

**AWARENESS OF VIMUKTHI PROGRAMME
AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN
KERALA**

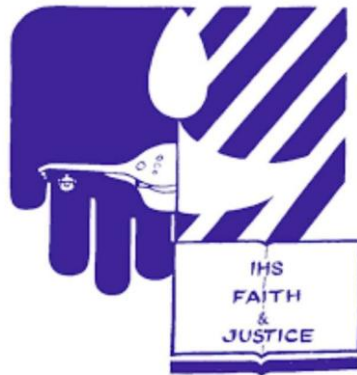
*A Dissertation submitted to the University of Kerala in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Social Work Degree
Examination*

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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “**Awareness of Vimukthi Programme Among Postgraduate Students in Kerala**” is a record of genuine work done by **Ms. Varsha Vijayan A**, a fourth semester Master of Social Work student of this college under my supervision and guidance and that it is hereby approved for submission.

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DECLARATION

I, **Varsha Vijayan A**, do here by declare that the Dissertation titled “**Awareness of Vimukthi Programme Among Postgraduate Students in Kerala**” is based on the original work carried out by me and submitted to the University of Kerala during the year 2024 -2026 towards partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Social Work Degree Examination. It has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title of recognition before.

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ABSTRACT

Substance abuse has become a significant public health and social concern affecting individuals, families, and communities. To address the growing problem of substance use, the Government of Kerala launched the Vimukthi Mission, a comprehensive initiative aimed at prevention, awareness generation, and rehabilitation. Educational institutions play a crucial role in disseminating information regarding substance abuse prevention and promoting healthy lifestyles among students. In this context, the present study entitled “Awareness of the Vimukthi Programme Among Postgraduate Students in Kerala” was undertaken to assess the level of awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. A total of 62 postgraduate students from various colleges in Kerala were selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire through both online and offline modes. The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and frequency and percentage analyses were employed for interpretation.

The findings revealed that awareness regarding several components of the Vimukthi Programme was limited among the respondents. A majority of students were unaware of the Vimukthi helpline number and were uncertain about the availability of Vimukthi programmes and Vimukthi Cells in their colleges. At the same time, most respondents had participated in drug abuse awareness programmes and expressed a positive attitude towards the Vimukthi Mission, as reflected in their willingness to recommend the programme to peers and participate as volunteers.

The study concludes that while postgraduate students demonstrate a favourable attitude towards the objectives of the Vimukthi Mission, awareness regarding its services and institutional support mechanisms requires further strengthening. The study recommends enhanced awareness campaigns, improved dissemination of information, and greater student involvement in Vimukthi-related activities within higher educational institutions.

Keywords: *Awareness, Vimukthi Programme, Postgraduate Students, Substance Abuse Prevention, Kerala.*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Substance abuse has emerged as a major public health and social concern across the world. The misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other psychoactive substances has significant consequences for individuals, families, and communities. According to reports Substance abuse is increasing in Kerala society especially among the youth. Since youth being most vulnerable to substance abuse, it is necessary to prevent the spread of substance among them.

With the growing challenges associated with substance abuse, Government of Kerala started Vimukthi Mission in 2016 with an objective to eliminate drug abuse in Kerala society. In a bid to eradicate the misuse of psycho active substances in the society and to create awareness especially among the youth on the harmful effects of liquor, drugs, and other addictive substances the Government of Kerala, established the Kerala State Drug Abstinence Mission, “Vimukthi” vide G.O(Ms)No. 94/2016/TD dated 06.10.2016. Vimukthi has been carrying out its functions with the co-operation of the Departments of this Vimukthi also cooperates with Kudumbasree, School- College level anti-drug clubs, NSS, SPC, NCC, other student organizations, voluntary organizations and women and youth organizations. Vimukthi Mission was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Kerala Shri. Pinarayi Vijayan on 20th November 2016.

The Vimukthi mission is spearheaded by the Kerala State Excise Department. It’s a primary goal is to eradicated the misuse of alcohol and narcotics, specially targeting the youth and children to create a drug free society. Excise of Kerala is uniformed service functioning independently under the Taxes Dept. Govt of Kerala. The Department of Excise is one among the oldest departments in the

State. The Department is keen on organising awareness campaigns against alcohol, drugs and tobacco products.

At the primary level, the anti-drug activities of Vimukthi Mission are being carried out by Vimukthi - Ward Committees of the district/ block/ Corporation/Municipality/ Panchayaths with a dignitary of the area like Chairperson and Ward - member as Convenor. The members of Vimukthi - ward committee include Kudumbasree, Anganavadi, ASHA worker, social and cultural figures, office bearers of residence associations and Excise Preventive Officer/Civil Excise Officer. The functions and responsibilities of Vimukthi Committees include identifying those addicted to drugs and counseling and treating them, and to provide information on production, procurement, marketing of drugs and other banned tobacco products in the area to the Excise officials. The main function, however, of the ward - committee is to check and prevent the spread of drug abuse with the wholehearted participation of all sections of the people in the area.

In a bid to create a drug - free Kerala, activities are being organized with public participation. The students and youth play a major role in organizing awareness classes, arts and sports competitions and rallies. Such initiatives help in spreading the message of Vimukthi Mission.

Children and youth are easy preys when it comes to drug abuse. It is in this context the Vimukthi Mission targets on educating our youth and children about the harmful effects of drugs, in order to protect them from addictions. At present there are 899 clubs at the college level and 4842 clubs at the school-level functioning to get rid of the menace of drug abuse. Anti narcotic clubs formed in schools, have been conducting anti - drug awareness classes in association with the PTA, School Development Committee, experts and voluntary associations.

