Original Article

PREVALENCE OF CANNABIS USE IN PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS OF MARDAN

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: *Finding out how common cannabis usage is among Mardan's professional drivers was my study's main goal. Thirdly, the impact of cannabis on these drivers' ability to work was ascertained; second, the influence of age on cannabis users was noted.*

Study design : *Cross-sectional Study*

Duration and place of study: *The research was carried out between March and May of 2017*

Materials & Methods: *Cross-sectional research was carried out. The research was conducted at Mardan. It featured one hundred professional drivers working in Mardan, KPK, Pakistan's public transport system. The research was carried out between March and May of 2017. The subjects were asked for their written agreement before the researchers completed the surveys. SPSS version 20 was used to input and evaluate the questionnaire data before showing it as tabular, bar, and pie chart data. A thorough debate was conducted, and conclusions were reached based on this data.*

Results: *In my survey, 89% of these drivers reported using cannabis, while the remaining 11% reported using other drugs (alcohol, cocaine, answer, etc.). The majority of drivers who take drugs began taking them when they were young. 85% of the participants reported using cannabis for the first time between the ages of 15 and 20, 7% between the ages of 20 and 25, and 2% between the ages of 25 and above, according to the data. Among those aged 15 to 20, the incidence of cannabis usage was 44%.In the 20–25 age range, the prevalence was 31%.In the 25+ age group, the prevalence was 25%. In my survey, the percentage of married people who used cannabis was 29%, compared to 71% of single people. Seventy percent of users think the substance has a detrimental impact on their ability to concentrate and remember things. In contrast, twenty-five percent think it has no effect at all or is beneficial.*

Conclusion: *Among drivers, cannabis usage was quite common. The impact of focus and work on drivers and cannabis usage, as well as the relationship between drug use and drivers' age and marital status, were all significantly correlated.*

Keywords: *cannabis, Psychological stress, narcotic drug users.*

INTRODUCTION

Cannabis, a plant-based narcotic that is extensively used worldwide, is commonly referred to as marijuana in the West and as "chars" in South Asia. Over 3.8% of the world's population, or 158.8 million individuals, use drugs, according to the United Nations [1]. Cannabis has been around for a long time, from the ancient Chinese and, more recently, the Sufis of the Sub-Continent, for religious reasons to recreational usage and therapeutic applications, such as social pleasure and treatment for nausea and vomiting during chemotherapy and the treatment of chronic pain.

It is thought that the plant originated in the hilly areas to the northwest of the Himalayas. 60,400 kg of cannabis were grown lawfully worldwide in 2013 [3]. An estimated 182.5 million people (3.8% of the population aged 15–64) used cannabis in 2014 [4].

Cannabis is second only to alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco in terms of global popularity among recreational drugs. It's estimated that over 100 million people use cannabis in the US alone, and another 25 million have used it in the past.

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Cannabis is available in several forms, including extracts like hashish and hash oil [5], which are more vulnerable to contaminants due to their look if not controlled [6]. Cannabis is used to alleviate chronic pain and muscular spasms [7], boost appetite in HIV/AIDS patients, and lessen nausea and vomiting associated with chemotherapy. Symptoms that are often experienced include fatigue, nausea, hallucinations, and dizziness. Uncertain long-term consequences of cannabis, addiction risk, and cognitive issues

Tens of thousands of commercial items, particularly those that employ cannabis as fiber for paper, cordage, building materials, textiles in general, and clothes, value cannabis for industrial use [9]. Compared to cotton, hemp is more resilient and durable. It's also a good source of biofuels and food items like hemp milk, seed, and oil. Over the last 12,000 years, hemp has been used by several civilizations, ranging from China to Europe (and eventually North America) [10]. The purpose of this research was to assess the prevalence of cannabis use among professional drivers, identify risk factors for the commencement of cannabis use, and raise awareness of the drug's impact on drivers' physical and mental health.

