

**Glue Sniffing Among Street Children in Gaushala and Sundhara Area of
Kathmandu Valley**

**A term paper submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements for
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Abstract

Street children are a term used to refer to children who live on the streets of a city. They are basically deprived of family care and protection. The easy access and availability of drugs has created an extremely conducive social environment for people to start taking such substances. It is believed that solvents produce hallucinations by disrupting the cell membrane of brain cells, thus altering the way the cells conduct electrical impulses. The current prevalence of glue sniffing is 78.7% among street children in the Kathmandu Valley.

We conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study to assess the situation of glue sniffing among street children in Gaushala and Sundhara area of Kathmandu valley. The problem of availability of food and the control over them and the lack of education among street children pushes them for glue sniffing. Majority of the respondents encountered problems such as Headache, Nausea and Stomach-ache while sniffing glue. They also faced other problems such as fighting with their friends and also developed a self-destructive nature.

At last, we concluded that the problem of glue sniffing is getting more serious in our society and this problem has to be addressed urgently if we want to see a safe environment for the future of the nation.

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Abbreviations

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Abbreviation

CWS: Child Welfare Society

CWIN: Child Workers in Nepal

LALS: Life Giving and Life Saving

CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Background

As in other countries drugs are strictly illegal in Nepal but have found their way into the market place via various different channels. The easy access and availability of drugs has created an extremely conducive social environment for people to start taking such substances, especially among young people and children.

Street children are a term used to refer to children who live on the streets of a city. They are basically deprived of family care and protection. Most children on the streets are between the ages of about 5 and 17 years old, and their population between different cities is varied. Street children can be divided into two categories: 1) Children of the street where the children work and live on the street. 2) Children of the street where the children work on the street and usually live with their families.

Street children are normally a mobile population. They roam from one part of the city to another. But generally they have made certain areas their base from where they do their 'business' and where they sleep at night. For most street children taking drugs is inevitable while living on the street. Their hardship and adverse circumstances are some of the reason children cite for doing drugs of one kind or another. While many street children perceive substances use as a tension reliever. As regard to glue sniffing, it has been viewed as one of the major coping strategies for street children all over the world. However, the easy accessibility and availability remain temptations for children to take up the habit of sniffing. Glue sniffing among street children is as serious a problem as abuse of any other substances.

Inhalation of the fumes from organic solvents of the type found in paints, lighter fuel, and glue, for their hallucinatory effects. As well as being addictive, solvents are dangerous for their effects on the user's liver, heart, and lungs. It is believed that solvents produce hallucinations by disrupting the cell membrane of brain cells, thus altering the way the cells conduct elect impulses.

There is wide range of frequency regarding inhalation abuse throughout the world. This is further complicated by the fact that a variety of inhalation techniques with different amounts of the substances being used. Some of the techniques used to inhale are:

"Sniffing" or "snorting": the substance is directly inhaled from the container. "Direct entry": the substance is directly sprayed into the mouth and nose. "Bagging": the substance is kept in a plastic or paper bag and is inhaled "Huffing": here a rag is soaked with the substances and is kept in the mouth.

The main cities in Nepal where the street children found are Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Pokhara, Dharan, Narayanghat, Butwal. Out of 5000 street children there are 500-600 street children in Kathmandu alone. This is due to rapid urbanization.

In Nepal context, bagging is the most popular technique used. The glue is dropped into a polythene bag and is inhaled continuously by taking short breathe into the bag while taking long deep breaths from the bag. Children generally inhale in a group and this activity can thus be termed a group or social event among street children.

Glue sniffing amongst street children in Nepal can be taken as an initiation to the use of other hard drugs. Peer pressure and easy availability of glue' dendrite' are two of the prominent reasons for addiction to sniffing. Addiction to glue sniffing is making street children more dependent on substances. This dependency is resulting in an increase in street children carrying out petty thefts. This trend, in the course of time will lead children to ever more violent and unsocial activities. Recently some street children have

stopped taking dendrite after learning of its harmful effects through their friends and social workers.

Street children feel strongly that society should not look down on them and that they should be given equal opportunities to other children. They also think that the government should take action against the unlawful sale of any kind of drugs or substances to children. Furthermore, they feel that there is a need for a wider awareness among children and society in general regarding children's problems and substances use.

1.2 Statement of problem

Glue sniffing in Kathmandu has been increasing to dangerous levels among children, according to rights activists, who said their health is at risk and it is even affecting their mental health. It can cause neurological damage, kidney or liver failure, paralysis and even death, according to local child health workers. According to a prominent child rights NGO, Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN), there are approximately 800-900 street children in Kathmandu out of 5,000 in the country. It found that some children used as many as 15 tubes a day (one tube of dendrite can be used four to five times) and many used it as a substitute for regular meals. Glue sniffing is relatively new trend in Nepal. It is fast becoming an addiction among street children in Kathmandu. The current prevalent of glue sniffing is 78.7% among street children in the Kathmandu Valley. 19.7% have started using glue two years ago, 34.4 % started a year ago and 27.9% started just few months back. Street children, who do not even smoke or drink alcohol often sniff glue. Glue sniffing can be termed as 'group activity' among street children. 95.1% children use glue with friends. 77% use glue in peer influence and 60.7% children sniff glue daily.

1.3 Objectives of the study

General objective:

- To assess the situation of glue sniffing among street children in Gaushala and Sundhara area of Kathmandu valley.

