



NECESSITATING PROFESSIONAL INTERVENTION: A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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ABSTRACT

For the treatment of drug addiction, having a strong support system is essential, with professional assistance playing a key role [1]. In order to manage withdrawal symptoms and curb cravings, rehabilitation centers provide structured programs, therapies that are supported by research, and medical assistance. Professionals assess the extent of the addiction and work with friends and family to create a detailed plan. They also back the ongoing support throughout the healing process, promote effective communication, and aid in managing emotions. The study investigates how professional intervention affects drug rehabilitation in Arunachal Pradesh. In order to investigate the scope and significance of professional intervention, it makes use of a collective case study approach, direct observation, empirical learning, and literature reviews. The study makes recommendations for improving the lives of people struggling with drug addiction, including hiring professionals, creating job opportunities, and appointing social workers in schools. It also recommends using vocational and skill-based training programs to enhance employability and help individuals integrate back into society.

KEYWORDS: Arunachal Pradesh, Case Study, Drug Addiction, Narcotics Anonymous, Professional Support, Social Worker

1. INTRODUCTION

A strong support system is invaluable for the treatment of person battling drug addiction. Among these support groups, professional help is one of the most essential in addiction treatment [2]. Rehabilitation centers, both inpatient and outpatient, provide structured programs tailored to address the specific needs of individuals struggling with addiction. These programs offer a range of evidence-based therapies, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), individual counseling, group therapy, motivational enhancement therapy (MET) and holistic approaches such as yoga and meditation. Rehabilitation centers also provide medical support, including detoxification services and medication-assisted treatment (Lunze et al., 2016), to manage withdrawal symptoms and reduce cravings. The expertise and guidance of medical professionals specializing in addiction medicine ensure that individuals receive comprehensive and individualized care throughout their recovery journey [3].

Assessing the Situation is one of the key components of professional intervention in drug addiction recovery. Professional interventionists are trained to evaluate the extent of addiction, how it affects the person's life, and whether the person is ready to change. They assess the needs, motivators, and underlying elements that contribute to the addiction. In order to develop a thorough plan for the intervention process, interventionists closely collaborate with families, friends [4], and other concerned parties. This entails picking the best occasion, setting, and participants, as well as figuring out the strategy that will work best for the person. The professional directs the intervention, making sure it stays organized, respectful, and targeted. They help manage emotions, encourage effective communication, and keep the intervention moving in the direction of getting the person into treatment.

These professionals inform loved ones and families about the effects of drug addiction. They assist them in comprehending codependency problems, enabling behaviors, and the value of establishing healthy boundaries [3][5]. They enable loved ones to support the healing process by educating them. Finding and recommending suitable treatment options is a crucial part of interventionists' jobs. They are well-versed in the various treatment options, facilities, and resources that are out there [6]. They can point the family and the addict in the direction of the best treatment option based on the circumstances of each individual.

They can also offer ongoing support and direction throughout the addiction recovery process and even after the intervention. They make sure the person gets the materials, motivation, and support they need to stay sober and deal with the difficulties of early recovery. To ensure a smooth transition from the intervention to the treatment process, interventionists collaborate closely with therapists, addiction counselors, and the staff of the treatment facility. They work together to offer a thorough and integrated approach to care.



India is grappling with a significant drug abuse problem, with an estimated 7.6 million people using opioids and 2.8 million people using cannabis [7]. The North East region of India, including Arunachal Pradesh has its fair share of drug abuse issues. According to the National Survey on extent and pattern of substance use in India, 2019, Arunachal is grappled with substances and in many categories have left rest of the nation far behind. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mizoram has the highest prevalence of drug abuse in the region, followed by Manipur and Nagaland and Arunachal not far behind. These statistics highlight the urgent need for awareness, prevention, and effective addiction treatment in India, particularly in the North East region [5] [8] [9]. It is crucial to address the root causes of drug abuse, provide accessible rehabilitation centers, and promote community support systems to help individuals overcome addiction and lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

Given this context, it could be argued that professional intervention is an essential part of recovering from drug addiction. Interventionists provide individuals with professional direction, encouragement, and resources to encourage them to seek assistance, connect them with suitable care, and offer ongoing support throughout their recovery process. This study focuses on understanding the significance of professional intervention in addiction recovery and how this support system can be further strengthened in Arunachal Pradesh.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the scope and significance of professional intervention in overcoming drug addiction in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To recommend ways through which professional support system can be strengthened.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher focused on client's experience with professionals and how significant it has been in their recovery process through a collective case study [10] approach. The selection of the clients was made based on the following two criterions viz.:

- i. Those who have received treatment from a professional for addiction recovery.
- ii. Researcher's accessibility to the client.

