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Studies on Addiction

Methodology in addiction studies is critical for understanding the complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors that contribute to substance use disorders. Researchers often employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture a comprehensive view of addiction.



Quantitative methods may include randomized controlled trials, longitudinal studies, and surveys that assess patterns of substance use, treatment outcomes, and relapse rates.



Qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, provide deeper insights into individuals' experiences, motivations, and barriers to recovery. Additionally, the use of mixed-methods approaches allows for triangulation of data, enhancing the validity of findings. Ethical considerations are paramount, particularly regarding informed consent and the confidentiality of vulnerable populations.

Overall, robust methodology in addiction studies not only advances scientific understanding but also informs effective interventions and policies aimed at reducing the impact of addiction on individuals and communities.



Challenges in Addiction studies

Addiction studies face significant challenges, beginning with the definition of addiction itself.

The term can encompass a wide range of behaviors and substances, making it difficult to create a universally accepted definition.

Variability in the conceptualization of addiction—whether as a medical condition, a behavioral issue, or a combination of both—complicates research efforts and can lead to inconsistencies in findings.

Challenges in Addiction studies

Another major difficulty in addiction studies lies in accessing hidden populations, such as those who may not seek treatment due to the stigma associated with addiction. This taboo can result in underreporting and underestimation of addiction prevalence, as individuals may be reluctant to disclose their substance use or related behaviors. This reluctance is compounded by societal judgments and misconceptions about addiction, which can deter individuals from participating in studies or seeking help.

Challenges in Addiction studies

Consequently, researchers may struggle to obtain representative samples, leading to skewed data that fails to accurately reflect the true scope of addiction in various communities. Additionally, interviewing individuals about their addiction experiences can be sensitive; the fear of judgment or legal repercussions may inhibit open and honest communication, further complicating the research process.

Indicators: prevalence and incidence rates

Understanding the landscape of addiction requires a comprehensive examination of several key indicators. The extent of drug use and abuse is often measured through prevalence and incidence rates, which help researchers determine how widespread drug use is within a population and identify emerging trends.

Indicators: Characteristics of people using drugs

Additionally, assessing risk and protective factors is crucial, as these elements—such as socio-economic status, mental health, and social support—can significantly influence an individual's likelihood of engaging in drug use.

Drug use patterns, including the frequency and context of use, provide insights into how substances are consumed, which can inform prevention and intervention strategies. Moreover, characteristics of people using drugs, such as age, gender, and ethnicity, help tailor approaches to specific demographics, ensuring more effective outreach and treatment.

Indicators: Drug abuse-related harms and Risk behaviors

Equally important are the indicators related to the consequences of drug use. Risk behaviors associated with drug use, such as unprotected sex or driving under the influence, highlight the potential for negative outcomes not only for individuals but also for their communities. Drug abuse-related harms, including health complications and social repercussions, underscore the need for effective public health responses.

Indicators: Policy and laws

Policy-related indicators assess the effectiveness of laws and regulations surrounding drug use, while intervention-related indicators evaluate the success of treatment and prevention programs. Finally, supply-related indicators help monitor the availability of drugs within a community, which can impact usage rates and inform strategies for reducing access to harmful substances. Together, these indicators create a multidimensional framework for understanding addiction and guiding effective responses.

