



Effects of Drug Addiction on Young Generation: A Sociological Investigation in Dinajpur District, Bangladesh

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

In Bangladesh, recently drug addiction is considered as a major problem, because our young generation is highly involved with the issue. Drug is now the curse of a society. This curse has polluted our society to its core. 200 million people around the world are into drug abuse most of who are teenagers. Bangladesh does not produce drugs, but the global environment has made it a dangerous place for drug abuse. Besides, urbanization, population growth, widespread use of the internet and lack of awareness has made drug abuse an epidemic. The drug scenario in Bangladesh has changed with time. Drug addiction is turning to the national problem from social problem. It creates many other problems. This study conducted to identify the core cause of drug addiction of young generation. To conduct this research, questionnaire survey and case study have conducted. Case study tried to bring out the core factor responsible for the drug addiction of young generation and questionnaire survey expressed the people's perception toward drug addiction. These research findings suggest that influence of peer group; weak family bonding, affluence and shortage of money are the key responsible factor for the drug addiction of young generation in Bangladesh.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Drug addiction in Bangladesh is a huge problem. It is not a recent one but it is wide spread now more than ever and raising at a tremendous rate. Several organizations like the United Nations and WHO are really concerned about the increase of drug addiction at this alarming rate.

“Drug impacts directly influence the economic and social aspects of a country and physically to a human body. In Bangladesh it is a growing national concern. There are millions of drug-addicted people in Bangladesh and most of them are young and in the age range of 18 to 30. These drug addicted people are from all strata of the society. It shows that the country is going to be transformed into potential users of drugs with the rapid increase in the number of addicts” (Hatashe, 2009).

In Bangladesh, recently drug addiction is considered as a major problem, because our young generation is highly involved with the issue. Drug is now the curse of a society. This curse has polluted our society to its core. 200 million people around the world are into drug abuse most of whom are teenagers. Bangladesh does not produce drugs, but the global environment has made it a dangerous place for drug abuse. Besides, urbanization, population growth, widespread use of the internet and lack of awareness has made drug abuse an epidemic. The drug scenario in Bangladesh has changed with time. There are different types of items added as drug like alcohol, heroin, fencidil and ya ba has replaced opium. This has spread from the cities to the villages. From high society to middle and low class. At the moment, there are more than 60 lakh people in Bangladesh engaged in illegal drug abuse. Most of them are between the ages 18-30. The reasons why people get into drugs are peer pressures, curiosity, mental problems, family problems etc.

The family has to take the first step in drug prevention. So, it is high time to start awareness. We should make understand our young generation by giving some suggestions and moral advice in this way, learn about different drugs and their effects. Learn about addiction. We have to discuss about the bad effects of drugs with the family especially the teenagers. Curiosity is a major cause of drug abuse.

Bangladesh has started to take measures to combat the increasing drug problem. From the beginning of the 1980s there have been the drug (control) ordinance act (1982), ban on marijuana and opium, establishment of drug rehabilitation centers, narcotics control act (1990) etc. The department of narcotics control and national narcotic control board has been established. Preventing the use and trafficking of drugs and the treatment of addiction and rehabilitation are being worked on tirelessly by such organizations.

Drug addiction has many problems and severe consequences. Addiction infects the very core of a human being. It is extremely difficult to combat. The harm caused by drugs extends to every sphere of life. Proper education, awareness and the combined effort of all the people can pave the way to a drug free society.

1.1 Research Objectives

- To know the current scenario of the drug addiction.
- To find out the reasons behind the drug addiction.
- To investigate strategies for the prevention of drug abuse.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The effect of the drug related problem is unbelievable. It is intense and deep. That's why now, Bangladesh wants to get rid of it's Drug addiction problem. But it is not an easy task. We need to know the depth of the problem as well as the real causes of drug addiction in Bangladesh. Without knowing the situation properly nobody can overcome the obstacle. Not even the Government.