Steps are initiated at the college - level to eliminate the possibility of drug abuse. In the college campuses coming under the jurisdiction of the Health University

of the State, a committee called 'Nerkootam' has been set up under the chairmanship of the Principal/Vice Principal, and another committee called 'Sradha' in college hostels to curb drug abuse among the inmates. Representatives from among teachers, parents, students, local self - governing bodies and excise officials are members of these committees. The Sradha/ Nerkootam committees meet every month and conduct reviews of available complaints and information about drug abuse among students. Subsequently necessary counselling and treatment will be extended by Vimukthi

Mission in suspected cases. The intention is to implement this model in all the professional colleges throughout the State.

In an effort to distance the youth from drugs, Vimukthi Mission in association with Sports council, various sports/ games associations under the slogan of "Sports euphoria against intoxicants," has been organizing kabbadi, volley ball, football, cricket competitions. The Mission has also conducted walkathon, bikathon and cyclethon rallies against drug abuse.

An awareness programme, 'Vimukthi Jwala', (Vimukthi Flame) has been conducted among the public throughout the State. The Mission also focuses on village libraries and holds evening discussions on the activities of Vimukthi which also help spreading messages against drugs and other intoxicants among the people.

Vimukthi Mission's goal is to achieve a drug free society in Kerala. In order to achieve Vimukthi Mission's goal, various activities are conducted to create awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse. Many activities with the participation of School/College Anti Narcotic clubs, SPC, NSS, NCC, Kudumbasree, Voluntary organizations, State Library Council etc. are being carried out all over the state. Special programmes in schools are being implemented for early detection of behavioural, emotional and mental problems in children to take necessary remedial measures and to give proper care and

guidance in time. Debates, seminars, community projects, special programmes for parents are being conducted. Programmes for skill development in tribal and coastal areas with the participation of youngsters have been started. Facilities have been established at district level to give counselling and de-addiction treatment to individuals who are facing problems of addiction. As a part of correctional measures, steps are being taken to establish rehabilitation centre in Kerala. By implementing these projects

Vimukthi Mission aims to create a drug free Kerala. (Excise Department, An analysis of the causes and consequences of drug addiction and illegal drug trafficking among adolescents: Vimukthi survey report 2020–2021. Government of Kerala , 2022)

Postgraduate students represent a significant segment of young adults who face academic, professional, and social challenges during an important phase of their lives. Understanding their awareness regarding the Vimukthi Programme is essential for strengthening their participation in substance abuse prevention initiatives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The rising prevalence of substance abuse among the youth in Kerala has emerged as a significant social and public health challenge, threatening the physical and mental well-being of the student community. The increasing use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs has resulted in significant physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences. Younger people are especially vulnerable due to developmental, psychological and environmental factors such as peer influence, academic stress, curiosity, social media exposure and easy accessibility to psychoactive substances. Substance abuse not only

affects individual health and well-being but also contributes to family conflicts, academic underachievement, violence, crime and reduced productivity.

Higher educational institutions play a crucial role in promoting preventive health education and creating awareness among students. Despite the high literacy rates and educational standards in the state, college students are increasingly exposed to various forms of narcotics and alcohol due to evolving social environments and accessibility. Postgraduate students, as young adults are expected to possess adequate knowledge regarding substance abuse prevention programmes available support services. Their awareness is particularly important because they often serve as peer educators, future professionals and responsible members of society.

The Government of Kerala launched the Vimukthi Mission as a comprehensive anti-narcotics campaign to address this menace through awareness and de-addiction services. However, there is a critical question regarding whether the information regarding these government initiatives effectively reaches the diverse student population.

A major concern identified in this study is the lack of empirical evidence regarding the specific awareness levels of students across different academic departments. While the Kerala Excise Department conducts various outreach programs; most existing research focuses on general trends of addiction rather than the "functional awareness" of the available state resources. There is a need to understand whether students in specialized higher education environments are truly aware of the specific help-seeking pathways, such as the 24/7 toll-free helpline and the district-level counselling centres.

Furthermore, the academic environment in colleges can sometimes create a barrier to the dissemination of social welfare information. Students often focus heavily on their academic and professional goals, which may lead to a gap in their knowledge regarding state-sponsored social defense mechanisms like the Vimukthi Mission. This creates a problem where the state's extensive infrastructure for drug prevention and treatment remains underutilized simply

because the target audience lacks specific, granular information about how to access these services.

The problem is also defined by the lack of primary, direct data collected from students across multidisciplinary fields. Most administrative reports from the Vimukthi-compressed provide data on the number of programs conducted, but they do not measure the actual retention of that information by the students. Without quantifying the awareness levels, it is difficult for policymakers to judge if the current communication strategies are reaching all departments equally or if certain academic groups are being left behind in the campaign.

Therefore, the core of the problem addressed by this research is the quantitative measurement of the awareness regarding the Vimukthi programme among Postgraduate students. It seeks to identify whether high educational attainment correlates with an actual functional knowledge of the mission's objectives and resources. Therefore, the present study seeks to assess the awareness of Vimukthi Programme among Postgraduate students in Kerala.

Higher educational institutions play a crucial role in promoting preventive health education and creating awareness among students. Postgraduate students, as young adults, are expected to possess adequate knowledge regarding substance abuse prevention programmes and available support services. Their awareness is particularly important because they often serve as peer educators, future professionals, and responsible members of society. However, awareness of government initiatives such as the Vimukthi Programme cannot be assumed merely because the programme exists. Students may participate in general drug awareness activities while remaining unaware of specific services such as the Vimukthi helpline, the availability of Vimukthi Cells, or institutional support mechanisms.