The authors' direct observation, empirical learning, and thorough reviews of the body of literature pertinent to the study's subject matter, which included official records of the rehab centers, newspaper articles, and governmental archives, have strengthened the primary data gathered through the case studies. Not only were formal sessions observed, but also the clients' daily activities, which were recorded in accordance with the rehab centers' schedules, as well as their interactions with visiting relatives. Select questions have been taken from the transcripts of each recorded interview to maintain consistency in documentation. By making these notes available to the clients for their review and approval, clarity and accuracy have been guaranteed.

4. CLIENT PROFILE

(All names have been changed to protect the anonymity of the respondents)

Case I | Age: 25 (M) | Choice of Chemical: Opioid

Tapun, a 25-year-old male from Arunachal Pradesh, was referred to a psychiatrist by his uncle, Akhup, to investigate his solitary confinement, social withdrawal, and lack of verbal communication. The client was suspected to have taken a substance causing his biopsychosocial instabilities.

During the duration of the case study, the researcher outlined the following goals for intervention:

- a) Assist the client in returning to their regular level of functioning.
- b) Support the client in recognizing that there are other significant aspects to life beyond substance abuse.
- c) Encourage care-givers to gain a better understanding of drug dependence and mental health issues, and guide them in taking appropriate actions.

Strategies for intervention included:

- a) Utilizing Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET) to increase motivation and commitment towards positive change.
- b) Implementing Recreational Therapy, which can involve engaging in activities such as painting, music, origami, reading, or watching documentaries.
- c) Incorporating Indoor and Outdoor games and activities to encourage participation and enhance physical and mental well-being.
- d) Conducting Home Visits to provide support and assistance to individuals in their own living environment.
- e) Referring individuals to Caregivers and Self Help Groups to connect them with additional resources and support networks.

Initially, the client exhibited avoidance of eye contact, a delayed or lack of response to the researcher's inquiries. Furthermore, the client showed clear signs of neglecting personal hygiene and had a toe injury attributed to this behavior. The client demonstrated a tendency to remain confined to their room and, if he did venture out, would repeatedly circle the corridors. These behaviors align with the symptoms associated with F11 (Mental and Behavioural Disorder due to use of Opioids).

**Case II | Age: 49 (M) | Choice of Chemical: Heroin**

Moji, a 49-years-old male was referred to the Rehabilitation Centre by the police, who was apprehended under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 being caught in drug peddling activity. The client's biopsychosocial instability was attributed to his anti-social activities, lack of social responsibility, living a trans life, and deviant lifestyle. The client symptoms included no interest in social activity, no interest in family responsibility, junky attitude, poor hygiene, cancer due to injecting drug use and due to the substance use disorder (SUD), he has participated in many anti-social activities. The client lived alone as his father, mother, and wife passed away, and his daughter got married. The client has been provisionally diagnosed with Hepatitis-C, and depression. The client's sever physical and psychological dependency led to poor social functioning, family relationships, poverty, and deteriorating physical and mental health.

Presently, he has completed the process of detoxification, and keeping up with the daily activities introduced in the rehab center. Professionals have attested his progress through follow ups and regular sessions. The client initially struggled with fortifying his coping mechanism but eventually he is doing well in his recovery journey which his daughter and relatives also appreciated.