The most often misused illicit substance in the United States is cannabis. Many young people in Pakistan suffer from drug addiction. Cannabis drugs account for half of all drug invasions worldwide. It is a dry, shredded, green, and brown combination of leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the Cannabis sativa hemp plant. It's usually smoked in a pipe or as a cigarette. It may also be made as tea or combined with meals. It acts on the brain's cannabinoid receptors, which is how it produces "high" feelings. Drug abuse, particularly in youth and young adults, has grown to be a major global public health issue. Drugs having the potential to cause dependency include illicit substances like benzodiazepines, amphetamines, cocaine, heroin, and cannabis, as well as non-therapeutic legal substances like caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, or nicotine. Cannabis addiction and misuse are devastating the world [11].

According to research, 48.4% of teenagers admitted to buying cannabis from someone who had a medical license. This indicates the misuse of cannabis that was readily acquired from someone who was either abusing it or had a permit to use it medicinally [12]. The beginning age for cannabis is often lower than that of other drugs, and it has grown increasingly prevalent in adolescent culture. High levels of misuse are correlated with low pricing in cannabis markets, and vice versa [13].

Approximately 147 million individuals, or 2.5% of the global population, use cannabis annually, compared to 0.2% who use cocaine and 0.2% who use opiates. Nowadays, the misuse of cannabis has increased at a faster rate than that of opioids and cocaine. Since 1960, cannabis abuse has increased most quickly in Western Europe, Australia, and North America[13].

The real picture of Pakistan's cannabis use prevalence is not readily apparent. Youth who use cannabis recreationally at first and develop an addiction to it seem to favor it the most [14]. Numerous national studies indicate a rise in cannabis use throughout the US, and some states have approved laws that might lead to even more consumption. Public roads are affected by this since research indicates that driving when high on cannabis may be impaired [15].

MATERIALS & METHODS

Descriptive cross-sectional research was done for this study between April and May 2017. This investigation used six buses, and wagon stops in the Mardan neighborhood. Among them are.

1. Daewoo bus stand Bilal, Mardan.
2. Mardan, Charsadda Adda.
3. Adda, Mardan, Mardan.
4. Mardan, Rashakai Stand.
5. The Mardan General Bus Stand.
6. Mardan, College Chowk.

One hundred professional public transport drivers and others who drive for a livelihood participated in the research. The majority of the drivers that were part of the research were from lower socioeconomic groups. The drivers' NIC provided information on their age. Before the trial, the individuals' oral agreement was also obtained. Informed permission was obtained from each individual. Every piece of information was kept private, and it was only utilized for the study. All professional drivers living in the Mardan area met the inclusion requirements. All people who were not professional drivers fall under the exclusion criteria. The researchers used a questionnaire to gather data. SPSS version 20 was used to input and evaluate

the questionnaire data before showing it as tabular, bar, and pie chart data. A thorough debate was conducted, and conclusions were reached based on this data.

RESULTS

Out of the 110 guys that were included in the research, 100 (91%) volunteered to participate. Thus, 91% of respondents responded.

In my survey, 89% of these drivers reported using cannabis, with the remaining 11% using other substances (alcohol, cocaine, answer, etc.). The majority of drug-using drivers began taking the substance while they were young. 85% of the participants reported using cannabis for the first time between the ages of 15 and 20, 7% between the ages of 20 and 25, and 2% between the ages of 25 and above, according to the data.

Among those aged 15 to 20, the incidence of cannabis usage was 44%.In the 20–25 age range, the prevalence was 31%.In the 25+ age group, the prevalence was 25%. In my research, the percentage of married people who use cannabis was 29%, compared to 71% of single people. Seventy percent of users think the substance has a detrimental impact on their ability to concentrate and remember things. In contrast, twenty-five percent think it has no effect at all or is beneficial.