The preliminary findings of the present study also indicate that although many postgraduate students had participated in drug abuse awareness programmes, awareness regarding the Vimukthi helpline, programme availability, and institutional support mechanisms was comparatively limited.

This suggests that there may be a gap between the implementation of awareness initiatives and students' knowledge of the programme and its services. Identifying such gaps is essential for strengthening awareness strategies and improving the effectiveness of prevention programmes within higher educational institutions.

Although studies have examined substance abuse, drug use patterns, and preventive interventions among adolescents and youth, relatively fewer studies have specifically focused on the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. Understanding their level of awareness can provide valuable information for educational institutions, social workers, policymakers, and the Vimukthi Mission to design more effective awareness campaigns and student engagement strategies.

In this context, the present study attempts to assess the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala, focusing on their awareness of the programme, the Vimukthi helpline, institutional support mechanisms, participation in awareness activities, and attitudes towards the programme. The findings are expected to contribute to strengthening substance abuse prevention initiatives and promoting healthier educational environments.

1.3 Background of the Study

Substance abuse is a major public health and social concern that affects individuals, families, and communities worldwide. The use of psychoactive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and other drugs has been associated with various physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences. Young people are particularly vulnerable to substance use due to factors such as peer influence, academic stress, curiosity, changing lifestyles, and exposure to social media and other environmental influences.

India has witnessed a growing concern regarding substance use among adolescents and young adults. Educational institutions are increasingly recognizing the need for preventive interventions and awareness programmes to address substance-related issues among students. Awareness plays a crucial role in preventing substance abuse by equipping individuals with accurate information regarding the harmful effects of drugs, available support systems, and healthy coping mechanisms.

In Kerala, substance abuse has emerged as a significant social issue requiring coordinated efforts from government agencies, educational institutions, families, and communities. In response to this challenge, the Government of Kerala launched the Vimukthi Mission as a comprehensive anti-drug initiative. The mission aims to create awareness regarding the adverse effects of substance use, promote healthy lifestyles, encourage community participation, and provide support for prevention and rehabilitation. Through awareness campaigns, educational programmes, counselling services, and community-based interventions, the Vimukthi Mission seeks to build a drug-free society.

Higher educational institutions play an important role in promoting awareness and preventive education among students. While awareness programmes are frequently conducted in schools and colleges, it is important to understand whether postgraduate students possess adequate awareness regarding the Vimukthi Programme and its various services.

Postgraduate students represent a group of young adults who are experiencing academic, professional, and social transitions. Awareness regarding substance abuse prevention initiatives is particularly relevant for this population, as informed students are more likely to make healthy decisions and contribute positively to awareness efforts within their communities.

Understanding the level of awareness among postgraduate students can provide valuable insights into the reach and visibility of the Vimukthi Programme within higher educational institutions. It can also help identify areas where awareness initiatives need strengthening. Therefore, the present study seeks to assess the

awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala and contribute to the understanding of substance abuse prevention awareness within the higher education sector.

1.4 Relevance and Significance of the study

Substance abuse has become one of the most pressing public health and social issues affecting young people worldwide. The increasing use of alcohol, tobacco, and other psychoactive substances among adolescents and young adults has significant implications for their physical health, mental well-being, academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life. Educational institutions play a crucial role in promoting awareness and preventing substance abuse by creating informed, responsible, and healthy student communities. In this context, understanding students' awareness of government-led prevention initiatives such as the Vimukthi Programme is of considerable importance.

The present study is significant as substance abuse continues to pose serious challenges among young adults. Awareness programmes play a crucial role in preventing substance use and promoting healthy lifestyles. Postgraduate students represent an importance of the youth population who experience academic, personal, and social pressures during their studies. Through the assessing of their awareness regarding the Vimukthi programmes will help them to reach when they needed during their critical stage of life. This study's finding may assist the educational institutions, policymakers, social workers and the Vimukthi mission in strengthening awareness programmes and encouraging the younger adult's participation in substance abuse prevention activities.

1.5. Chapterization

The study is divided into five chapters,

Chapter I: The first chapter attempts to provide an introduction into the study and various other concepts related to the study and state the problem that is addressed in the research paper, its intensity, relevance and significance of the study in current scenario.

Chapter II: The second chapter attempts to deal with the review of literature available in International and Indian context or perspectives, the helps the trainee to identify the dimension in which the researcher needs to focus more. A gap in these studies gets discussed in the following.

Chapter III: It discusses the methodology that the researcher uses in her study. It includes the details like title, general and specific objectives, research design, sampling techniques, details of the pilot study, Method of data collection, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

Chapter IV: The data is analysed descriptively, analysis to link the findings back to existing literature, and discussion of the data collected for the study are discussed in the chapter in a detailed manner.

Chapter V: The chapter deals with major findings followed by discussions, suggestions, and conclusions. The last pages of the dissertation include the bibliography, appendix, and tools used for data collection in the study.

1.6 Conclusion

The present chapter introduced the research problem and explained the background, need, relevance, significance of the study. Substance abuse has emerged as a major public health concern affecting young people, including university students. The chapter emphasized that although various preventive initiatives have been implemented by the Government of Kerala, particularly through the Vimukthi Programme, there is limited evidence regarding the extent of awareness of these initiatives among postgraduate students. As postgraduate students represent an educated and influential segment of society, understanding their awareness of the programme is essential for strengthening substance abuse prevention efforts within higher educational institutions. The chapter provides the importance of assessing awareness of the Vimukthi programme in order to identify existing gaps and provide evidence that may support

policymakers, educational institutions, and social work professionals in planning effective awareness and prevention strategies. Therefore, this study seeks to assess their awareness of the Vimukthi Programme and contribute to strengthening preventive initiatives within higher education institutions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter of the research deals with the literature reviews based on the various studies conducted on the topic, related aspects or associated events. (Alex, 2026) A well-conducted literature review in research demonstrates the researcher's familiarity with the existing literature, establishes the context of their own research, contributes to scholarly conversations on the topic. It involves a systematic examination, analysis, and synthesis of published and unpublished literature, including books, peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, policy documents, dissertations, and other scholarly sources. Reviewing the available literature enables the researcher to identify established concepts, theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, and empirical findings relevant to the study. It also helps in identifying gaps in existing knowledge, thereby providing a strong rationale for undertaking the present research.