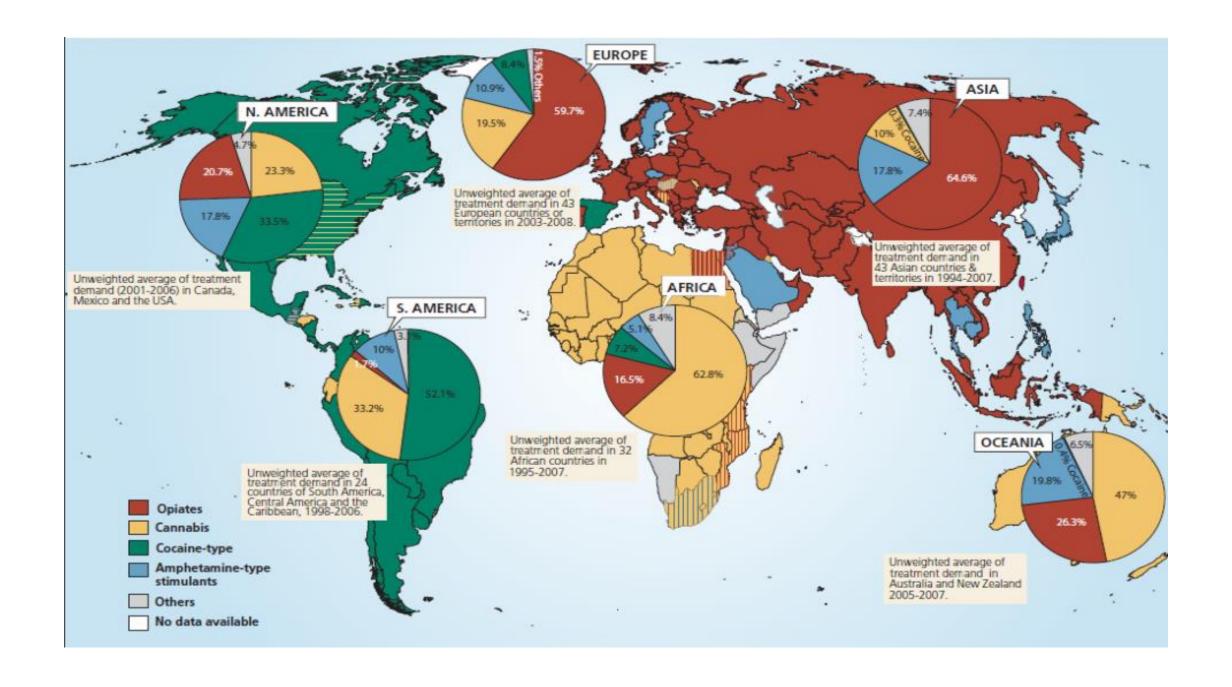


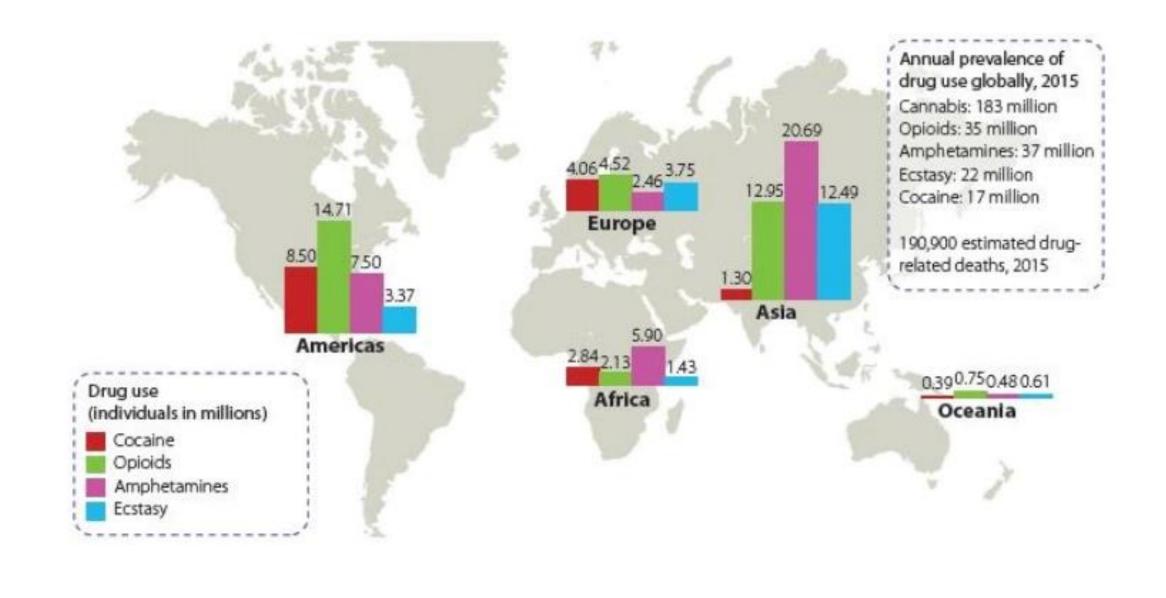
Drug use in the World

The consumption of substances varies across different regions of the world, influenced by social, cultural, economic, and legal factors. These differences can lead to a diversity in the types of substances consumed and the related problems. next is an examination of regional differences in drug and alcohol consumption:









North America: High Prevalence of Opioid Use

The use of opioids, especially synthetic opioids like fentanyl, is extremely high in North America. The opioid crisis in this region has become one of the main public health challenges in recent years. The United States and Canada have the highest rates of opioid overdose deaths. This crisis is largely linked to the prescription of opioid medications, followed by a shift towards illegal opioids.

