

# Research paper on drugs



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**Definition of a Drug**

The definition of a drug is a chemical substance used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease or used to otherwise enhance physical or mental well-being. Illegal drugs obviously mean drugs that are prohibited and banned by law. The difference between legal drugs and illegal drugs is that illegal drugs are far highly addictive than the legal ones. Unlike illegal drugs, legal drugs are controlled by law and prescribed by pharmacies and doctors. Illegal drugs also cause far more damage to the body than legal drugs do. These illegal drugs are distributed illegally through the illegal drug trade that includes countries in South America, such as Colombia and Jamaica. Other leading countries in the drug trade are Afghanistan, China, and Mexico. Illegal drugs cause so many problems, apart from the damage it causes to the body. For example, consuming illegal drugs could lead to financial problems, accidents, and family issues. Consuming illegal drugs takes away a large portion of one's money as well as one's time. Basically, one's life is ruined after becoming addicted to an illegal drug. There are four types of drugs and all of them are somewhat addictive. All the four types of illegal drugs harm the body and affect it negatively and have different methods of being consumed. Illegal drugs that are being used by consumers throughout the world include different types; negatively affect the consumer both physically and psychologically, and have different methods of being consumed.

**Types of illegal drugs**

Illegal drugs are divided into different types; club drugs, hallucinogens, inhalants, and the most addictive drugs. Club drugs are drugs used in

teenage parties as well as clubs for younger adults. Consumers of club drugs tend to think that they are not addicted to these drugs since they only consume them occasionally in parties. However, as time passes, consumers tend to become addicted even if they seldom consume the drug. As long as the drug enters a consumer's body, the consumer becomes dependent on the drug and needs to consume it more regularly than previous times. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010) Club drugs include ecstasy, GHB, rohypnol, and ketamine. The most common club drug distributed in clubs is ecstasy. It presents a relaxed mood for the consumer and relieves his/her anxiety for hours. Ketamine directly affects the central nervous system, slowing down reaction time.

Another type of illegal drug is a hallucinogen, which is a psychoactive drug that induces hallucinations or altered sensory experiences. These drugs tend to cause the consumer to start hallucinating, or imagining people or objects that do not actually exist. Thus, hallucinogens cause changes in perception, thought, emotion, and consciousness. Consumers that have consumed hallucinogens have reported hearing sounds, seeing images, and feeling sensations that seem real, but do not actually exist. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010) Examples of hallucinogens are LSD, PCP, DMT, Psilocybin, and Mescaline. LSD is the most common type of hallucinogens and the most consumed hallucinogen. It comes from a specific fungus called ergot. PCP was used to treat patients that had attention disorders and that were agitated. Nowadays, it is illegally manufactured in factories. Psilocybin is famous for the drug known as " Magic Mushrooms". Hallucinogens cause

faster heart rate and increased blood pressure. The effect also depends on the amount of dose taken.

Inhalants are also another type of drug that is in the forms of gases, aerosols, or solvents that are breathed in and absorbed through the lungs. Inhalants are considered addictive and cause a mind-altering effect. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010) Inhalants are inhaled by the consumer and various effects are immediately recognized. These effects include drowsiness and agitation. These effects, however, are short-lived since they are short-term effects. The inhalants have effects similar to those of intoxication. Examples of inhalants include white-out, felt-tip markers, aerosol sprays (hair spray and spray paint), and nitrates as well as gases (gasoline, propane).

The last type of drugs is the most addictive drugs. These drugs are considered highly addictive and can cause death if taking more doses than one is supposed to. One example is crystal meth, or Methamphetamine. It is a highly addictive central nervous system stimulant. Crystal meth is injected, snorted, smoked, or ingested orally. (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010) It causes dizziness, anger, and depression. Cocaine is another type of drug under the category of most addictive drugs. Cocaine can be smoked, snorted, or injected. Cocaine is one of the most highly addictive drugs in the world. Therefore, just a slight amount more of cocaine could cause death of the consumer since the consumer would die of an overdose. Cocaine causes increased body temperature, paranoia, and loss of appetite. A consumer could get addicted to cocaine just as soon as he or she consumes it because it has one of the highest likelihood of drug addiction. Cocaine is also one of

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the most expensive drugs in the world. Cannabis is another example of the most addictive drugs. Marijuana is a form of cannabis that causes feeling of relaxation, increased heart rate, and increased appetite. Heroin is one of the most dangerous of all addictive drugs since it could easily get a consumer to be addicted to it. It causes drowsiness, slow breathing, and euphoria. Heroin is also a very expensive illegal drug. Illegal drug traffickers make a fortune out of heroin.