Drug abuse among young adults has emerged as a significant public health and social concern worldwide. College students are particularly vulnerable due to factors such as peer influence, academic stress, curiosity, social acceptance, and easy accessibility to psychoactive substance. Awareness regarding the harmful consequences of drug abuse plays a vital role in preventing substance use and promoting healthy lifestyles among students. Several national and international studies have examined the level of awareness, attitudes, risk factors, and preventive strategies related to drug abuse among adolescents and college students.

2.2 Review of Literature

2.2.1 Substance Abuse among Students: Prevalence, Risk Factors and Patterns

2.2.1(a) International Perspective

(Siyan Yi, 2017) conducted a multi-country cross-sectional study to examine the prevalence of and factors associated with illicit drug use among university students in nine ASEAN countries. The study included 7,923 undergraduate students selected through multistage cluster sampling, and data were collected using self-administrated questionnaires. The findings revealed that 16.9% of students had used illicit drugs at least once in the previous 12 months, 14.7% reported infrequent use (1–9 times), and 2.2% reported frequent use (10 or more times). Illicit drug use varied across countries and was associated with factors such as gender, living arrangements, country income level, perceived health status, and binge drinking. The study concluded that targeted social intervention and prevention programmes are necessary to reduce illicit drug use and related behavioural problems among university students in the ASEAN region.

(Semagan Mekonen, 2021) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis to assess the prevalence of psychoactive substance abuse among students in Ethiopia. The review included 29 cross-sectional studies involving 22,012 high school and higher education students. The findings revealed that the overall prevalence of psychoactive substance use was 32.28%, indicating that nearly one-third of the students had used psychoactive substances. The study highlighted substance abuse as a major public health concern among students and emphasized the need for preventive interventions and awareness programmes within educational institutions.

(Husam Abazid, 2023) conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study among 679 students from public and private universities in Jordan. The study found that 7.1% of students had used substances. Peer pressure and lack of religious commitment were identified as the major factors influencing substance use, while female students and those studying in public universities were less likely to engage in substance use. The authors recommended strengthening awareness programmes involving students, parents, and the community to prevent substance abuse.

2.2.1(b) Indian perspective

Tsering et al. (2010) conducted a cross-sectional study among adolescent students in eastern India to assess the prevalence of licit and illicit substance use and identify the associated risk factors. The study found that alcohol and tobacco were the most commonly used substances among students, while the use of illicit drugs was comparatively lower. The findings indicated that factors such as peer influence, family environment, and easy availability of substances were significantly associated with substance use among adolescents. The authors emphasized the importance of early preventive interventions, school-based awareness programmes, and counselling services to reduce substance abuse among students.

Bhagavati et al. (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study among 384 adolescents in Bagalkot, Karnataka, to assess the prevalence, patterns, and determinants of substance abuse. Data were collected using the WHO Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (WHO ASSIST). The study found that approximately 21% of the participants had a history of substance abuse. Alcohol and tobacco were the most commonly used substances, while cannabis and inhalants were reported by a smaller proportion of adolescents. The study also identified age, gender, and peer pressure as important factors associated with

substance use. The authors emphasized the need to strengthen preventive strategies and awareness programmes to reduce substance abuse among adolescents.

(P C Pradeep Kumar, 2024) conducted a narrative review to examine the prevalence and associated factors of substance use among Indian college students. The review analysed 12 studies published between 2010 and 2021 using databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar and ProQuest. The findings revealed that the prevalence of the substance use among college students ranged from 17.15% to 60.26%, with tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis being the most commonly used substances. The study also identified peer pressure, stress, curiosity, family problems, easy availability of substances and academic pressure as the major factors associated with substance use among Indian college students.

(Fayaz Ahmad Paul, 2025) conducted a cross-sectional study to assess the prevalence, patterns and predictors of alcohol and drug use among undergraduate University students in sonitpur, Assam, North East India. A total of 404 students was selected using multi- stage stratified systematic sampling and data were collected using a socio demographic questionnaire the Alcohol Used Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) and the Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST-10). The finding revealed that most students were abstainer or low risks drinkers, while a small proportion reported harmful alcohol use and low-to-moderate drug involvement. The study identified gender, family type, academic stress, age, education level and over sleep qualities as significant predictors of substance use. The authors emphasize the need of campus-based mental health services and culturally appropriate substance abuse prevention programs for universities students.

2.2.1(c) Kerala Perspective

(Lucy Raphael, 2017) conducted a community-based cross-sectional study to assess the prevalence and determinants of substance abuse among youth in central Kerala. The study included 402 college students and used a self-administrated pretested semi-structured questionnaire for data collection. The findings revealed that 31.8% of the participants had used or abused at least one substance, including alcohol, smoking, or pan chewing. Age, gender, place of residence, and attitude towards substance prohibition were significantly associated with substance abuse. The study emphasized the need for adolescent counselling and early preventive interventions to reduce substance use among youth.