In addition to opioids, the concurrent use of other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine is also on the rise. These combinations increase the risk of overdose.

THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC BY THE NUMBERS



70,630people died from drug overdose in 2019²



10.1 million
people misused prescription
opioids in the past year¹



1.6 million
people had an opioid use
disorder in the past year¹



2 million
people used methamphetamine
in the past year¹



745,000 people used heroin in the past year¹



50,000
people used heroin for the first time¹



1.6 million
people misused prescription
pain relievers for the first time¹



48,006
deaths attributed to overdosing on synthetic opioids other than methadone (in 12-month period ending June 2020)³



14,480 deaths attributed to overdosing on heroin (in 12-month period ending June 2020)³

SOURCES

- 1. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2020.
- 2. NCHS Data Brief No. 394, December 2020.
- NCHS, National Vital Statistics System. Provisional drug overdose death counts.



Europe: High Prevalence of Alcohol and Psychoactive Substances

Alcohol consumption has traditionally been high in Europe and continues to be a major public health issue on the continent. Countries like Russia, the UK, and Scandinavian nations have high rates of alcohol consumption. Also cannabis remains by far the most commonly consumed illicit drug in Europe. The use of psychoactive substances such as ecstasy (MDMA) and cocaine is also common in Europe. These drugs are particularly popular among young people and partygoers. In recent years, cocaine use has been increasing in Western European countries like Spain and the UK.

Australia: High Consumption of Alcohol and Stimulants

Australia is known for heavy alcohol consumption patterns among various demographic groups. Alcohol use is prevalent among both young people and the elderly, associated with issues such as traffic accidents, violence, and alcohol-related health problems.

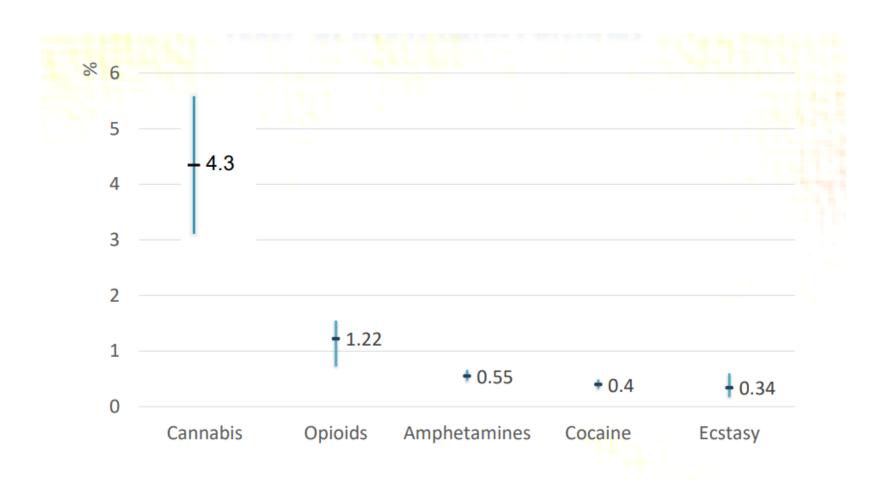
The use of amphetamines and methamphetamine is also high in Australia. These substances are particularly common among young people and workers who require long hours due to their stimulating effects on the central nervous system.

Other Regions: East and Southeast Asia, Africa

In East and Southeast Asia, methamphetamine use has become one of the largest public health challenges. Due to widespread production and easy access, it is widely consumed.

In Africa, the use of cannabis and homemade alcohol is common and is associated with various health problems, especially in areas with limited healthcare services.