My study's findings indicate that 57% of cannabis users used it once a week, 32% once a day, and 6% once a month. 46% of the participants began using cannabis as a result of societal pressure, 29% as a result of their workload, 12% as a result of parental modeling, and 7% as a coping mechanism for mental health problems. However, 12% of users were utilizing it for other purposes.

Based on the findings, 44% of the participants used cannabis to reduce anxiety, 36% to experience euphoria, 10% to experience aphrodisiac benefits, and 4% to deal with their emotions. Just 2% of these drivers ingested or swallowed cannabis, compared to 93% who smoked it. Of those drivers, 25% did not experience any of the issues above, while 70% reported difficulties with cognition and focus as a result of cannabis use. Due to cannabis usage, 55% of people had problems in their relationships with friends and family, while 40% did not. In the current survey, 15% of the drivers did not find it difficult to picture a life without cannabis, compared to 80% of the drivers. A substantial correlation between the impact on concentration and work on the drivers and cannabis usage was discovered when the chi-square test was used, with a p-value of less than <0.01.

With a p-value of 0.034, there was a significant correlation between drug usage and the drivers' age. Additionally, a significant correlation between marital status and drug usage was found, with a p-value of 0.05.

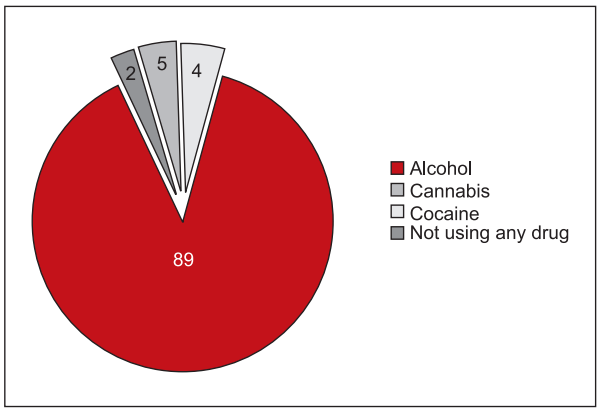

Fig 1: If yes, then which one?

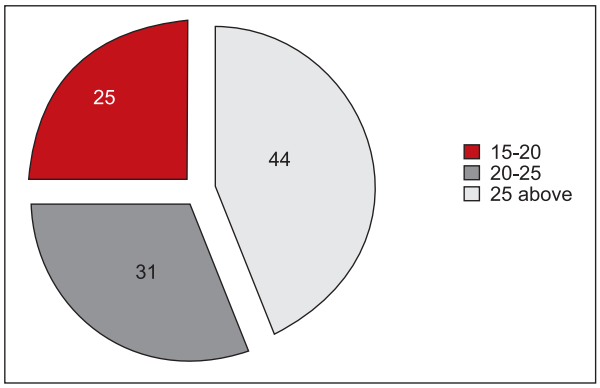

Fig 2: Age

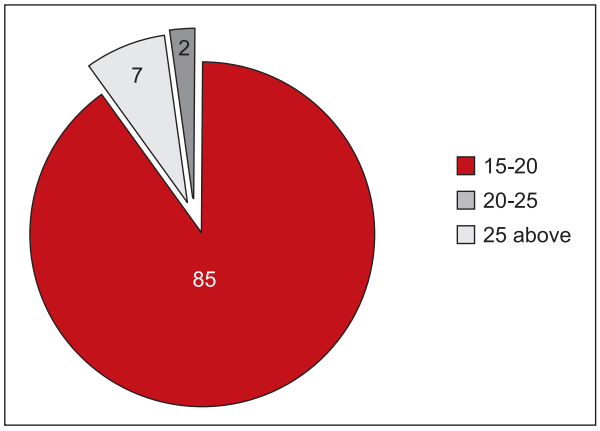

Fig 3: How old were you when you first use Drug?