(Dr. Siby K M, 2023) conducted a temporal study to analyse the prevalence, patterns, and perception of substance abuse among Higher Secondary and Higher Education students in Ernakulam District, Kerala. Data were collected during 2022 and 2023, and the study used Independent Sample t-tests and Two-way ANOVA for analysis. The findings highlighted variations in students' risk perception, disapproval of substance abuse, and perception of drug accessibility over time. The study recommended strengthening awareness programmes, counselling services, rehabilitation facilities, and strict enforcement measures to address substance abuse among students.

(Bhagyalakshmi Mahadevan Kanchana, 2026) conducted a study to assess the prevalence of substance abuse among higher secondary school students in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala. The study found that substance use was present among adolescents, indicating that substance abuse continues to be an important public health concern among young people. The authors highlighted the need for strengthening school-based awareness programmes and preventive interventions to reduce the risk of substance abuse at an early stage. Although the study focused on higher secondary school students, it provides useful evidence regarding the importance of awareness and prevention programmes among young people in Kerala.

2.2.2 Awareness, Prevention and Institutional Interventions on Substance Abuse among Students

2.2.2(a) International Perspective

(Ching- Hao Chang, 2025) conducted a content analysis to examine campus anti-drug activities reported in Taiwan. The study analysed 17,698 online news reports using a hybrid manual and automated text analysis approach. The findings showed that campus awareness campaigns, family support, and tailored prevention programmes play a significant role in preventing substance abuse among students.

(Tariq Ali Murah, 2020) evaluated the effectiveness of anti-drug awareness programmes among school students in Dubai, UAE. The study included 201 students who participated in drug awareness programmes. The findings revealed that awareness programmes improved students' understanding of substance abuse and emphasized the importance of collaboration among schools, families, religious institutions, and community organizations in preventing drug use.

(Seçim, 2017) conducted a cross-sectional survey to evaluate substance abuse prevention training programmes for parents, teachers, school administrators, and counsellors. The study included 45,807 participants. The findings indicated that more than 90% of participants considered the training programmes beneficial, highlighting the importance of community-based education in substance abuse prevention.

2.2.2(b) National Perspective

(Naresh Nebhinani, 2013) conducted a cross-sectional study among 192 school and college students to assess knowledge and attitudes regarding substance use. The findings showed that most students had adequate knowledge about the

harmful effects of substances but limited awareness of available treatment services, indicating the need for enhanced awareness and prevention programmes.

(Anju Dhawan, 2022) conducted a nationwide survey among school-going adolescents in India to assess substance use patterns and awareness. The study found that substance use begins during adolescence and emphasized the need for school-based awareness programmes and early preventive interventions to reduce substance abuse among young people.

(Ershad Hussain, 2025) conducted a scoping review to examine culturally adapted anti-stigma interventions for substance use in India. The review analysed published studies and found limited evidence of culturally appropriate awareness programmes. The authors recommended community-based and culturally sensitive interventions to reduce stigma and improve help-seeking behaviour.

2.2.2(c) Kerala Perspective

(R Jayaprakash, 2017) conducted a descriptive study to examine the implementation of the UNARV district adolescent school mental health programme in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The study included 2,432 students who were referred by trained teachers from government and government-aided schools between 2007 and 2012. The students were assessed by child mental

health professionals and received appropriate psychosocial and, where necessary, pharmacological interventions. The study found that behavioural problems such as involvement in physical fights, poor academic performance, absenteeism, alcohol use, and smoking were commonly reported among the students. The programme played an important role in helping these students continue their education by facilitating their reintegration into school rather than allowing behavioural problems to result in suspension or dismissal. The authors

concluded that the UNARV model is an effective and sustainable school-based intervention that highlights the importance of early identification, teacher involvement, counselling, and multidisciplinary collaboration in promoting adolescent mental health and preventing substance-related risk behaviours

(Aarcha S. Nandan, 2025) conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study among 450 college students in Thiruvananthapuram to assess awareness and attitudes towards substance use. The study found that most students had average awareness and negative attitudes towards substance use. A significant positive relationship was observed between awareness and attitude, highlighting the importance of awareness programmes in colleges.

(Ms. Nanditha P, 2026) conducted a pre-experimental study among 40 high school students in Kannur to evaluate the effectiveness of a structured teaching programme on substance abuse. Using a one-group pre-test and post-test design, the study found a significant improvement in students' knowledge after the intervention, demonstrating the effectiveness of structured educational programmes in substance abuse prevention.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The present study is based on the Knowledge–Attitude–Practice (KAP) Model, which is widely used in public health, nursing, and social science research to understand and assess behavioural change. The model explains that an individual's knowledge about a particular health issue influences the development of attitudes, which subsequently shape practices or behaviours (K, 2004)

The KAP model consists of three interrelated components: knowledge, attitude, and practice. Knowledge refers to the information, understanding, and awareness that individuals acquire through education, personal experience, and exposure to

health information. Adequate knowledge helps individuals develop a clear understanding of a health issue and its consequences.

Attitude refers to an individual's beliefs, perceptions, opinions, and feelings towards a particular issue. It develops from knowledge and personal experiences and influences an individual's willingness to accept or reject healthy behaviours. A positive attitude is more likely to encourage individuals to participate in health promotion and preventive programmes.

Practice refers to the actual behaviour or actions performed by individuals based on their knowledge and attitudes. It represents the application of knowledge in real-life situations.

Although knowledge alone may not always result in behavioural change, positive attitudes often strengthen the likelihood of adopting appropriate practices ((K, 2004)).