Being a small country with a large population, Bangladesh is not free of problems. It has an approximate population of 160 million. And most of them are youth. Some 47.6 million people are aged under 25. And that's a huge number. Almost 30% of the population currently living in Bangladesh are young energetic people. And here begins the problem of Drug addiction that many misses at a first glance. And it is a severe one.

But before we know further about its drug addiction problem, we need to know about the country; Bangladesh.

It is a beautiful country situated in Southasia. It has resources of many kinds, natural resource is one of them; Vast beautiful landscapes and fertile lands are the hallmark of its pride. Though beautiful it has a landmass not more than 1,47,570 square kilometers. And has a high population density.

Drug addiction is a problem that not only bleeds Bangladesh but also the whole world. There is not a single country in the world which is free of this monster. Recent years saw a sharp rise in drug addiction problem. And that is really an alarming situation. Having a huge population makes the equation hard enough for Bangladesh to solve and if 30% of that number belongs to youth, then it is a problem which needs more than normal attention and resource allocation to face the challenge.

But first we need to have a clear idea about drug addiction. What it is and how it is actually affecting the society.

1.3 Significance of the Research

Drug abuse and addiction continues to be a global issue. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), about 5% of the global population used an illicit drug in 2010 alone, and about 27 million or 0.6 percent of the adult population of the world can be categorized as drug abusers.

According to the head of Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (MANAS), Arup Ratan Chaudhury, an estimated more than 2.5 million children were drug addicts in Bangladesh. Street children, who are said to number 3.4 million, are the primary targets of drug dealers. The Bangladesh Children Rights Forum (BSAF) also estimated that 85 percent street children in the country are suffering from drug abuse. The Dhaka-based nongovernmental organization said 19 percent of such children use heroin, while 28 percent took tablets and another 8 percent injected drugs. Cannabis, heroin, stimulant or sleeping pills, glue and gasoline sniffing are popular among such children in Bangladesh, the BSAF added.

The most common drugs used in Bangladesh are stimulant drugs. More and more people are beginning to use them - middle aged people, old people, housewives and young girls, University's student, even high school students (especially in English Medium student). These teens are

ignorant about drugs. Some of them can not tell the difference between stimulants and marijuana. At first they put the drugs into drinks. They don't even know which drugs are dangerous. It's easy for teenagers to get the drugs. They can buy them from friends who don't think it is wrong to sell them, or they can get them from some foreigners. They buy drugs called "Speed, tiger, yaba" they knew it's a type of Drinks or tablets which give refreshment to study and mind, which they don't think is dangerous. They don't realize that it really is dangerous. There are a larger number of young using drugs. According to the police- "In the last 3 or 2 years many more teens have been arrested for using drugs than ever before".

People from all economic classes and all walks of life are heavily affected by illegal drugs in Bangladesh right now.

We must stop drug trafficking and illegal drugs to prevent the society from deteriorating any further. Its disastrous effect on society is killing our youth and our future.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This part will show the previous study conducted by various researchers on the drug addiction of young generation. Studying different literatures from online journals, thesis papers, articles and other relevant literatures through the internet it is found that the Drug addiction has epidemically spread among the youths of Bangladesh in the recent years.

Mahmud [1] "Bangladesh though not a drug producing country has now become a victim of drug. This problem is based on its historical perspectives, geographic location, ethnicity, tradition and heritage. It is estimated that TK. 70 million every day are spending for the drug purpose". Shafiq [2] Female are also involved with the issue, presently a good number of female are involved with drug addiction. According to Government and non-Government sources shows at least 1 lakh and 50 thousand women are drug addicted, 90 percent of them are young people between ages of 18-25. Zaki MH [3] examined the study many of the young people especially students from different background are highly involved with the drugs, it is assumed that peers playing vital role for happening the incident. Besides, day labourer, rickshaw puller, driver are also being addicted mostly. Khan MJ [4] Drugs have now become a

threat to national economy, for the society and for the country also, if it is not taken immediate measures it will be a great problem for our livelihood, serious steps should be taken to get rid of this problem.