Prevalence of drug use in the wold

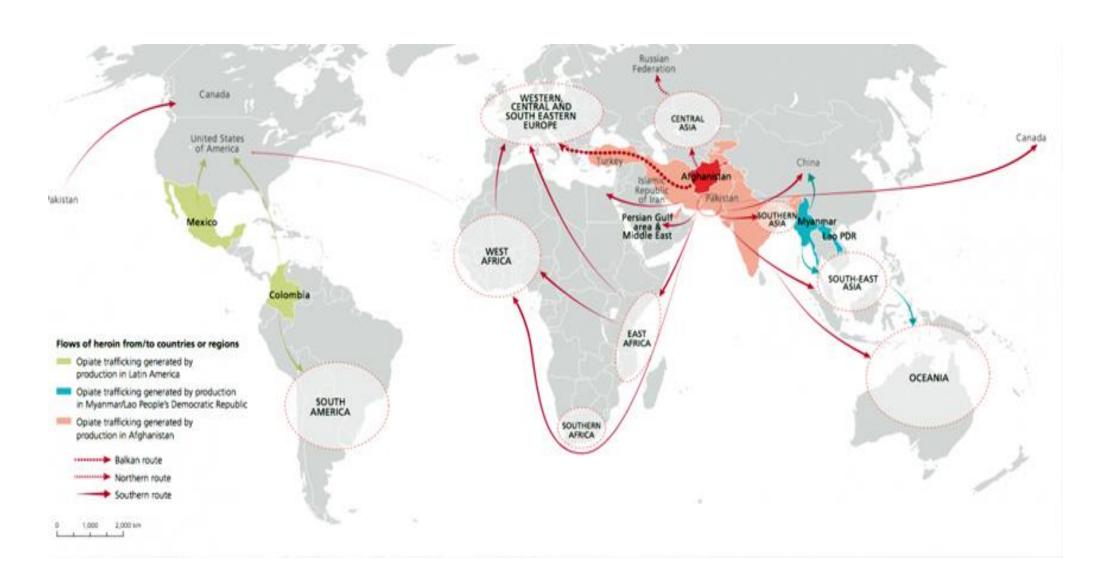


Global opiate abuse: 15.6 million people, or 0.4 per cent of the world's population aged 15-64.

- Opiates continue to be the main problem drug worldwide, accounting for some 60 per cent of treatment demand in Asia and in Europe.
- Main using countries: Iran, Russia, Afghanistan,
 China, Pakistan, UK, USA