Specific objective:

- To find out extensively about the trend of glue sniffing among street children in Gaushala and Sundhara.
- To assess the prevalence of glue sniffing among street children in Gaushala and Sundhara.
- To find out the reasons why street children get into glue sniffing.
- To determine the effects of glue sniffing on street children in Gaushala and Sundhara.

CHAPTER II

Literature review

Street children have become a common phenomenon for children in many cities in Nepal. Children who are working and living on the streets are found throughout the nation. The definition of the 'street' is no longer limited to being a path but is now interpreted as a site for living for many children in our country.(CWS:Situation analysis of street children in Nepal,1996)

Street children are among the high risk and insecure groups and they are consequently more vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and abuse. They have been denied not only their rights as children but also their childhood without guidance, education and security; they are heading towards uncertain future. They need to be steered back to the mainstream of social life through proper opportunities, care and rehabilitation. They have enough potential and talent. If they are brought into a better environment, they have a real hope for the future.(Gauri Pradhan: Young survivor on the street)

According to CWIN estimation there are 5000 street children in Nepal and around 400 - 600 are based in the Kathmandu Valley. CWIN Research on Alcohol and Drug Use among Street Children in Nepal, 2001 has shown that between 25 and 90 per cent of street children use substance of one kind or other. Glue sniffing is relatively new trend in Nepal. It is fast becoming an addiction among street children in Kathmandu. The current prevalent of glue sniffing is 78.7% among street children in the Kathmandu Valley. 19.7% have started using glue two years ago, 34.4 % started a year ago and 27.9% started just few months back. Glue sniffing is taken as a 'debut' drug by street children.

Mostly street children begin drug-taking by glue sniffing and end up on other, more hard-core, drugs. Street children, who do not even smoke or drink alcohol often, sniff glue. In general, the main short-term effects reported by the responding children were

hallucinations. Its ill effects have resulted in problematic behavior, self-destruction due to hallucinations and fighting amongst friends. The reasons given by the users for sniffing were low self-esteem, an inferiority complex and having enough pocket money to buy this substance. Children also use glue because it is cheap and easily available. Most of the harmful effects of Glue Sniffing are found to be related to the brain and the Nervous System. 63.9 % have reported one or other kind of illness as long term effects of glue sniffing. Even among non-users almost all the children knew about glue sniffing. In the group of non-users a majority (85%) have seen their friends sniffing glue. Glue sniffing can be termed as 'group activity' among street children. 95.1% children use glue with friends. 77% use glue in peer influence and 60.7% children sniff glue daily.

LALS (Life Giving and Life Saving), an organization working on harm reduction, has found the maximum use of glue sniffing among school girls as compared to street children. Most of the teenage girls are using these substances. The trend of glue sniffing has already shifted from street children to school going girls and boys. These young people use dendrite, which they buy from the local shops. LALS further states that the rate of glue sniffing has gone down among street children because of some casualties among peers, which other street children witnessed.

According to the women's cell in the valley police of Kathmandu around 95% street children sniff dendrite. The initial use is generally due to peer pressure and children often get addicted.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Study area: The study area was Gaushala and Sundhara.

Study Design: The study was conducted as descriptive cross-sectional study.

Study population: The study population of the study was street children between 5 and 17 years.

Universe population: The frame of the study was the street children of Gaushala and Sundhara.

Sampling size: Altogether 30 street children were interviewed.

Sampling Technique: Purposive Sampling

Data collection technique: The technique used for collection of data was interview.

Data collection tool: The tool used for collection of data was questionnaire.

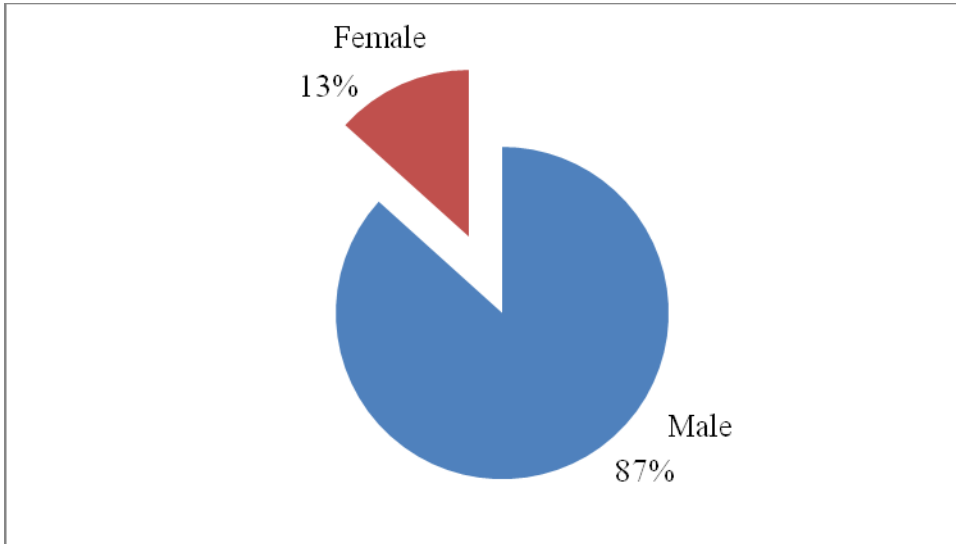
Data processing, analysis and interpretation: The data was processed through ms-word, excel, the data was analyzed and interpreted by presenting in tables, bars, pie-charts, etc

Limitation of the study: Due to small sample size, the data may not represent the whole population and lack of time and resources.