Hossain and Mamun found in their study that “67.30% of respondents became addicted because of the influence of their peer groups, 57.69% respondents mentioned that curiosity is the second reason for being addicts”. From the study “it is quite evident that frustration (16.54%), unemployment (5.77%), failure in love (11.54%) and family conflict (20.19%) were also influential causes of drug addiction” [5]. Huq and Enamul [6] found in their study that “50% of addicts took their first drug through drug user friends and under pressure, 20% out of frustration and 15% out of curiosity”. Uddin, Md. Jalal (2008) says that “failure in love, disappointment, family disorder and social and family related matters are highly responsible for addiction”. Saha, Sudir Kumar [7] saw that “environmental influence, frustration, ignorance, curiosity, recreation, failure in love, the influence of peer group and sorrow were the causes of drug addiction”. Shawkatuzzaman, Syed [8] saw “geographical location, pressure of peer group, curiosity, frustration, ignorance etc. as the causes of drug addiction”.

Begum, Hamida Akhtar [9] found in her study that “pressure of peer group (73.55%), frustration (18.62%) etc. were the causes of drug addiction”. Mannan, Bashira found in her study that “disorganization of the family (35%), influence of peer group (35%) and affluence of money (20%) were the causes of drug addiction”. Sarker and Hossain (1999: 212) found in their study that “curiosity (70%) was one of the causes of drug addiction”. Hossain, Md. Anwar says that “disorganization of the family, influence of peer group, influence of slum, and poverty etc. were the causes of drug addiction. Influence of peer drinking was the cause of adolescent drinking”. Mariam, Iobidze saw that “in Asian Countries, Juvenile crime and delinquency were largely urban phenomena” [10].

Liddle, H. [11], in his research paper named “Drug Abuse in Teenagers”, he found that “teenager faces some problems like Behavior problems, Emotional distancing, isolation, depression, or fatigue, irritability, or change in level of cooperation around the house, decrease in interest in personal appearance, rapid weight loss, Changes in mood, eating, or sleeping

patterns and memory problems after taking drugs”. Cepulkauskaitė, I. [12] in her research named “Drug addiction of teenager: A myth or reality” he found that, “it is a combination of several factors, including society, family and peers. They may turn to drugs to escape stress or loneliness or to overcome shyness in social situations. They may want to be seen as grown up or as a risk taker or they may simply be curious. A young person with low self-esteem may feel they are not as smart, attractive, talented or popular as their peers”. Gerstein, R [13] conducted a one-year follow-up study of patients from 78 treatment programs across the country and found that approximately, 50% of the patients refused regardless of the primary drug and the treatment approach.

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2.1 Detailed Methodology of the Research Work

The study is performed based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data/ information are collected through questionnaire survey. Fifty households are selected randomly from Dinajpur District. A simple random sampling technique is followed for achieving the ultimate objectives of the study [14-16].

2.2 Method of Data Collection

Source of data: Primary and secondary data both have been used in the research paper. For the primary data collection mainly, these tools are used:

- a) Questionnaire survey.
- b) Case study.

And as secondary data these tools have been used.

- (a) Different articles.
- (b) Website.
- (c) Research report.
- (d) Recent newspaper.

In case of case study method, purposive and convenient sampling have been applied. Researcher selected drug addicted people in a convenient manner as access to them is not easy but sensitive. There are two case studies have been conducted to know the purposes of getting the real picture of the causes of drug addiction of young generation.

2.3 Study Area

Dinajpur is the study area of this research.

2.4 Study Population

To know the people's perception, questionnaire and two case studies have been conducted. In the questionnaire survey, the respondent is taken from Dinajpur. And at the time of conducting case studies were taken through the discussions with the respondents.

2.5 Selection Criteria

For questionnaire survey, respondents must have to be the different age groups. The participant was those who met the criteria needed.

2.6 Data Collection Instrument

Questionnaire survey and case study method were used as a data collection instrument.

(a) Questionnaire survey: From the different age group, respondent has been chosen. There are fifty respondents chosen for the questionnaire survey. The questionnaires are formed mainly based on the causes of drug addiction, what types of drugs are available, how they think etc.