Afghanistan and Iran

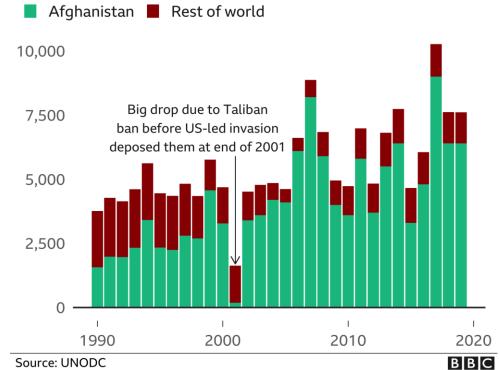


Taliban effects on opium products

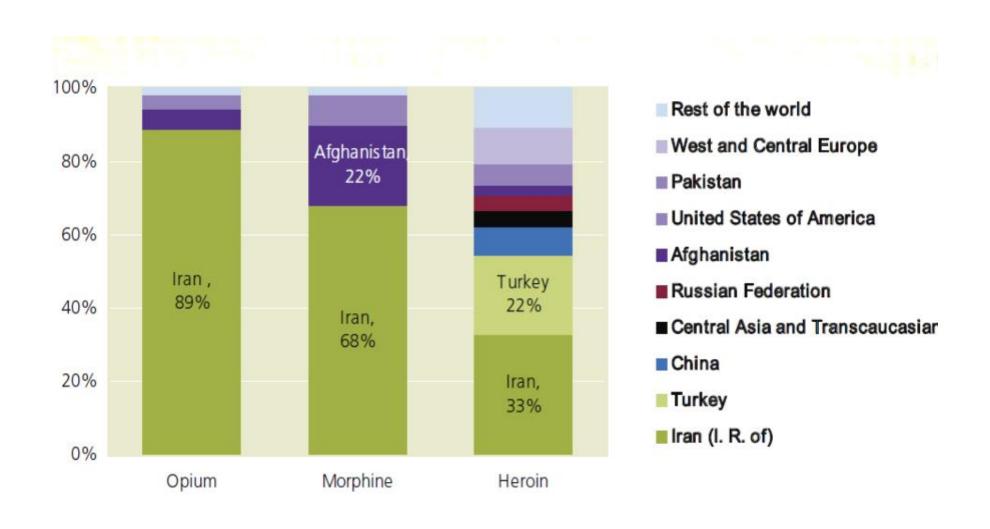


Afghanistan is responsible for more than 80% of global opium production

Opium production in tonnes, 1990-2019



Opium seizure in the world



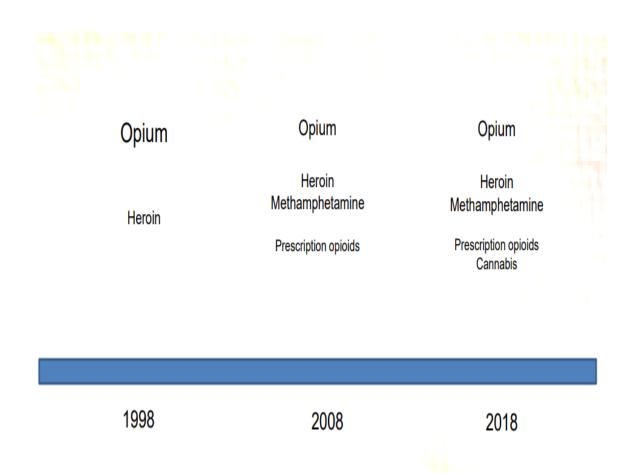
Opium seizure in Iran



TEHRAN, Nov. 27 (MNA) – The secretary general of Iran Headquarters for Campaign against Drug Trafficking Eskandar Momeni stressed that about 92% of the world's opium discoveries are related to Iran.

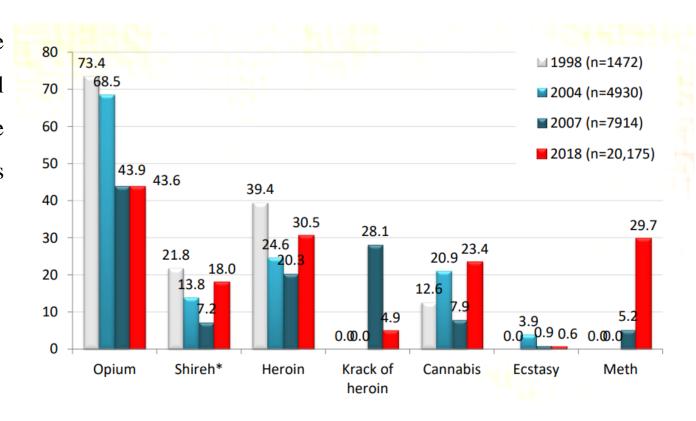
Iran Addiction Situation

In Iran, addiction to drugs is one of the significant public health challenges. Statistics indicate that over 2 million people in the country suffer from substance disorders. Opioids, use including opium and heroin, are the most commonly used substances in Additionally, the Iran. of use methamphetamine has increased in past years, becoming one of the prevalent stimulant drugs.