CHAPTER IV

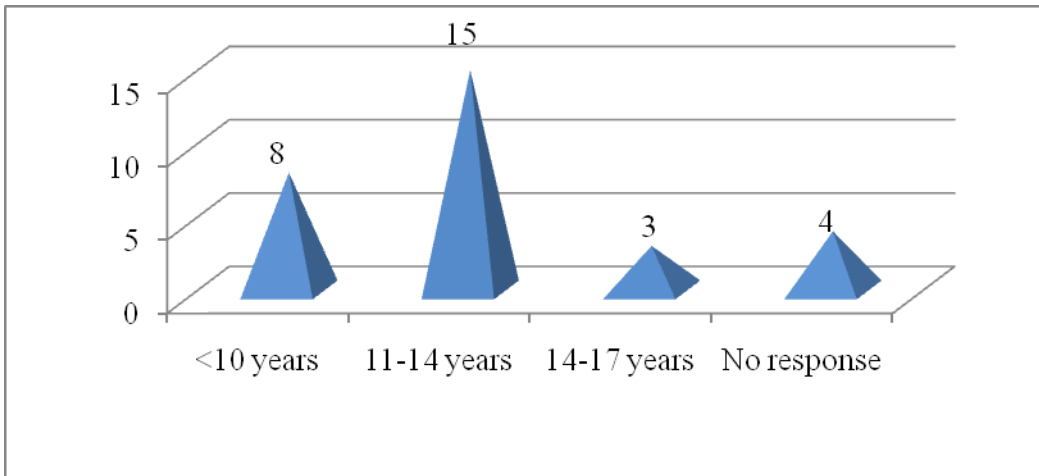
Findings

Fig1: Gender



The above pie chart shows the gender distribution. Majority were male 26(87%) respondents and 4(13%) were female respondents.

Fig2: Age distribution of the respondents



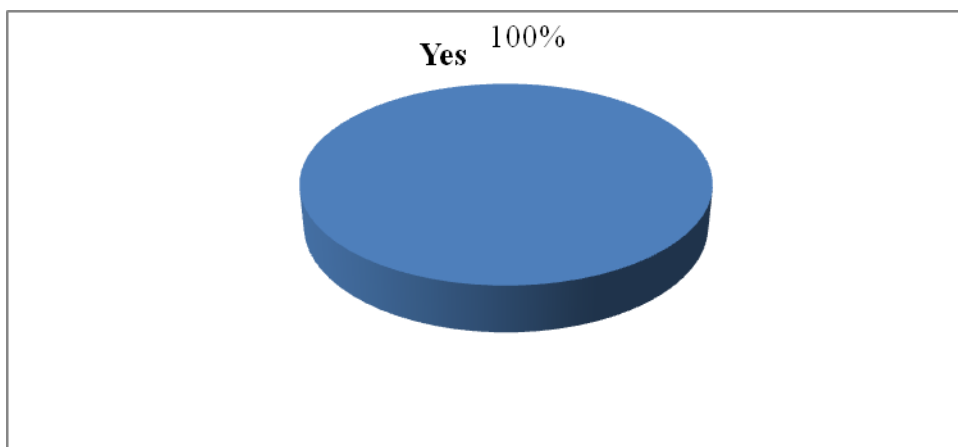
The above diagram shows age distribution of the respondents. Out of 30 respondent's majority were between the age 11-15 years i.e. 15 respondents. Similarly 8 and 3 respondents were <10 years and 14-17 years respectively. 4 respondents did not respond.

Table 1: Different substances used by street children interviewed.

Type	No	Percent (%)
Cigarette	26	87
Tobacco	8	27
Alcohol	14	47
Marijuana	16	53
Tidigesic	2	7
Dendrite	19	63

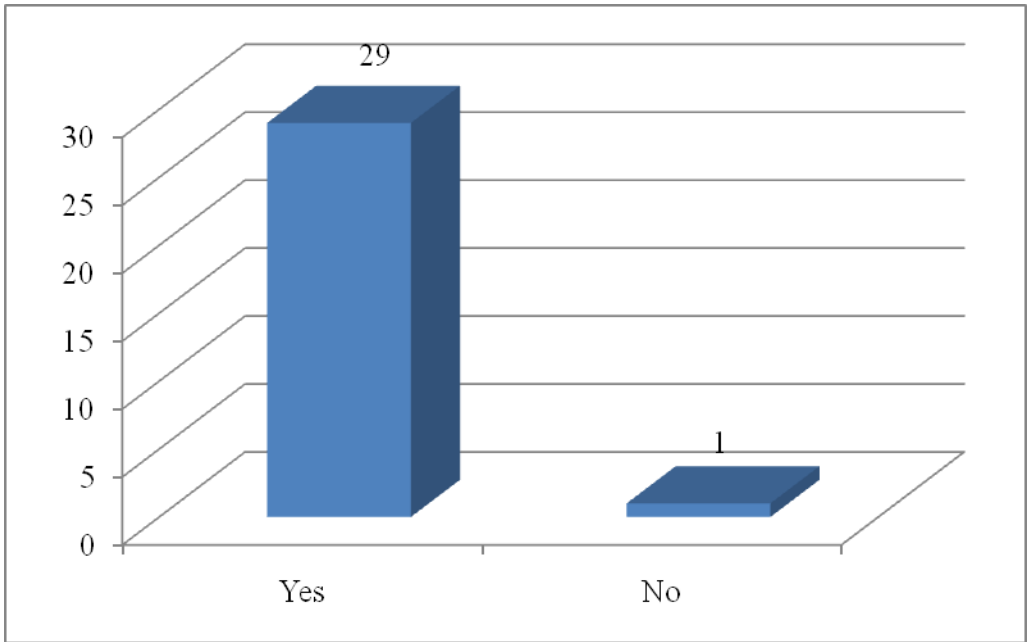
The above table shows out of 30 respondents maximum use cigarette i.e. 26 minimum use Tidigesic i.e. 2 and 19 use dendrite and similarly 8, 14 and 16 use Tobacco, alcohol and Marijuana respectively.

