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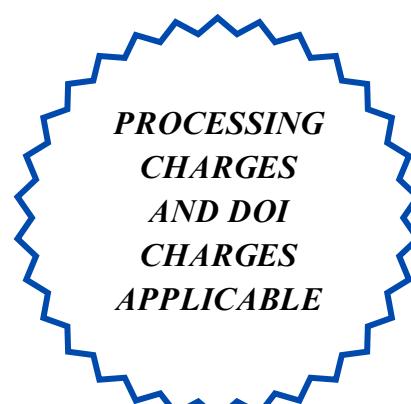
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From Editorial desk: "Redefining Boundaries: Recognizing Nurses as Innovators."

"Nurses have been the frontlines of promotion, prevention, care, and rehabilitation of people and patients' health and safety. But beyond this lies a less recognized but equally powerful identity — that of the nurses as innovators, critical analytical people, and leaders of change and visionaries."

Our Nurse Innovators journal was launched to publish the research and conversations by nurses about healthcare innovations. Healthcare departments, governing agencies, and the general public have recognized nurses as agents of change; however, scholarly and research articles and practical literature highlighting nurse-led solutions are lacking. This journal aims to address that. This journal will open the space for interdisciplinary dialogue needed in nursing practice. The launch of the journal comes at a moment of critical transformation in healthcare. The challenges we face — from global health inequities and workforce shortages to digital transformation and environmental crises — demand new ways of thinking. Nurses, with their unparalleled proximity to patients and systems, are uniquely positioned to inform.

What do we mean by "nurse innovator"? We see innovation not just in technology or start-ups, but in every instance where nurses challenge assumptions, redesign systems, and imagine better ways of delivering care. It is the nurse in a rural community who adapts mobile phone technology to improve antenatal care. The ICU nurse leads a quality improvement initiative to reduce infections and medication errors. The psychiatric nurse who develops a culturally grounded mental health toolkit for the community. Innovation, in this context, is not always high-tech — it is high-impact!

In this inaugural issue and future ones, we will feature a diverse range of content: original research on nurse-led interventions, field-tested solutions from practice, reflective essays from nurse leaders, and interdisciplinary perspectives that expand our collective imagination. We welcome contributions from nurses in all sectors — clinical, academic, community-based, and entrepreneurial — as well as collaborations with designers, engineers, and policymakers who collaborate with nurses to co-create change.

We hope that this journal is more than a publication. We envision a vibrant ecosystem — a space of dialogue, mentorship, and shared purpose. Whether you are a student with an idea, a frontline nurse solving problems daily, or a scholar exploring the theory of practice-led innovation, you have a place here.

We invite you to read, contribute, critique, and connect. Let this journal be both a record of what is and a catalyst for what could be.

Because innovation is not the future of nursing — it is already here. And it begins with the nurse.

We invite you to read, contribute, critique, and connect. Let this journal be both a record of what is and a catalyst for what could be.

Dr. Meena Ganapathy
Chief Editor, NIJ

“The Interplay of Anger and Substance Abuse: A Review of Adolescent Behavioral Patterns”

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Abstract

Anger and substance use are tightly connected behavioral patterns, especially among teenagers. The failure to manage anger can lead to dangerous actions, such as substance misuse, which intensifies emotional instability. This review examines the connection between expressing anger and the potential for substance abuse in adolescents, emphasizing contributing factors, mental health implications, and intervention approaches.

I. INTRODUCTION

Anger Expression and Its Association with Substance Abuse

Anger can manifest in various forms, including outward aggression, suppression, and internalized distress. Studies indicate that adolescents with poor anger management skills are more likely to engage in substance abuse as a coping mechanism^{1,2}. The intensity and frequency of anger episodes correlate with the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors, including drug and alcohol use.³

Mathew B pointed out that a common trigger for adolescent substance use is difficulty in emotional regulation, peer pressure, and stressors related to academic pressure or family conflict. Such factors may contribute to emotional distress, making adolescents vulnerable to substance abuse.⁴

Factors contributing to the link between anger and substance abuse include:

Emotional Dysregulation: Adolescents who struggle with emotional control often turn to substances to alleviate distress and achieve temporary relief from negative emotions.⁵

Impulsivity and Risk-Taking Behaviors: Poor impulse control and risk-seeking tendencies make adolescents more vulnerable to experimenting with substances as a response to frustration or anger.⁶

Peer Influence and Environmental Factors: Exposure to peer groups that normalize substance use can reinforce maladaptive coping strategies, increasing the likelihood of substance dependence among adolescents with high levels of anger.⁷

Mental Health Disorders: Co-occurring mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety, can intensify anger issues and increase susceptibility to substance abuse.⁸

II. METHODOLOGY

This review adopts a systematic approach to examining the interplay between anger and substance abuse in adolescents. Studies were selected based on their relevance to adolescent behavioral patterns, emotional dysregulation, and substance use. The inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles published within the past decade that explored anger expression, coping mechanisms, and substance use. Meta-analyses and longitudinal studies were also considered to assess the long-term effects of anger on substance abuse tendencies.

III. RESULTS

Findings from the reviewed articles indicate a significant correlation between anger expression and substance abuse. Adolescents who exhibit poor anger management are at a higher risk of engaging in substance use as a maladaptive coping mechanism.⁹ Emotional dysregulation was identified as a key factor influencing substance dependence, with heightened impulsivity and risk-taking behaviors leading to increased substance use.¹⁰

Neurobiological studies suggest that prolonged substance use alters brain function, impairing decision-making abilities and increasing aggression.¹¹ Adolescents with co-occurring mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression, demonstrated a higher propensity for substance dependence, further intensifying emotional instability.¹²

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings underscore the complex relationship between anger expression and substance abuse, emphasizing the role of emotional dysregulation and environmental influences. Adolescents with high levels of anger are more susceptible to using substances as a means of coping with frustration and emotional distress.¹³ The results align with studies demonstrating that poor impulse control and risk-seeking behaviors are significant predictors of substance use disorders.¹⁴

Wang L highlighted that childhood adversity, including exposure to violence or neglect, can significantly impact emotional regulation and lead to higher risks of substance abuse later in life.¹⁵ This further supports the argument that unresolved anger and emotional trauma play a crucial role in shaping adolescent behavioral patterns.

School-based prevention programs and family support systems play a crucial role in mitigating these risks, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions that address both anger management and substance abuse prevention.¹⁶ Mindfulness-based strategies and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) are effective in reducing anger-driven substance use by promoting emotional regulation and alternative coping mechanisms.¹⁷

V. CONCLUSION

This review highlights the intricate connection between anger and substance abuse among adolescents, emphasizing the importance of early intervention strategies. Addressing emotional dysregulation through structured anger management programs, CBT, and mindfulness-based interventions can significantly reduce the risk of substance dependence. Future research should explore integrated treatment approaches that combine anger management and substance abuse prevention for holistic adolescent well-being. By implementing evidence-based strategies at the community, school, and family levels, the cycle of anger-induced substance abuse can be effectively mitigated.

Conflict of interest: No conflict of interest to declare.

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