

F-18:AN INQUIRY INTO DRUG ABUSE AND ITS POTENTIAL HARMFULNESS

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The last decade has witnessed an escalation in drug abuse in Sri Lanka. This trend is seen mainly in urban societies. An assessment of needs in the context of drug abuse prevention is important especially as a base line for planning and implementing effective intervention programmes. Cognizant of this fact, we have attempted through this study to ascertain the expenditure incurred by the low income earners on alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

An interview survey of 241 subjects comprising members of 54 families was conducted in selected slum areas in Colombo. The sample consisted mainly of Sinhalese (88%). Average income of those families was Rs.1800.00 per month. The total expenditure on alcohol and tobacco was Rs.34048.00 which amounted to 34% of the total income.

These findings have implications for those involved in poverty alleviation programmes.