Fig3: Have known about glue sniffing



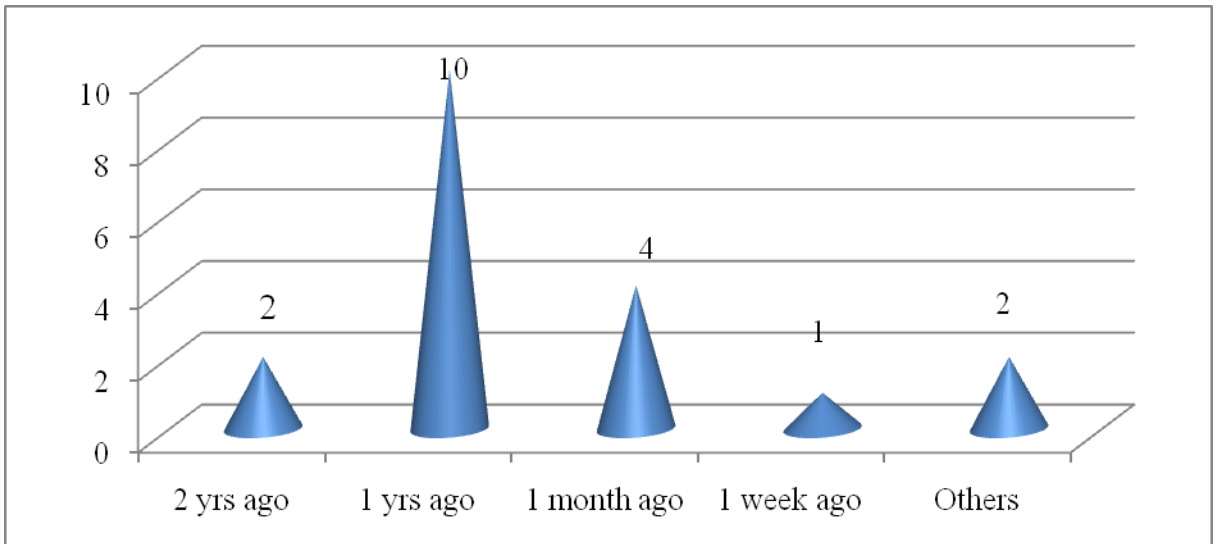
The above pie chart shows that all respondents i.e. 30 know about glue sniffing.

Fig 4: Have seen friend sniffing



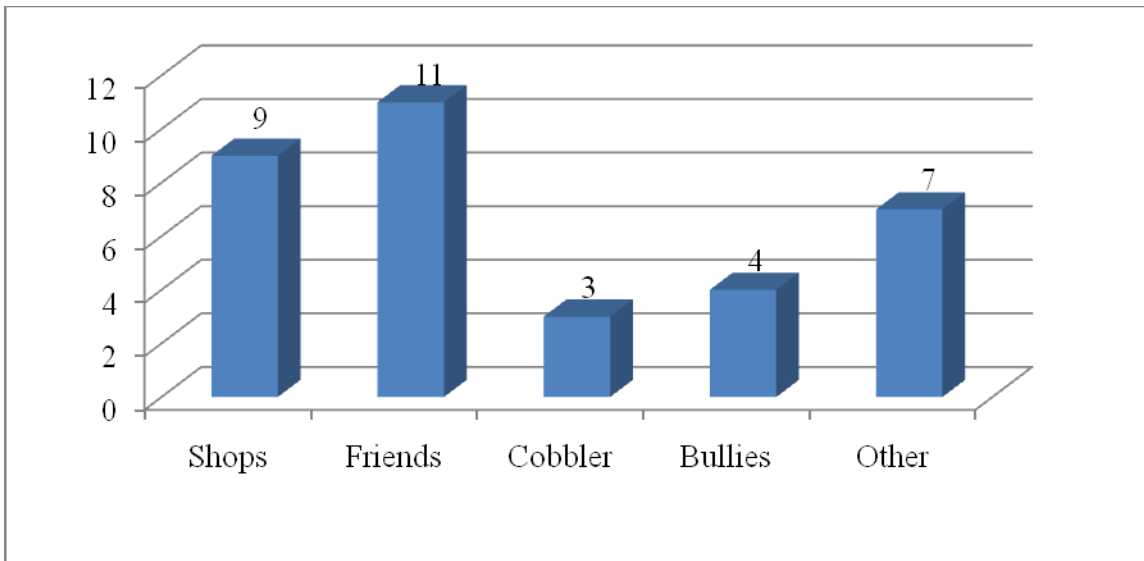
The above bar diagram shows that 29 respondents have seen friend sniffing and 1 respondent has not seen friend sniffing.