(b) Case study: There are two case studies conducted and the respondents were drug addicted for in-depth analysis of the study of the drug addiction and to identify the actual reason behind the drug addiction.

Case Study 1: A 20 years old student of Dinajpur Government College, who is currently studying Honours. He is now addicted to drug. Once upon a time he was a very modest and brilliant students due to the bad companion he started taking drug at university first year with his friends. At the beginning he did not like that kind of activities, but now he has been addicted to drugs and spends large portion of his monthly income. Having gossip with friends, he takes drug.

He says,

“Drugs are very useful and much more beneficiary for his work especially it can increase his spirit, it makes the people more creative and passionate to work and Alcohol gives a jolly mood and relax from tension . ”

He has a positive outlook to drugs. He believes that, Ganja is better than cigarette and less harmful for body. He also mentioned that, one day it will be a very normal activity, drug will get legitimacy in Bangladesh and the people will take it with positive attitude. Although he confessed that, taking drug raises crime in the society, it is not so bad if it doesn't lead to addiction.

Case Study 2: A 24 years old boy has come from a lower middle class family. His father is living in Dubai.

He takes different types of drugs. Those drugs are mainly Gaza and Phencydyl. .He took drugs for the first time with his friends. That time he started taking drugs mainly from his curiosity, to forget the pain of poverty and to forget the pressure of studies. First he started taking drugs by taking 'Gaja'.

Now he takes drugs occasionally not always. He takes drugs at his or his friends' house. Now he mainly takes drugs to overcome his depression and frustration. When he takes drugs he feels better and less pressure. When he was asked whether he knows about the dangerous part of the drug addiction. He answered that he knows that but to feel better and keep him aloof from the pressure of the real world he takes drugs. He mentioned that, he is addicted because no one is available to take care his regular activities and he is only one son of his parents, but now he understands the consequences of drugs, he will try to come out of this problem. He also said that for taking drugs from a long time he has been affected by various diseases like depression, tiresome, physical weakness etc.

2.7 Data Presentation

Data was presented through pie chart with the percentage for easy understanding. As well as data were analyzed with providing sufficient judgment. The difference in peoples' perception is shown through colored pie chart and reasons behind that difference are given with proper logic along with data presentation.

2.8 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were entered into computer, and be analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS programmes. Descriptive statistics is mostly be used to characterize the addicted people.

2.9 Contributions of the Research Findings in the National Development, Planning and Generation of Knowledge

The demand of the research on drug addiction is very much relevant with the passage of time. It's noted that now a days it has become a serious

issue for a country. Though globally it is seen as a threat for the peace and harmony of the society. Many of our valuable young generations are destroying their life through involving with this activity. It is expected this research will be helpful to get the exact idea on the issue of drug addiction; eventually it will help us to find out suggestion to get rid of this problem. They don't fear anything at this time. They are curious and enthusiastic to get known with the unknown. They have a high tendency to fill their curiosity.

2.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

According to the respondents view 40% of the respondents selected option (A) which indicate the age 18-21, secondly 35% respondents chosen option (B) and Finally 25% respondents chosen (C) which indicate the age between 26-29 (Fig. 1).

In the Fig. 2 in shows about the family condition of drug addicts where there are found three categories upper class, middle class and lower class and their percentage is 30%, 28% and 42% respectively.

