

Risk Factors Associated with *Gutkha* Addiction: An Empirical Study in Cuttack City of Odisha

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ABSTRACT The use of smokeless tobacco in the form of *gutkha* is highly prevalent nowa-days. The young mass is the main consumer. It is being considered as a socially acceptable habit. The use of *gutkha* starts during the young age, mainly due to the influence of friends. Tobacco, the prime ingredient of *gutkha* is responsible for oral cancer. The high rate of use of *gutkha* in recent times is a serious health threat and a matter of great concern for the health planners and social activists. Thus, it needs preventive measures to protect the society. The objectives are (i) to study the causative factors, (ii) risk-factors and (iii) the overall problems associated with *gutkha* addiction. The study adopted exploratory-cum-descriptive research design. 300 cases were studied with the help of self-prepared interview schedule. This study included all groups irrespective of age, sex, educational qualification and profession. The data have been analyzed through SPSS software. From the study, 30.70 percent *gutkha* users belonging to the age group of 26-35 years, 92.70 percent were male followed by female addicts. 80.30 percent of addicts maintained nuclear families which helps them to continue this habit without any restriction from family side. Out of 300 respondents, 64.70 percent always keep a dip of *gutkha* inside the mouth and 52 percent people swallow the tobacco juice. 37 percent respondents are suffering from various pre-cancerous lesions. Consciousness among the respondents regarding its use is very low. Mainly the young mass uses it due to the influence of friends. The laws framed to stop its consumption need to be implemented positively to save the society.