Fig 5: Started glue sniffing



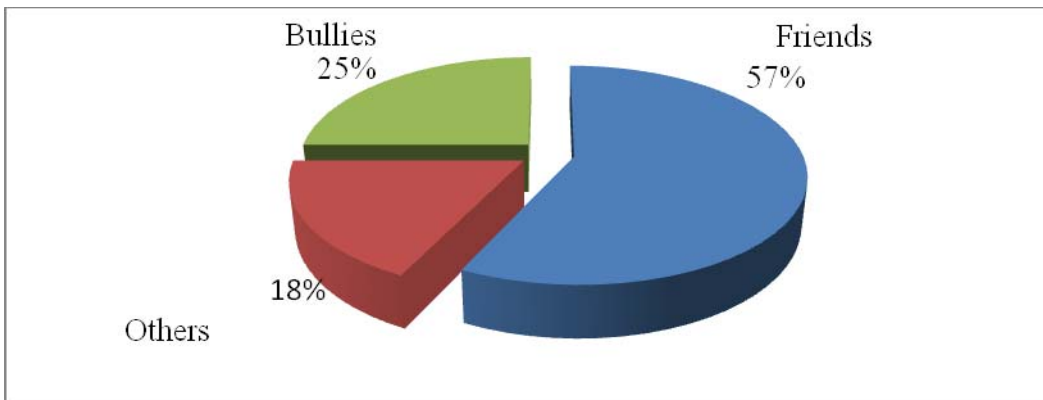
The above diagram shows respondents started glue sniffing. Majority of the respondents started sniffing 1years ago i.e.10 respondents. Similarly 2, 4, 1 1and 2 respondents started 2 years ago, 1 month ago, 1 week ago and others respectively.

Fig 6: Buying glue



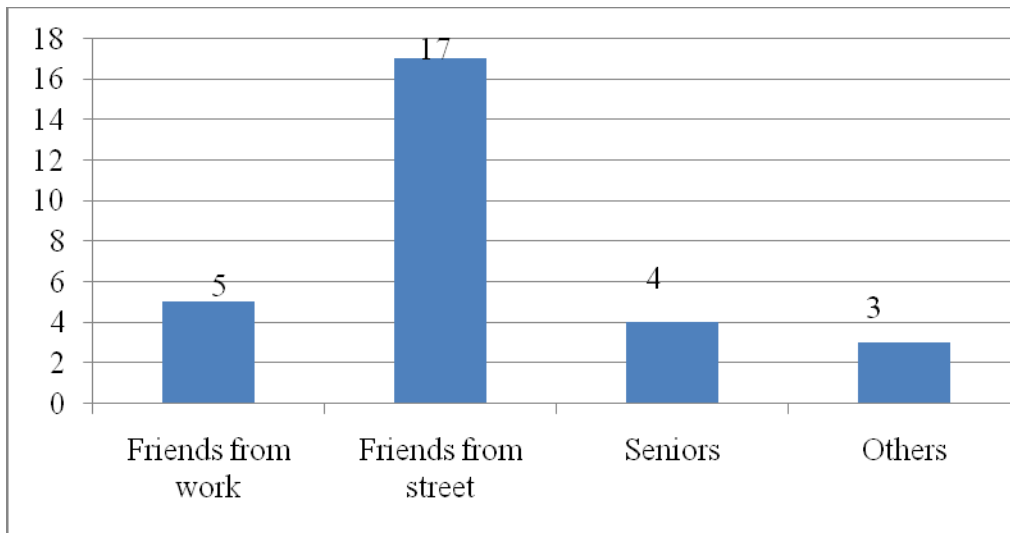
The above diagram shows the respondents buy glue. Majority of the respondents buy glue from their friends i.e.11 respondents and 9, 3, 4 and 7 respondents buy from shops, cobbler, bullies and other respectively.

Fig 7: Group with whom they use glue



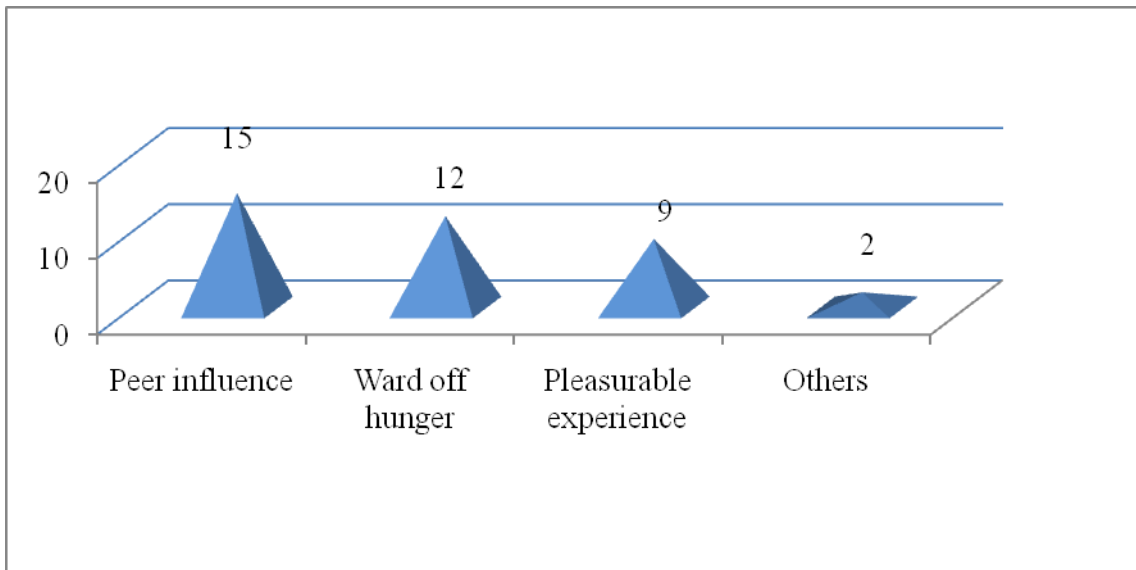
The above pie chart shows group with whom they sniff glue. Majority of the respondent sniff with their friends i.e. 16 respondent (57%). Similarly 5(18%) and 7(25%) respondents sniff with Bullies and others respectively.