Case III | Age: 23 (M) | Choice of Chemical: Heroin

Rikam, a 23-year-old male was referred to the rehab center by his father, Rokim, due to his progressive anti-social activities. The Client's symptoms included lack of social activity, physical withdrawal, indifference, and poor hygiene. Biopsychosocial implication included failure in maintaining social relationships, decline in academic performance, and social isolation. The client's family environment included a father who is a contractor by profession and a mother who is business woman. The client has been provisionally diagnosed with Hepatitis-C, which is associated to liver failure, this disease was occurred due to Intravenous Drug Abuse (IVDA). The client's sever physical and psychological dependency led to poor social functioning, lack of motivation, relationship issues, and declining physical health. The rehab center is providing him proper treatment and giving him a chance to grow in his recovery life.

The researcher aimed to help the client from SUD, though interventional strategies which included motivation therapy, counselling, group therapy, meditation, indoor and outdoor games, dance & singing, and spiritual sessions. The client initially struggled with guilt and shame that led him to anxiety & depression but he is doing great and presently, living a sober life for the last 8 months since his admittance.

Case IV | Age: 20 (M) | Choice of Chemical: Heroin

Mikir, a 20-years-old male was referred to the rehab center as a case of chemical dependent person by police personnels. His mother had initially contacted the police due to his compulsive behavior of stealing money from home because of SUD. The client's biopsychosocial instability was identified as the cause of his lack of interest in social life, failure in studies, and poor psychological health. The client's symptoms included no interest in social activity, unable to maintain his relationships, poor hygiene, Hepatitis-C, and additionally he was under the debt of 1 Lakh INR for procurement of substance. Biopsychosocial implications included failure in talking social responsibility, weekend social support, and no participation in social activities. The client's family comprised of only single mother who worked as a government servant. The client has been provisionally diagnosed with Hepatitis-C, and depression. The client's sever physical and psychological dependency led to poor social functioning, family relationships, and physical health.

The researcher aimed to help the client by making him understand the importance of study, way of life, and role of the individual in the society among other interventional strategies mentioned in previous cases. He has been able to turn his life around and currently doing better in academics and been sober for the last 4 months.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Hand to Hold and a Heart to Understand

Following their enrollment as members of Narcotics Anonymous, the clients encountered their counselors at a rehab facility. They regularly partook in gatherings during which they openly discussed their challenges and received guidance from the counselors. These counselors offer valuable advice, instructing them on how to manage their lives and providing guidance on what actions to take and avoid. The clients effectively utilized this advice and realized that professionals can comprehend their situation without any prejudice. The clients acknowledged the importance of maintaining an open mind and cultivating a sense of empathy towards one another. Also, they discussed their challenges and delve into the religious practice of the 12-step program of the 'Narcotics Anonymous'. Counselors rely on their personal experiences, especially in the areas of mental and physical well-being, to provide guidance and these interactions enhance the client's motivation to remain at the rehabilitation facility, impart the importance of maintaining an open-minded, honest, and optimistic attitude, and assist in gradually rebuilding their character and reputation. The fact that the counselor is a recovering addict adds to the clients' confidence in his ability to empathize with their situation without bias. In order to enhance their counseling experience, the clients emphasized the need for truthful communication, sharing more of their thoughts and challenges openly. The importance of professional support as identified through this study could be summarized in the following concrete points:



Upside of Professional Support

- Better understanding of own thoughts and feelings
- Appropriate emotional expression
- Virtue of honesty, open-mindedness and positive outlook in life
- Inculcation of 12-Steps of Narcotics Anonymous
- Rebuilding social image and overall health
- Restoring relationship with family, relatives and peers

Figure 1: Benefits of professional care

A deeper understanding of one's own thoughts and feelings: Working with a qualified support network can give people a better understanding of their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Individuals can explore their inner world in a safe, judgment-free environment provided by therapists and counselors, which promotes greater self-awareness and self-discovery.

Appropriate emotional expression: People can better express and control their emotions when they receive professional support. This can stop people from suppressing their emotions or using unhealthy coping strategies like abusing drugs. Improved mental health and healthier relationships can result from learning healthier emotional expression.

Values of honesty, tolerance, and a positive outlook on life: People who receive professional support are encouraged to be honest with one another and with themselves. Open-mindedness can promote greater personal growth and a wider outlook on life, and therapists and counselors can help people develop it. Individuals can also develop a positive outlook on life with the assistance of a professional, focusing on opportunities and growth.