In the context of the present study, the KAP model provides an appropriate theoretical basis for assessing postgraduate students' awareness of the Vimukthi Programme. The knowledge component relates to students' awareness of the Vimukthi Programme, its objectives, helpline services, Vimukthi Cells, and other institutional initiatives. The attitude component is reflected in students' opinions regarding the importance of the programme, their willingness to recommend it to others, and their views on the need for awareness initiatives in higher educational institutions. The practice component is represented by students' participation in substance abuse awareness programmes, involvement in Vimukthi-related activities, and willingness to volunteer in future awareness programmes.

Thus, the Knowledge–Attitude–Practice (KAP) Model provides a suitable framework for understanding the level of awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students and the relationship between their knowledge, attitudes, and participation in substance abuse prevention initiatives.

2.4 Research Gap Analysis

The review of literature indicates that several studies have examined the prevalence, patterns, risk factors, awareness, and prevention of substance abuse among school, college, and university students at the international, national, and state levels. Previous studies have highlighted the growing burden of substance abuse among young people and emphasized the importance of awareness programmes, institutional interventions, and preventive strategies.

Although studies conducted in Kerala have assessed awareness and attitudes towards substance use and evaluated educational interventions, very limited research has specifically focused on students' awareness of the Vimukthi Programme, the flagship anti-drug initiative of the Government of Kerala. Furthermore, most available studies have concentrated on school or undergraduate students, while postgraduate students have received comparatively little attention.

The existing literature also reveals a lack of research examining awareness of the Vimukthi Programme in terms of students' knowledge of its objectives, helpline services, institutional support mechanisms, participation in programme activities, and attitudes towards the initiative. This gap justifies the need for the present study. Therefore, the current research seeks to assess the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala and contribute to the existing literature by generating evidence that may support future awareness and prevention initiatives.

2.5 Conclusion

The present chapter reviewed the existing literature review relevant to the study by examining research conducted at the international, national, and Kerala levels. The review focused on two major themes: The Prevalence, Risk Factors, And Patterns of Substance Abuse Among Students, And Awareness, Prevention, And Institutional Interventions Related to Substance Abuse. The literature consistently indicates that substance abuse remains a major public health and social concern affecting young people across different settings. The reviewed studies also emphasized the importance of awareness programmes, educational interventions, family involvement, community participation, and institutional support in preventing substance abuse among students.

The chapter further discussed the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) Model as the theoretical framework guiding the present study. The model provides a suitable framework for understanding how awareness influences attitudes and practices related to health behaviours, including substance abuse prevention. The review also revealed that although several studies have explored substance use, awareness, and preventive strategies among school and college students, limited research has specifically examined awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. This identified research gap provides the justification for undertaking the present study. The next chapter describes the research methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of the study, including the research design, sampling procedure, data collection methods, and techniques used for data analysis

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology refers to the systematic and scientific process used to conduct a research study. It provides the overall framework for selecting appropriate research methods, techniques, and procedures to achieve the objectives of the study. It includes the research design, sampling methods, data collection tools, data collection procedures, and techniques used for data analysis. A well-defined research methodology ensures that the study is conducted in a logical, reliable, and ethical manner, thereby enhancing the validity and credibility of the findings Swarooprani (2022).

For the present study, an appropriate research methodology was adopted to assess the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. The methodology was selected based on the nature of the research problem and the objectives of the study.

3.2 Title of the Study

‘Awareness of the Vimukthi Programme Among Postgraduate Students in Kerala’

3.3 Objectives of the Study

General Objective

To assess the awareness of Vimukthi programme among postgraduate students in Kerala.

Specific Objectives

- I. To assess postgraduate student's awareness regarding the helpline, programmes, and institutional support mechanisms associated with Vimukthi programme.
- II. To identify participation of postgraduate students in drug abuse programmes.
- III. To assess participation in Vimukthi-related activities among postgraduate students.
- IV. To examine postgraduate students attitudes towards the Vimukthi programme.

3.4 Variables

Variables

- Independent variables
 - ❖ Age
 - ❖ Gender
 - ❖ Year of study
 - ❖ University
- Dependent variables
 - ❖ Awareness of Vimukthi programme

3.5 Definition of Concepts

Table No: 3.4.1: Theoretical and Operational Definition

Concepts	Theoretical Definition	Operational Definition
Awareness	Awareness in general means, knowledgeable being conscious; cognizant, informed alert. Awareness is the state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects, or sensory patterns (Gafoor, 2012)	In this study, awareness refers to Postgraduate student's knowledge of Vimukthi programme.
Vimukthi Programme	The Vimukthi Programme is an anti-narcotic and substance abuse prevention initiative implemented in Kerala, primarily under the Excise Department of Kerala, aimed at creating awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse, promoting prevention strategies, and facilitating community-level interventions for substance use reduction and rehabilitation support Kerala State Excise Department. (2025). Vimukthi Mission. https://vimukthi.kerala.gov.in/	For the purpose of this study, the Vimukthi Programme refers specifically to awareness and preventive outreach activities conducted by the Kerala Excise Department and allied institutions aimed at reducing substance use among youth.

3.6 Pilot study

Prior to the main data collection, a preliminary assessment was carried out among a small group of students to understand their familiarity with the Vimukthi Programme and to assess the suitability of the questionnaire.

3.7 Research Design

The research design provides the blueprint for conducting a systematic and organized investigation. It determines the methods, procedures, and strategies to collect, analyse, and interpret data to achieve the research objectives and test.

The present study adopted a **Descriptive Research Design**. According to Purdy (2020) Descriptive research is a methodological approach aimed at detailing behaviours, situations, events, and outcomes without delving into theoretical predictions or cause-and-effect relationships. It can be conducted through various means, including observation, case studies, and surveys. The descriptive design was considered appropriate as it facilitated the systematic collection and description of information regarding the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala.