## **Effects of drugs**

### **Physical/psychological effects of drugs**

Illegal drugs that are being used by consumers throughout the world negatively affect the consumer both physically and psychologically. There are both short-term effects and long-term effects of drugs. Even though each type of drug has its own specific effects, there are common short-term and long-term effects. Common short-term effects include increased or decreased appetite, extreme anxiety and restlessness, short-term alertness, change in heart rate, impaired vision, reduction of ability to make decisions, and slow reflexes. Common long-term effects include cardiac arrest, damage to vital organs, confusion, anxiety, paranoia, overdose, impaired thinking, violent behavior, depression, and suicide or death. Club drugs tend to give out effects of relaxation and pleasure since teenagers want to forget about the world while they are at a party or in a club. Thus, ecstasy produces the effect of a relaxed mood. Hallucinogens produce effects of hallucinations and altered sensory experiences. They also produce dilated pupils, elevated body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, appetite loss, sleeplessness, tremors, headaches, nausea, sweating, heart palpitations,

blurring of vision, memory loss, trembling, and itching. Inhalants only produce short-term effects such as drowsiness and agitation or a mind-altering effect. These effects do not last long. The most addictive drugs are the ones that produce dangerous short-term and long-term effects. For example, they could affect the heart rate, the blood pressure, or the nervous system. However, they could also damage vital organs and lead to death. For example, for heroin, abusers typically report feeling a surge of pleasurable sensation. (Sourav, n. d) According to Sourav, addiction itself is a dangerous effect of heroin. Thus, illegal drugs negatively affect the consumer both psychologically and physically.

### **Types of drug consumption, and their effects**

Illegal drugs that are being used by consumers throughout the world have different methods of being consumed and different uses. For example, illegal drugs could be injected, swallowed, smoked, or inhaled. The first method, which is injection, has several disadvantages such as the risks of acquiring HIV since needles are used, the misuse of administering the drug, and the fear of injection and needles. The introduction of the needle and ability for a person to inject a drug has caused a problem and rise in the consuming of drugs. “ The disposable plastic syringe has achieved dramatic success since its introduction.” (Pates, 2005, P. 7) Injection is typically fast and takes effect directly after the drug is injected. It is one of the fastest methods of drug usage. However, this mean the risk of addiction is higher. The second method, swallowing, is the safest and slowest method of consuming a drug. It is safe since the body filters out the unnecessary elements of the drug. Because it is the slowest method, the drug effect tends to be the one that

lasts the longest. Thus, ecstasy is swallowed for a longer effect at clubs and parties. The third method involves smoking the drug. For example, marijuana or tobacco is smoked. There is a higher risk of bacteria being transmitted to the consumer. However, there is a less chance of overdose than injecting the drug. Like injection, the smoking of a drug produces effects rapidly. The last method involves inhaling or sniffing the drug. It is a safe way to consume drugs, but the nasal membranes could easily be damaged, especially if the drug is consumed and inhaled over and over again by the consumer. Therefore, drugs have different effects, but one thing is for sure. Illegal drugs always negatively harm the body and does more damage than legal drugs do.

### **Government reactions to illegal drugs**

Illegal drugs tend to be highly addictive compared to those that are legal and cause far more damage to the body and organs than prescribed drugs.

Unfortunately, consumers continue to buy and consume illegal drugs through the illegal drug trade that includes several developing countries that make a fortune out of that business. Increased education could lower the amount of teenagers that consume illegal drugs. Stricter control by the government is needed to prohibit illegal drugs from being sold. Governments are trying to prohibit illegal drugs from being sold by imposing strict laws. For example, dogs are put in schools to sniff and locate any drugs. "Dogs in hallways, their noses turned to the air for the scent of contraband, are increasingly common in public schools on Long Island and in Westchester, New Jersey and Connecticut." (Hicks, 2009) Therefore, the governments are trying decrease the amount of drug consumers, especially in the U. S. School administrators

need to request to bring dogs to schools to locate any consumers that consume drugs. " The school board voted to sign a memorandum of understanding with the police department that will allow drug-sniffing dogs on school property if requested by school administrators." (Doan, 2007) If governments keep trying hard to keep consumers away from drugs, then the number of consumers will definitely decrease. Obviously, it is very hard for the government to stop the illegal drug trade completely. However, it could decrease the amount of drugs in the illegal drug trade by imposing strict laws and controlling the borders severely. Corruption also needs to be taken care of and completely abolished so that drug traffickers have no way of bribing police that are at the borders. Developing countries have a far worse problem than developed countries because of corruption and poverty. Some countries actually need the drug trade to boost their economy and that is why the police and the government allow drugs to be sold illegally in their countries. Therefore, they will never actually cease the drug trade and put an effort to stop it. Unless they become developed countries, the illegal drug trade would always be allowed in their countries. Colombia is a great example of a country heavily involved in the illegal drug trade. Thus, Colombia is always associated with drugs, especially since it is sold everywhere in Colombia. Nowadays, however, it has decreased tremendously, but it still continues to have drug lords that sell drugs inside Colombia and export to other countries. It is one of the richest businesses in the world, especially since it is an illegal business. Because Colombia is a poor country that produces drugs in its lands, it has to use the drugs to promote its economy and improve its conditions. However, it is the government's responsibility to do something about the drug trade, especially



since it is killing millions of people around the world who consume drugs, whether through long-term effects, or short-term effects. Thus, there should be a war on the illegal drug trade as well, not only focusing on terrorism and extreme fundamentalists. Therefore, illegal drugs should not be sold since they negatively harm the consumer, physically and psychologically.