

**ABSTRACT**

A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out to describe the facilities available in the Rehabilitation Centres for Drug Addicts (RCDA) in the Galle District; to describe socio demographic characteristics of drug addicts and details of their drug abuse and rehabilitation. Level of satisfaction among the drug addicts regarding some of the facilities available in RCDA also studied. Study was carried out among all the drug addicts admitted to RCDA in Galle District during a period of 3 months from 01 / September/2004 to 30/November/2004.

Information regarding water facilities, toilet facilities, sleeping facilities, recreation facilities, and counseling were collected using a data sheet. When the 4 RCDA in the Galle District are considered relatively better facilities were found in the RCDA managed by the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB). In the RCDA managed by Nawa Jeewana Amadyapa Handa Sewaya (NJAHS), mainly poor sleeping facilities, poor recreation facilities and lack of trained counselors were identified.

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Out of 385 drug addicts admitted to RCDA in the Galle District during the study period, 381 addicts (99%) participated in the study. 99% of the drug addicts were males. Large proportions of addicts (44.9%) belong to the 31-40 years age group, followed by 21-30 years age group. 74% was Sinhalese while Burgher's (4.5%) were observed to be over represented. Majorities (55.9%) were Buddhists, but Catholics (33.6%) were observed to be over represented.

Majority of the drug addicts (63.3%) belong to the educational category GCE (O/L) or above. 51.4% were married and 87.8% of them having children. Majority (69%) were in the social class 3 and class 4. Many addicts (54.4%) received a income between Rs 7,500 to Rs.15, 000.

More than 50% of drug addicts were admitted to the RCDA in the Galle District are from the Colombo District. Out of all drug addicts 66.4% lived in urban areas. 98.7% used heroin in combination with other drugs or alone. Majority of the drug addicts (70.1%) started drug abuse during 10- 20 years of age. 54.1% of addicts started heroin as their first drug of abuse. Less than 1% of addicts used intravenous route.

94.5% of addicts had smoked before using addictive drugs. Mean starting age of smoking was 16.29 years. 88.2% of addicts introduced to drugs by their friends.

There was a significant association between mean starting age of drug abuse and the introducer ( $P < 0.001$ ). Younger people were introduced by friends and older people were introduced by relatives. Majority (74.3%) of the addicts started drugs to experiment. There was a significant association between the reasons for drug abuse and mean starting age of drug abuse ( $P < 0.001$ ).

A statistically significant association was seen between the reasons for starting drugs and urban/rural residence ( $p < 0.001$ ). Large majority of the persons who started drugs to get rid of stress were from urban areas ( $P < 0.001$ ).

Mean current expenditure on drugs is Rs 951/96 per day. There is no significant association between the mean expenditure and social class or mean expenditure with urban rural difference. There was a statistically significant association between monthly income and expenditure for

drugs ( $P < 0.001$ ). 44.9% of addicts in RCDA were first admissions and 55.1% were readmissions.

There is a statistically significant association between mean period of drug addiction and first admission and readmission status ( $P < 0.001$ ). There is no statistically significant association between number of admissions and the period of abstinence.

Satisfaction among drug addicts to some of the facilities in the RCDA were assessed using composite score. 29.4% were unsatisfied. Drug addicts in lower social classes were more satisfied with facilities compared to those from higher social classes ( $P < 0.05$ ). High proportion of addicts in RCDA managed by NDDCB was satisfied with the facilities compared to those in NJAHS managed centres ( $p < 0.001$ ).