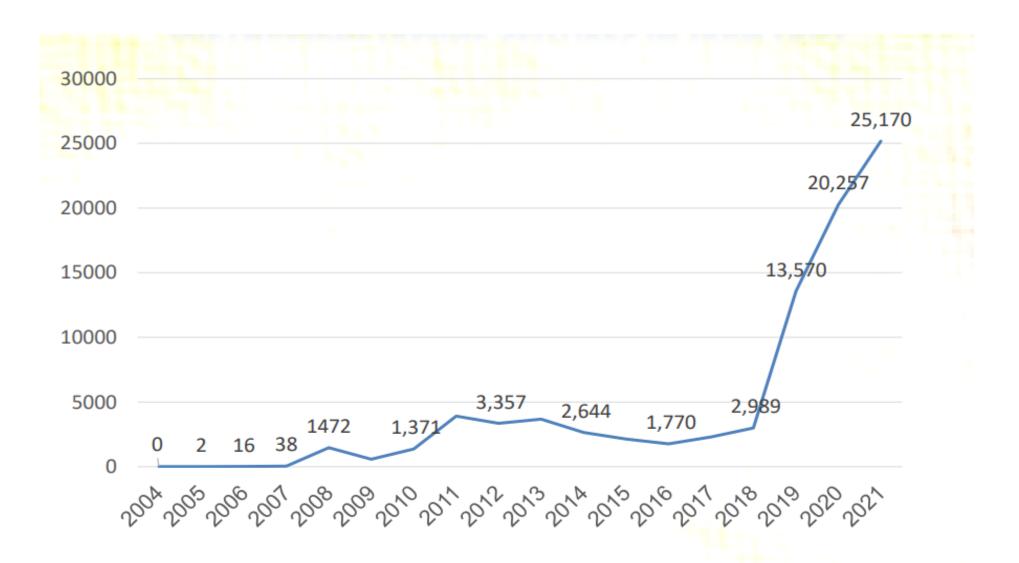


Iran Addiction Situation

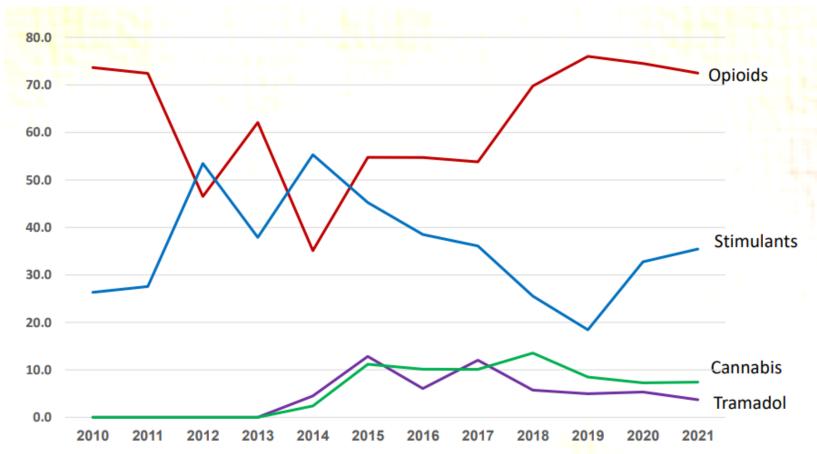
Moreover, patterns of substance use in Iran have changed over time. For example, with increased legal controls and reduced access to opium, some users have turned to synthetic opioids like methadone, as well as stimulants such as crystal meth.



Methamphetamine Seizures in Iran



Trends of addiction in Iran





According to internal reports, men are more likely than suffer from women substance use disorders, with the age group of 20 to 40 years showing the highest prevalence of addiction. Geographically, substance use is higher in marginalized urban areas and rural regions compared to urban centers.



Studies of addiction in Iran

General population surveys:

- National Study on drug use in the emergency rooms, 2002
- National household survey on prevalence of substance use and use disorder, cost and service use (IranMHS), 2011
- National household survey on prevalence of substance use, 2015
- Persian Youth Cohort

National surveys on students:

- School surveys
- University surveys

Large surveys on drug users:

- Four national survey on drug users 1998, 2004, 2007, 2018
- Survey and qualitative study on IDUs in Tehran, 2001
- Annual statistical reports from treatment centers, since 1996
- Bio-behavioral surveys on IDUs

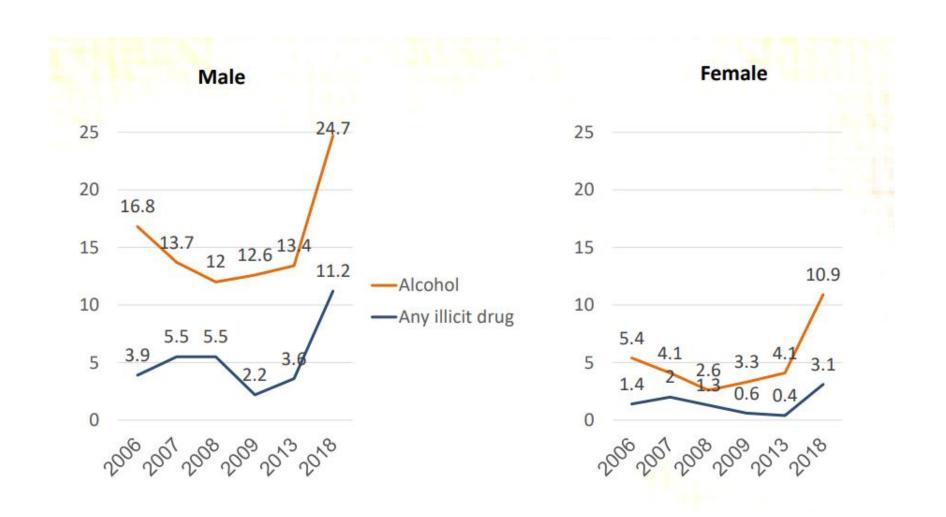
Other:

- National study on drug use in prisons, 2001
- Study on burden of diseases, 2003, etc.
- Systematic reviews

National Study

	Current use	Dependence	
Opioids	3,761,000	1,158,000	
Heroin	277,000	137,000	
Alcohol	1,863,000	253,000	
Cannabis	391,000	Not estimated	

TUMS students Study



TUMS students Study