Fig 8: Influence for using glue



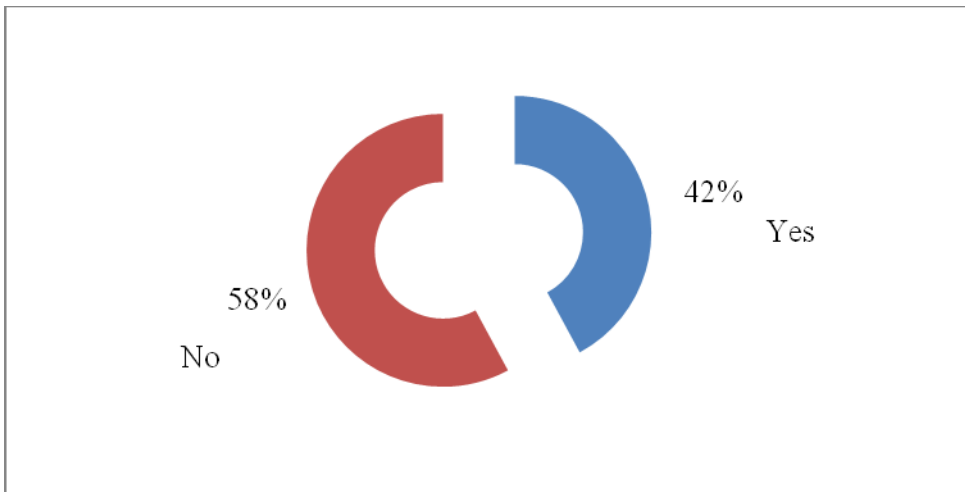
The above bar diagram shows respondents being influenced for sniffing glue. Majority of the respondents are influenced by friend from street i.e.17 respondents. Similarly 5, 4 and 3 respondents are influenced by friend from work, seniors and others.

Fig9: Reasons for using glue



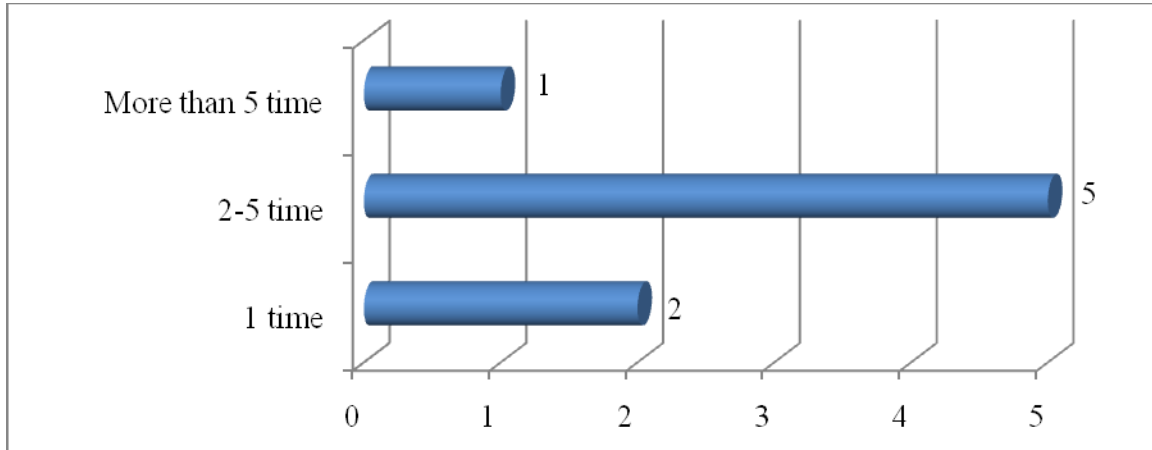
The above diagram shows reasons for sniffing glue. Majority of respondents sniff glue due to peer influence i.e.15 respondents and 12, 9 and 2 respondents sniff glue for ward off hunger, pleasurable experience and others respectively.

Fig10: Sniff daily or not



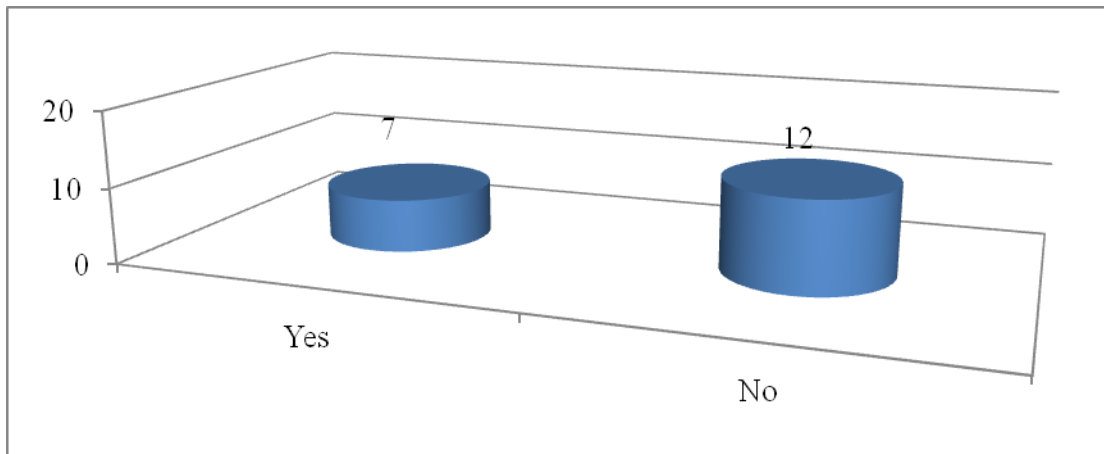
The above figures show that how often they sniff glue. Out of 19 respondents 8(42%) respondents sniff daily and 11 (58%) respondents do not sniff daily.

