimental descriptive research that assessed the  
268 knowledge and attitude of 30 college students regarding substance abuse. A  
269 pilot study confirmed the reliability of the research tool with a correlation  
270 coefficient of 0.67. The main study, conducted on 16/09/2025 at Smt.  
271 Nagarathamma College of Nursing, showed that the intervention led to a  
272 statistically significant improvement in both knowledge and attitude toward  
273 substance abuse.