3.8 Universe and Unit of Study

Universe of the Study

Every research study requires a clear definition of its universe and unit of study to ensure that the research objectives are met systematically and meaningfully. The universe represents the larger population from which the sample is drawn. The **universe** of the study comprised postgraduate students studying in higher educational institutions in Kerala.

Unit of Study

The unit of study refers to the specific element or entity about which information is collected and analyzed.

The unit of study consisted of individual postgraduate students selected for participation in the research.

3.9 Sampling Design

A sampling design outlines how participants are selected from the research universe to ensure that the data collected accurately represents the target population.

Sampling Technique

The study employed Convenience Sampling Technique for the selection of respondents. The participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the study.

Sample Size

A total of 62 postgraduate students constituted the sample for the present study.

3.10 Data Collection

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data.

Primary Data

Primary data were collected directly from postgraduate students through a structured questionnaire. Data collection was carried out through both online and offline modes.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from books, journals, research articles, government reports, official publications, websites, and other relevant documents related to substance abuse prevention and the Vimukthi Programme.

3.11 Pre-test

Prior to the main data collection, the questionnaire was pre-tested among a small group of students to assess the clarity, relevance, and suitability of the questions. Based on the feedback obtained, necessary modifications were made to improve the quality and comprehensibility of the tool before administering it to the final sample.

3.12 Data Analysis

The collected data were coded, classified, and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency and percentage were used to analyze and interpret the data. The findings were presented using tables and graphical representations wherever necessary.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical principles throughout the research process. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from the respondents before data collection. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided were ensured. The collected data were used solely for academic purposes.

3.14 Assumptions, Limitations and Scope

Assumptions

- Postgraduate students possess varying levels of awareness regarding the Vimukthi Programme.
- Respondents provided honest and accurate responses to the questionnaire.
- Awareness contributes to the effectiveness of substance abuse prevention initiatives.

Limitations

- The study was limited to a sample of 62 postgraduate students.
- The study adopted convenience sampling; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all postgraduate students in Kerala.
- The study relied on self-reported responses, which may be subject to response bias.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on assessing the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. The findings may contribute to understanding the level of awareness regarding the programme and provide insights for strengthening awareness initiatives among higher educational institutions. The study may also serve as a reference for future research in the areas of substance abuse prevention and youth awareness programmes.

3.15 CONCLUSION

The present chapter described the research methodology adopted for the study entitled "Awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among Postgraduate Students in Kerala." It explained the research design, study setting, objectives, definition of concepts, pilot study, universe and unit of study, sampling design, data collection methods, pre-test, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, and the assumptions, limitations, and scope of the study. A descriptive research design with a quantitative approach was employed to obtain reliable and objective information regarding the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students. Appropriate sampling techniques and data collection procedures were followed to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings. Ethical principles, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity of the respondents, were maintained throughout the study to protect the rights and dignity of the participants. The methodology adopted was appropriate for achieving the objectives of the research and provided a systematic framework for collecting and analysing the required data. The next chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the respondents. The findings are discussed in relation to the objectives of the study and supported by relevant statistical analysis.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Data analysis and interpretation constitute an important stage in the research process, as they facilitate the systematic organization, presentation, and interpretation of the information collected from the respondents. The purpose of data analysis is to transform raw data into meaningful information that can be used to address the research objectives and draw valid conclusions. Interpretation of the analysed data enables the researcher to understand patterns, relationships, and trends within the data, thereby providing a clear understanding of the research problem.

The fourth chapter explains the data collected from 62 postgraduate students. It gives an in-depth analysis regarding the data collected. The chapter helps in understanding the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme. The data were analyzed using SPSS. Frequency and percentage were used to present and interpret the findings. The results are according to the objectives of the study.

4.2 Demographic profile of Respondents

Table 4.1

Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21	12	19.4
22	22	35.5
23	15	24.2

24	7	11.3
25	2	3.2
26	2	3.2
27	1	1.6
37	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

Table 4.1, depicts the age-wise distribution of the respondents. The majority of the respondents (35.5%) were aged 22 years, followed by respondents aged 23 years (24.2%) and 21 years (19.4%). Respondents aged 24 years constituted 11.3% of the sample. Only a small proportion of respondents belonged to the age groups of 25 years (3.2%), 26 years (3.2%), 27 years (1.6%), and 37 years (1.6%). The findings indicate that most of the respondents were between 21 and 23 years of age, which is typical of postgraduate students.