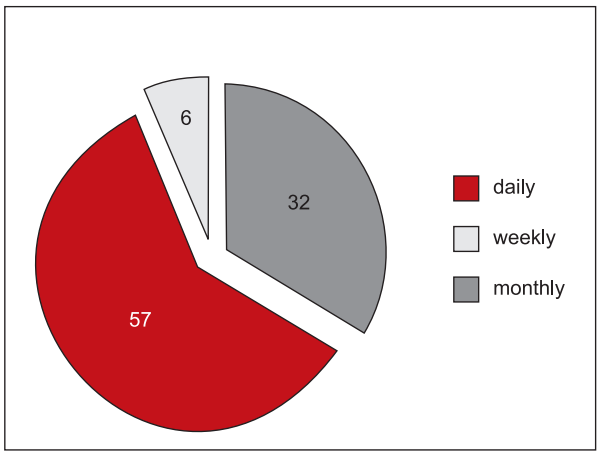

Fig 4: How often do you use it?

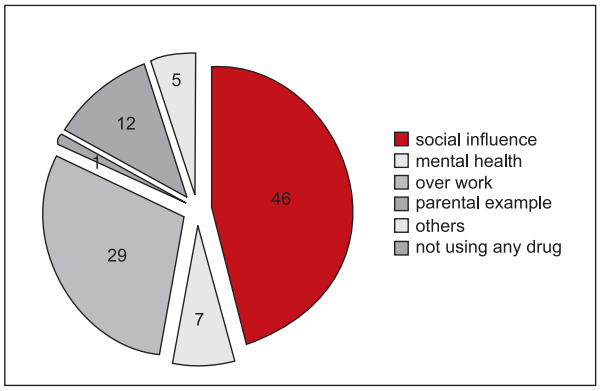

Fig 5: Who Influenced you to take Drug?

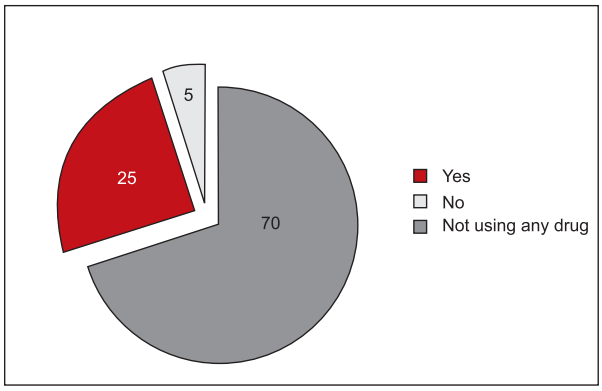

Fig 6: Has its use caused problem with your memory and Concentration

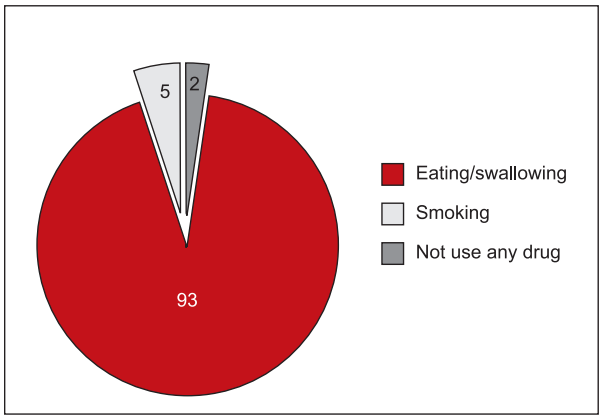

Fig 7: In what forms or ways do you take this drug?

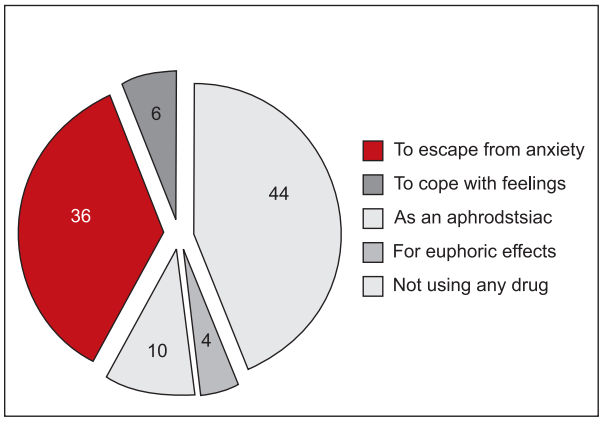

Fig 8: Why do you use this drug?