Inculcation of the 12-Steps of Narcotics Anonymous: For those overcoming addiction, professional support frequently includes incorporating the Narcotics Anonymous 12 Steps or a comparable recovery program. These steps offer a methodical framework for introspection, self-improvement, and abstinence maintenance. Professional assistance and guidance can improve one's comprehension and application of these steps.

Rebuilding social image and general health: Individuals can get professional support to rebuild their social image and deal with the effects of addiction. Through therapy, people can rebuild their overall health and well-being, mend broken relationships, and gain back lost trust and respect, which may result in a happier and more fulfilling life.

Repairing connections with peers, family, and relatives: Addiction frequently causes rifts in connections with close friends and social networks. By fostering communication, educating others about addiction, and assisting family members in understanding the recovery process, professional support can help people mend these relationships. Working with experts can help to foster a supportive environment for mending and enhancing these connections.

6. SUGGESTIONS

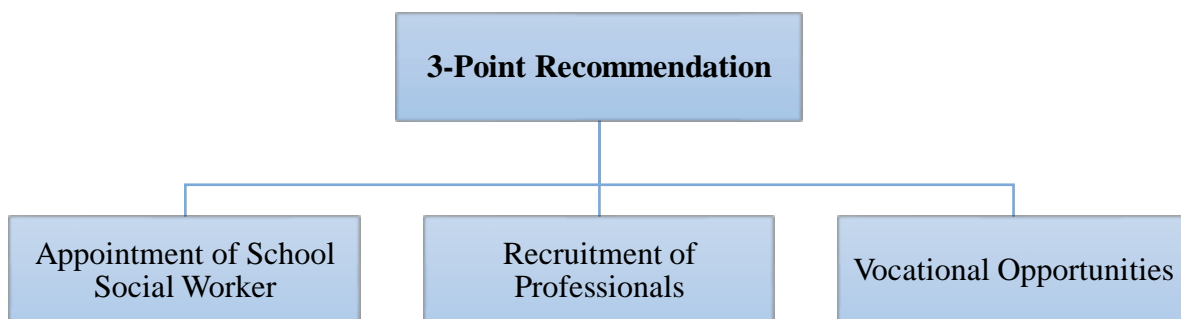


Figure 2: Recommendations for effective addiction reduction

6.1 Appointment of School Social Worker

The overall wellbeing of an individual is influenced by various factors, including both clinical and critical aspects. When students lack a trustworthy environment, they may feel hesitant to express their deepest emotions and thoughts. Unfortunately, family members, friends, and teachers often struggle to comprehend and take the time to address personal issues. In these situations, social workers play a crucial role in providing support within educational institutions (Steiker et al., 2014). In order to provide a comprehensive and customized solution for all individuals, these experts consider various factors as they are



specifically trained to predict and aid children who may be susceptible to drug use. Hence, this research proposes the compulsory inclusion of a social worker in every educational institution.

6.2 Recruitment of Professionals

Professionals such as Psychiatric/School/Medical Social Workers, Counsellors, Psychiatrists, and Psychologists are needed in locations such as schools, medical facilities, and rehab centres to give drug users with a holistic chance of recovery. In order to bring about positive change in our society, it is imperative to recruit these professionals in the state and offer them benefits that are on par with national standards. The limited number of professionals currently in the state feel disheartened due to the low pay and lack of job prospects.

6.3 Vocational Opportunities

According to interviews with individuals battling drug addiction, it has been found that despite successfully overcoming drug dependency during their time in rehab, there is uncertainty regarding their future employment opportunities. Many individuals have abandoned their education owing to addiction at both school and college levels, leaving them without any viable skill. As a result, it becomes difficult for them to envision a future of financial independence. This situation greatly obstructs their path to recovery. To address this issue and provide support to recovering addicts, the government can implement vocational and skill-based training programs and platforms that aim to enhance their employability. By doing so, these individuals will be able to integrate back into society and transform their lives in a positive way.

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