**Drug Menace**

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November 15, 2023

[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns)

Drug menace has permeated our every segment of the society, especially among the youth. However, the reasons for drug abuse are different among youth in different segments of the society. Among the affluent class, more recreational drugs are used to while away the time, or during raves. The youngsters from the elite class get hooked upon in schools and colleges, where peers are using drugs to look cool. Consequently, these youngsters also start smoking to look cool and be a part of the crowd. Many of the schools and colleges where these youngsters study are aware of the drug problem but prefer to look the other way so as not to get their institutions’ reputations tainted; plus these youngsters are from elite class who manage to escape any disciplinary action from their institutions.
On the other hand, youngsters from middle to lower middle class get hooked onto drugs when they don’t get openings in life even after having qualifications and degrees. Thus, for them the drugs offer escapism from reality and depression. Among the labour class, drug abuse is most severe, because they daily face the harshest facets of life: homelessness, joblessness, unbearable cost of living, failure to support families, which drive this segment of the society to drugs abuse. Resultantly, we see addicts begging on roads, and lying around on the footpaths and by the roadside.
Help is available to youth of the elite class for rehabilitation, and they have lives full of opportunities and hope to look forward to. Similarly, to a lesser degree, help and support is available to children from middle-class in form of nuclear families, which support them on their road to recovery and rehabilitation. However, the most vulnerable-labour segment of the society, have no support to crawl out of the jaws of drug addiction, and the belief that life has nothing to offer to them further adds to their despondency. Therefore, majority of the people lying around on roads, streets and under bridges belong to this vulnerable segment of the society.
Now, the next question is what needs to be done: a multifaceted approach is required. First, all support and resources need to be provided to the drug enforcement agencies such as ANF to curb drug smuggling. Second, laws are in place but effective and speedy implementation of these laws without any prejudice or bias needs to be ensured so that drug barons and their peddlers arrested by law enforcement agencies are prosecuted. Third, support of religious leaders may be solicited and requested to create awareness against drug abuse during their sermons. Fourth, awareness in educational institutions may be created and zero tolerance may be maintained against drug abuse in institutions. Fifth, awareness should also be created through electronic media, especially to remove societal taboo related to drugs, and seminars may be held with former drug addicts as invitees to discuss their drug addiction and rehabilitation stories. Sixth, support of national celebrities may be also solicited in highlighting the scourge of drugs especially affecting our younger generation.
Finally, government should also work on streamlining efforts for drug rehabilitation, especially for the vulnerable class. Also, the government needs to generate economic activity to create jobs for the ever growing youth bulge entering the job market. Last but not least, youth are full of energy which could either be channelised to useful, productive activities but if left to their own devices, could be exploited by nefarious elements for their ulterior designs. Therefore, the government should regularly hold sporting competitions at schools, colleges, and district, provincial and national levels to engage the youth continuously in healthy activities. Such sporting activities will not only keep the youth engaged in healthy activities but also create future sportsmen for the country.