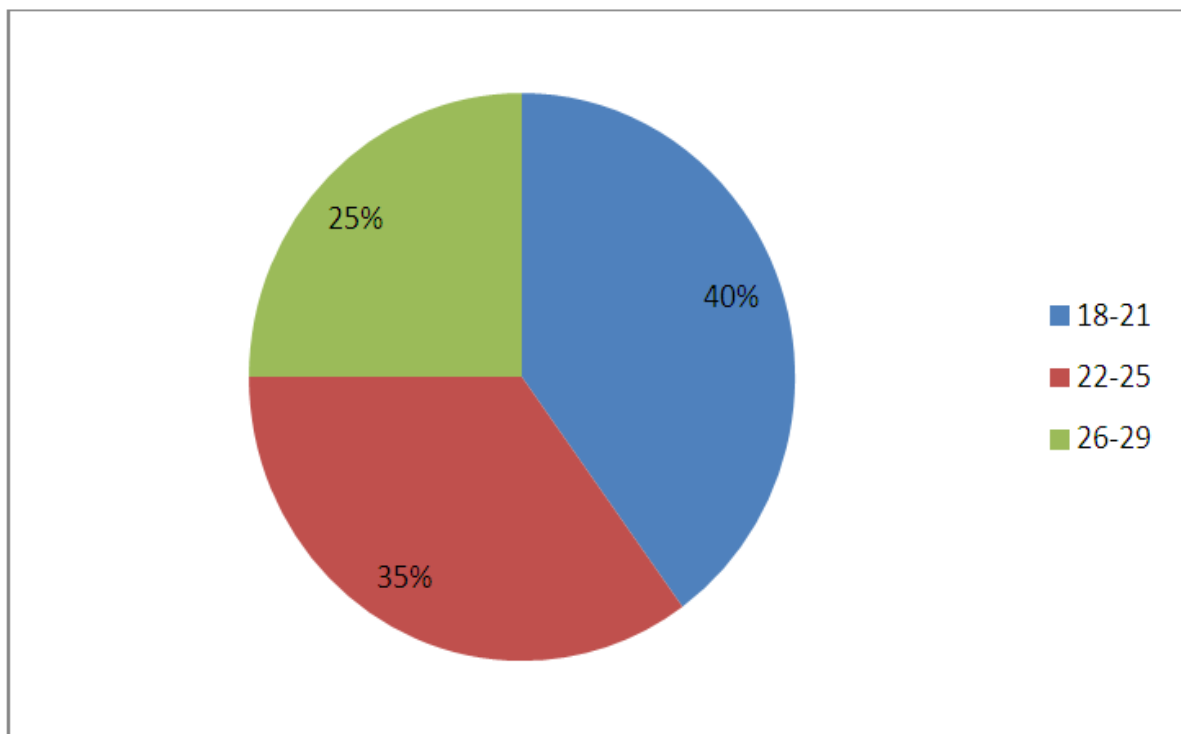


Fig. 1. Average Age of Drug Addicts

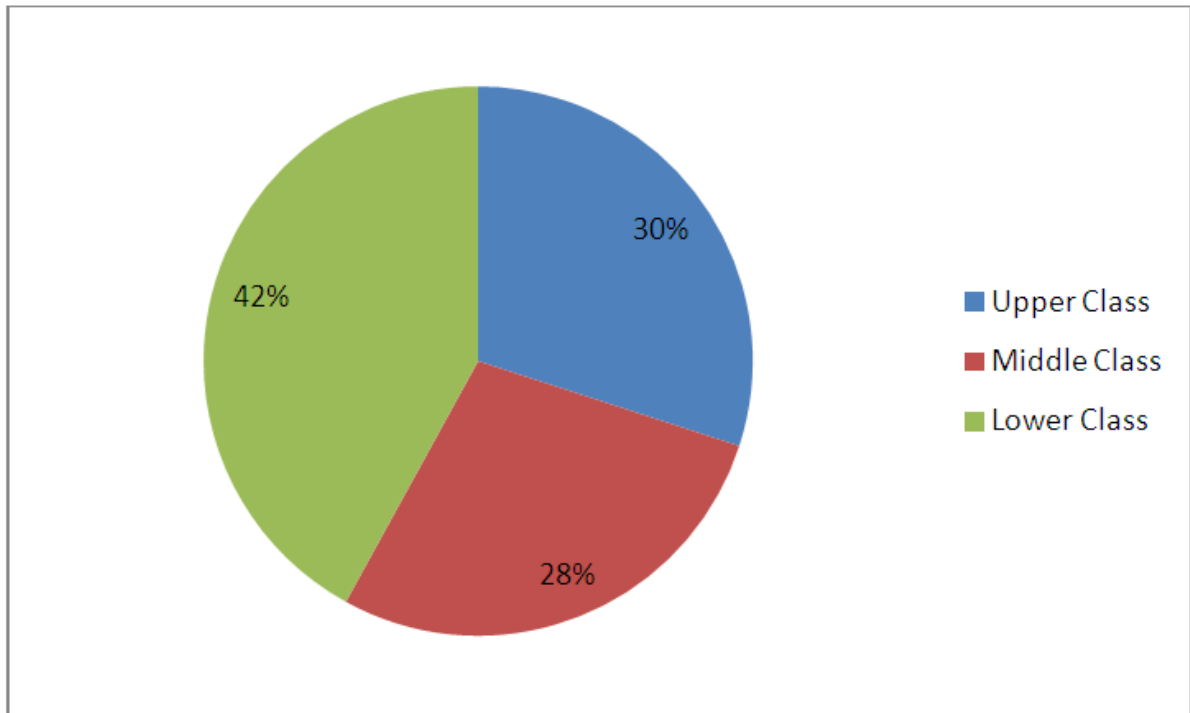


Fig. 2. Family condition of drug addicts

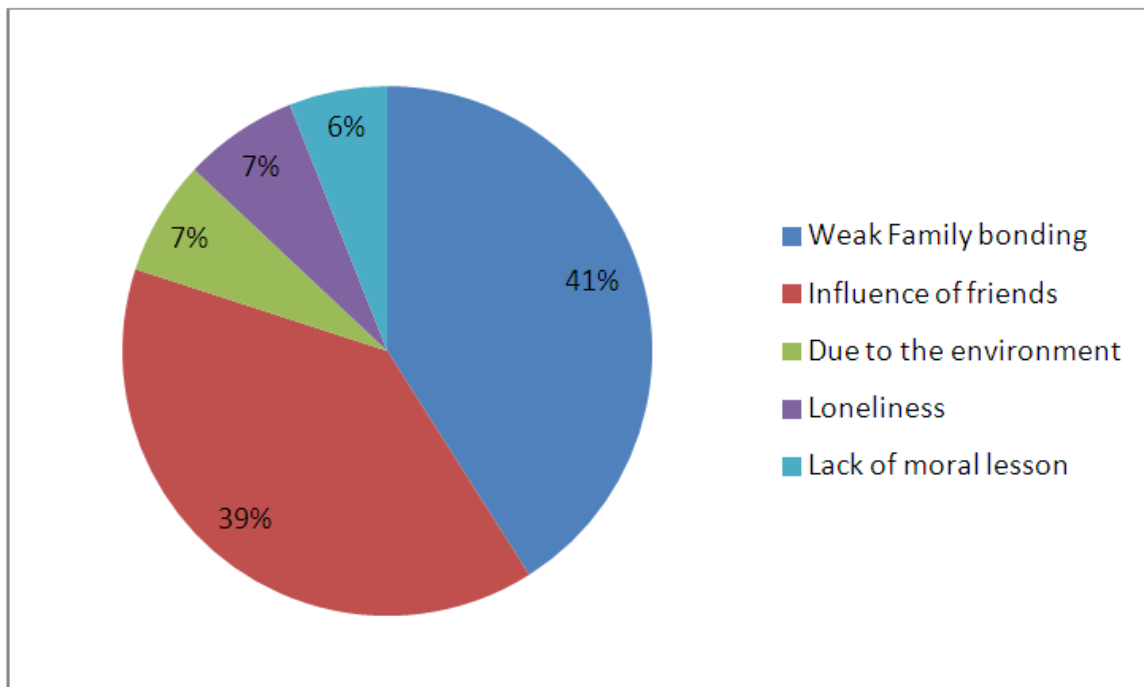


Fig. 3. Factor's behind the drug addicts

According to the respondents view about factor's behind the drug addicts it is clear that there are several factors found in this regard. For weak family bonding 41%, influence of friends

39%, due to the environment 7%, loneliness 7% and finally in case of lack of moral lesson it is 6% (Fig. 3).