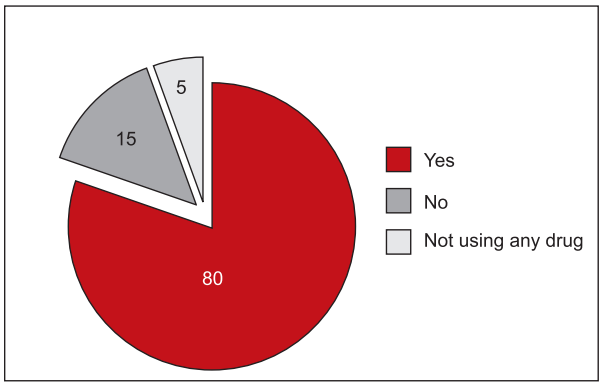

Fig 9: Is it hard for you to imagine a life without it?

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the prevalence of cannabis use among professional drivers, as well as the impact of age on cannabis usage and the impact of cannabis on an individual's ability to work. According to the survey, 89% of people who were contacted had used cannabis overall, compared to 11% who had used other substances. In comparison to Lund et al. (1988: 15%) and Crouch et al. (1993: 13%), the prevalence of cannabis was 4.3% in research done in Washington to determine the prevalence of drug use among drivers.

The significant frequency among young people was attributed to its euphoric effects, sexual properties,

and ability to relieve anxiety. It was also how they dealt with their emotions.

Numerous unofficial reports from surveys suggest that many commercial drivers use this medication to help them deal with the boredom and exhaustion that come with extended driving hours.

According to a poll conducted in 1977, 14% of male drivers admitted to routinely or sporadically taking this substance. Drivers thought that 26% of their coworkers often drove while under the influence of this or other drugs, according to a 1989 poll. These results contradict our findings since 89% of participants in my research reported using cannabis.

For many cannabis users, smoking is the most popular way to administer and ingest the drug. Social effects account for the largest incidence of smoking among the methods in which people use this medication.

The majority of cannabis use occurs in groups, according to the data. This demonstrates the company's control over how it is used. Seventy percent of the drivers who were contacted reported having memory and focus issues related to cannabis use. Cannabis users' bodies and health suffered both good and harmful impacts. The usage of cannabis also caused them problems at work.

The annual proportion of the population aged 15 to 64 that uses cannabis varies depending on the nation and the time of year. In 2000, it was 3.9 in Pakistan, 14.3 in Nigeria in 2008, and 7.0 in the United States in 2007. The research found that, except for heavy users, cannabis often has no tolerance-building effect or withdrawal symptoms.

When heavy cannabis users were surveyed, 42.4% of them reported experiencing withdrawal symptoms, including cravings, anxiety, insomnia, irritability, and negative effects on their behavior and social lives.

In the US and Canada, cannabis is the most often misused substance. Many young people in Pakistan suffer from drug addiction. 48.4% of the teens surveyed in the research reported getting cannabis from a person having a medical license. This indicates the possibility of cannabis usage coming from someone who either uses it regularly or has a license to get it for medicinal purposes. Nowadays, the misuse of cannabis has increased at a faster rate than that of opioids and cocaine. Since the 1960s, cannabis usage has increased most quickly in Western Europe, Australia, and North America.

CONCLUSIONS

The frequency of cannabis usage in my research was 89%. The impact of focus and work on drivers and cannabis usage, as well as the relationship between drug use and drivers' age and marital status, were all significantly correlated.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Authors declare no conflict of interest

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