Fig: 11 Daily use frequency



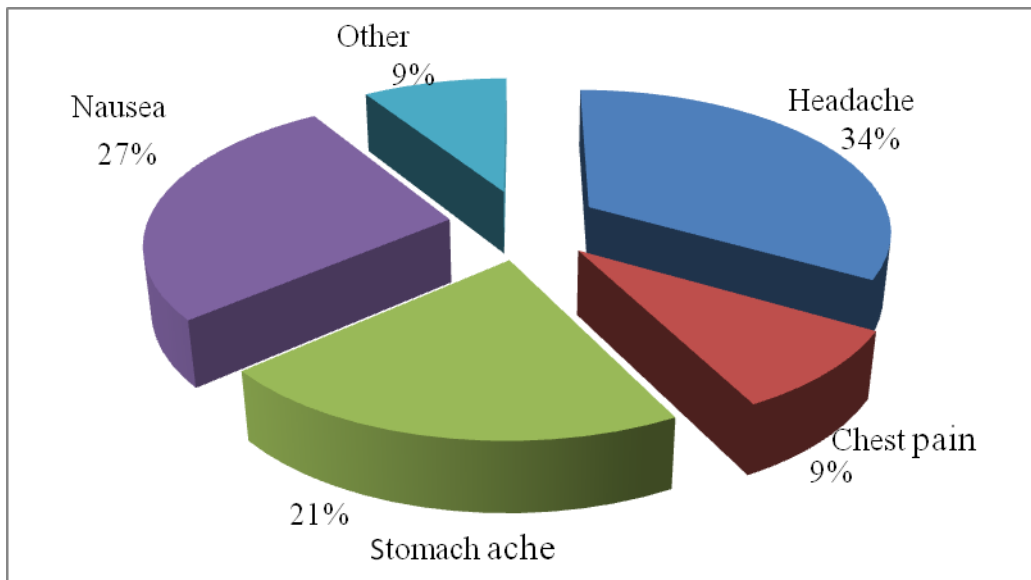
The above diagram shows daily use frequency by the respondents. Majority of them use 2-5 times a day i.e.5 respondents and 1 and 2 respondents use more than 5 times and 1 time respectively.

Fig 12: Aware of effect of glue sniffing.



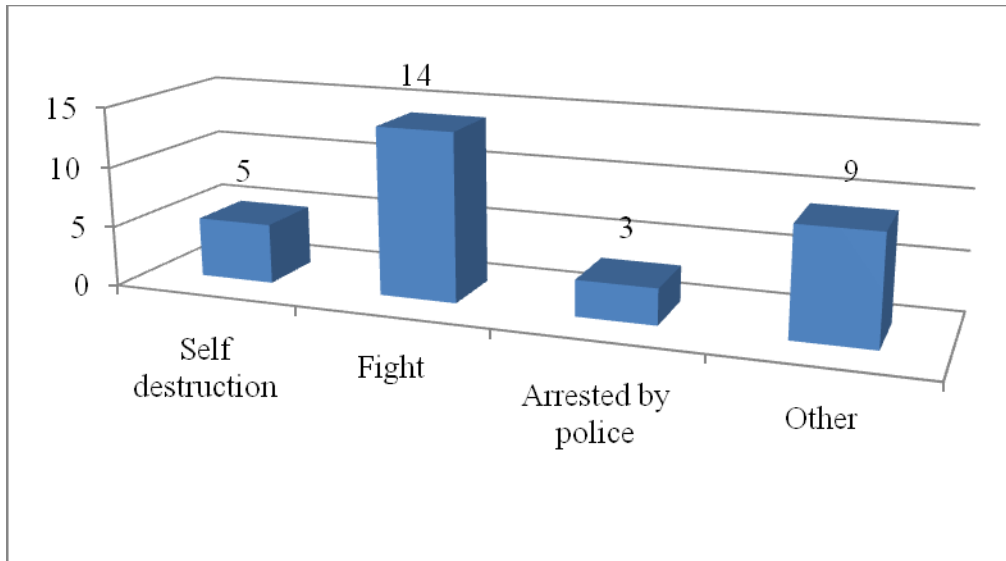
The above diagram shows respondents awareness of effect of glue sniffing. Majority of the respondents i.e. 12 are not aware and rest of them i.e.7 respondents are aware.

Fig13: Health effects encounter during sniffing glue



The above pie chart shows health effects encounter during sniffing glue. Majority of the respondent i.e.11 (34%) had headache and 3(9%) respondent, 7(21%), 9(27%) and 3(9%) encounter Chest pain, Stomach ache, Nausea and other respectively.

Fig 14: Others problems apart from health effect



The above diagram shows other problem encounter during sniffing glue. Majority of the respondents fight i.e.14 respondents. Similarly 5, 3 and 9 respondents encounter self destruction, arrested by police and other respectively.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

This research aimed at determining the situation of the glue sniffing among street children. For this one to one interview with structured questionnaire were carried out with the street children.