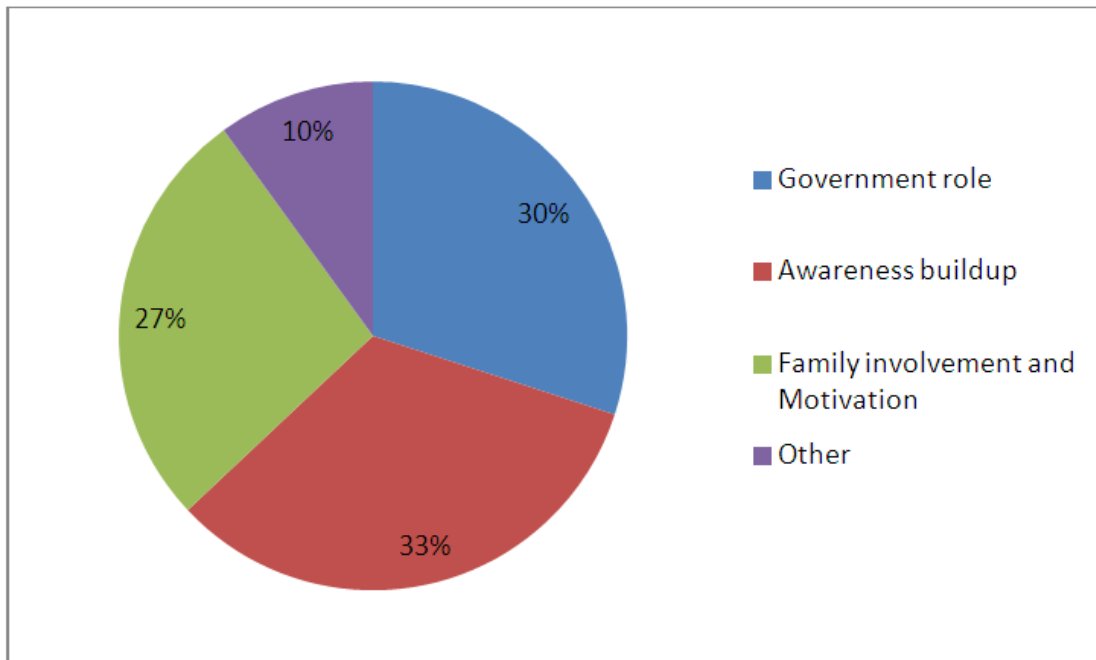


Fig. 4. Way to get rid of this Problem

From the Fig. 4 illustrates the way to get rid of this problem where it is found government role 30%, awareness buildup 33%, family involvement and motivation 27% and others 10%.

3. CONCLUSION

Drug addiction has grabbed not only the youth but it has grabbed the social leaders also. In the present situation, we need to strengthen family and social values and religious ethics in order to maintain a stable and drug-free society. Drug addiction can have serious adverse effects on an individual's life. It can affect them in work, school or their relationships. After doing all these we can get our drug-free Bangladesh.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been found that many people, especially the youths are needed to get rid of drugs. But unfortunately, they can hardly find any way out. The departments of narcotics control, police, Arms forces etc. either do not work or/and even somehow are related to drug smuggling/business. According to the discussion with the concerned people such as drug abusers, guardians, teachers, policemen and related persons in the drug business, it is clear that behavioral modification of the abusers is not enough to check the spread of drug taking and

drug trafficking in Bangladesh. The concerned people gave the following suggestions in order to free Bangladesh of drugs:

- a) Concerned administration should be reshuffled. Culprits, those who are hidden in the police, Arms forces and narcotics control department, must be punished. At the same time, rewards may be declared for good performance. It is obvious that, drugs business in Bangladesh would fall rapidly if border-crossing areas can be checked properly.
- b) Leaders of social institutions like schools, colleges, University, clubs etc. should come forward to build resistance against drugs.
- c) The addicts, while talking with the investigators sought treatment to wipe out the negative effects of drugs.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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