Of the total respondents' majority of the respondent i.e.87% used cigarette. Our research was concern on sniffing glue i.e. using dendrite.19 respondents (63%) were using glue in different quantity. Even among non-users all the respondents had known about the glue sniffing. They were all much familiar about glue sniffing. Majority of the respondents had seen their friend sniffing in the street. They sniff it because it is cheap and easily available. Most of the respondents had started sniffing glue 1 year ago and few started 2 years ago.

Most of the respondents had bought glue with their friends. They also often buy glue from shops and sometime from cobbler and bullies because they provide glue without any harm and risk. They answered that they mostly sniff glue with their friends because they were well familiar with their friends and feel secure while sniffing with them. Some of the respondents also used glue with bullies. Children generally inhaled in a group and this can be termed as a group activity or social event among street children. During the research large number of participants responded that they were influenced by friend from street for using glue and few from seniors.

Majority of the respondents replied that the reasons for sniffing glue was due to peer influenced and most of the respondents also sniff glue to ward off their hunger while living on the street and some of them sniff glue for pleasurable experience. As the street children are mainly orphans and they are in no control of anyone (family and others).

They have not enough money to buy food and also no one is keen to provide food for them. Out of 19 respondents 42% of the respondents sniff glue daily and 58% of the respondents did not sniff glue daily. The reason for not sniffing daily was due to the lack of money to buy glue. The respondents who sniff daily sniff glue 2-5 times a day and few respondents sniff more than 5 times a day.

Most of the respondents were unaware of effect of sniffing glue because of lack of education and awareness about the harmful effects of sniffing glue. Majority of the respondents encountered health problems such as Headache, Nausea and Stomach- ache while sniffing glue. Despite of the health problems they also faced other problems while sniffing glue. Majority of the respondents answered that they get physical and often fights with their friends and also develop self destructive nature. The reasons behind these problems are due to the trip and hallucinations encountered while sniffing glue. They also lost their mental capacity and thinking after sniffing glue.

CWIN Research on Alcohol and Drug Use among Street Children in Nepal, 2001 has shown that between 25 and 90 per cent of street children use substance of one kind or other. The current prevalent of glue sniffing is 78.7% among street children in the Kathmandu Valley. 19.7% have started using glue two years ago, 34.4 % started a year ago and 27.9% started just few months back. Comparing to our findings we found that prevalence of glue sniffing was 63%. 10.5% had started using glue two years ago, 52.6% had started a year ago and 21.1% had started a month ago. The findings of our research show almost similar result to CWIN findings and some variation in our study was due to low coverage of the study area.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The phenomenon of street children is well known around the world. Nepal is no exception in this respect. Although small in number; street children of Nepal are a very visible community and are definitely the most vulnerable group of children, who are at risk of exploitation and being forced into criminal activities. Street children's problem need to be addressed by all concerned with much seriousness and with commitment to empower them for their self-reliance to give them respect for their dignity and potential.

Glue sniffing is fast becoming an addiction among street children in Kathmandu. It has been seen as a 'debut' drugs for street children. Street children, often those who do not even smoke or drink alcohol, are into using glue. Its ill effects have resulted in problematic behavior, self-destruction due to hallucinations and fighting amongst friends. The problem of availability of food and the control over them and the lack of education among street children pushes them for glue sniffing.

Observation and evidence suggest that the problem of glue sniffing is getting more serious in our society. In Nepal now it is not only the problem among street children but it is also increasingly found among school children. This problem has to be addressed urgently if we want to see a safe environment for the future of the nation.

Recommendation

- Education should be provided by social organization and the government.
- Programmes with broad overview of street's children problems are needed to prevent children from getting into substance addiction and drug abuse.
- The government should regulate the sale of glue and other volatile solvent agent to children.
- The shopkeeper should be made aware about the ill-effects of glue on children and should be punished for selling such substances to children.
- Social concern and awareness-raising is needed to counter the addiction of volatile solvent use.
- Advocacy for banning the sale of any volatile solvent agent to children.
- Campaign against glue sniffing by reaching out to street children through the "Street net".
- Campaign aimed at shopkeeper should be organized.
- Advocacy materials should be produce and disseminate against glue sniffing.
- Awareness programmes should be organized in schools through Street drama and discussions by former street children.

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Annex

Questionnaire:

Date _____ Area _____

1. Age group: Less than 10 years() 11-14 () 14-17 () No response ()
2. Gender: Male () Female ()
3. Have you ever used any substances?
Yes () No ()
If yes, which of the following
Cigarette () Tobacco () alcohol () Marijuana () Tidigesic () Dendrite
()
4. Do you know about glue sniffing?
Yes () No ()
5. Have you seen friend sniffing glue?
Yes () No ()
6. When do you start sniffing glue?
2 Yrs ago () 1 Yrs ago () 1Month ago () 1Week ago () others ()
7. Where do you buy it?
Shops () Friends () Cobbler () Bullies () Others ()
8. With whom do you use glue?
Friends () Bullies () Others ()
9. Who influence you for using glue?
Friends from work () Friends from street () seniors () others ()
10. What is the reason for using glue?

Peer influence () ward off hunger () pleasurable experience ()
Others ()

11. Do you sniff daily or not?

Yes () No ()

If yes how many times?

1 time () 2-5 times () more than 5 times ()

12. Are you aware of the effects of glue sniffing?

Yes () No ()

If yes what health problems have you encountered during sniffing glue?

Headache () Chest pain () stomach ache () Nausea () others ()

13. Have you faced any other problems apart from problems related to
Health?

Yes () No ()

If yes then what

Self destruction () fight () arrested by police () others ()