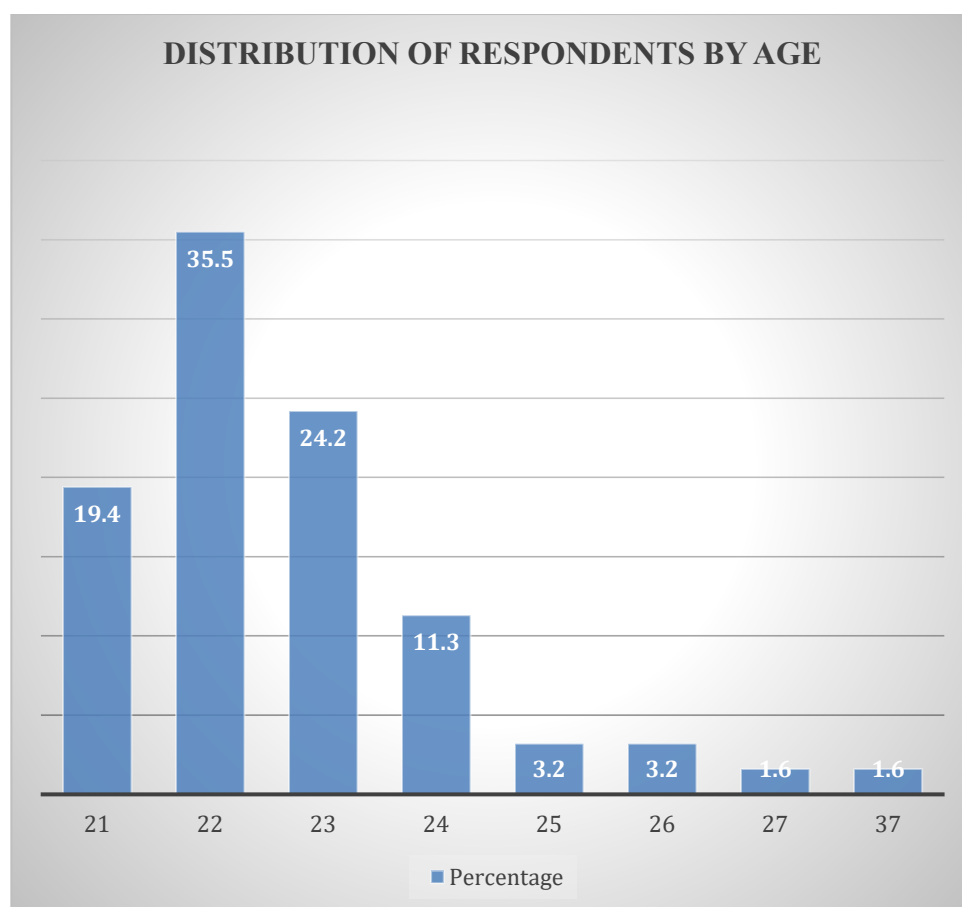


Figure 4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Age

The figure 4.1 shows the age distribution of the respondents from the data collection. The age 22 (35.5%) have an increase in respondents. The findings indicate that most of the respondents were between 21 and 23 years of age, which is typical of postgraduate students.

Table 4.2

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	13	21.0%
Female	49	79.0%
TOTAL	62	100

Table 4.2 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of the total 62 respondents, 79.0% were females and 21.0% were males. The higher proportion of female respondents indicates that female postgraduate students constituted the majority of the study participants. Their active participation contributed significantly to the assessment of awareness regarding the Vimukthi Programme. Although both male and female students participated in the study, the findings primarily reflect the perspectives of female postgraduate students due to their larger representation in the sample. This gender distribution should be considered while interpreting the overall results of the study.

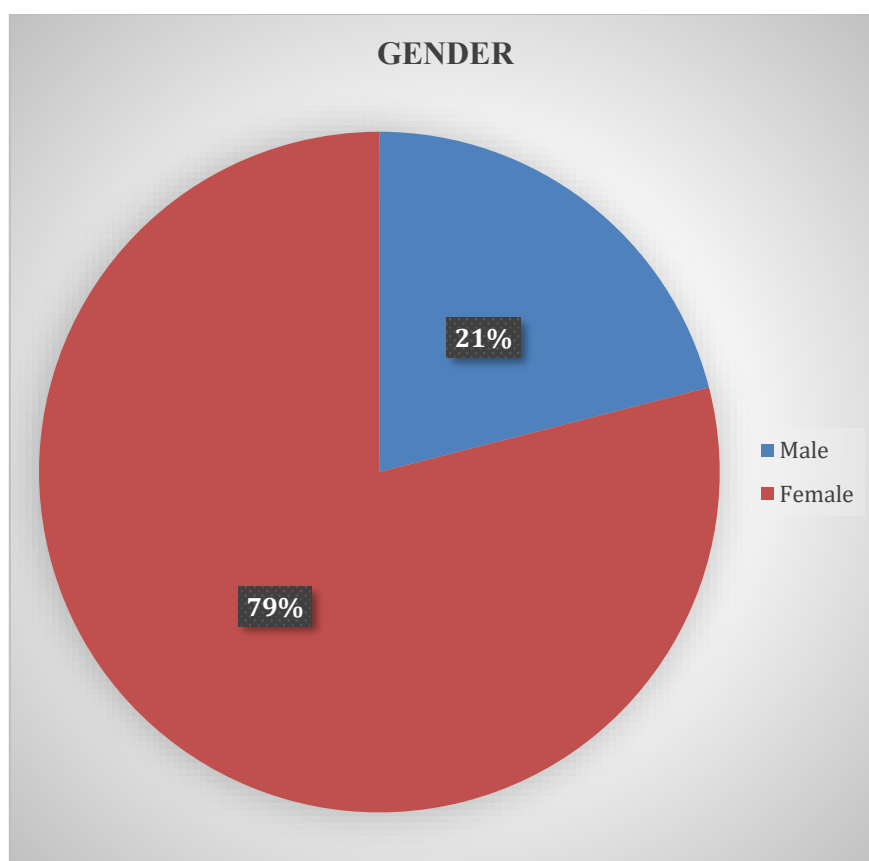


Figure 4.2 Gender

According to the figure 4.2, illustrates the gender-wise distribution of the respondents included in the study. It shows the female respondents constituted the majority (79.0%), while male respondents accounted for 21.0% of the sample. This indicates the gender composition of the respondents who participated in the study and provides a basis for understanding the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Respondents by Year of study

Year of study	Frequency	Percentage
1 st year	26	41.9%
2 nd year	36	58.1%
Total	62	100.0

The table 4.3 presents the distribution of respondents based on their year of study. The findings reveals that the majority of respondents were studying in 2nd year about 58.1%, while the remaining respondents were from 1st year postgraduate students about 41.9%. This shows the participation of the postgraduate students.

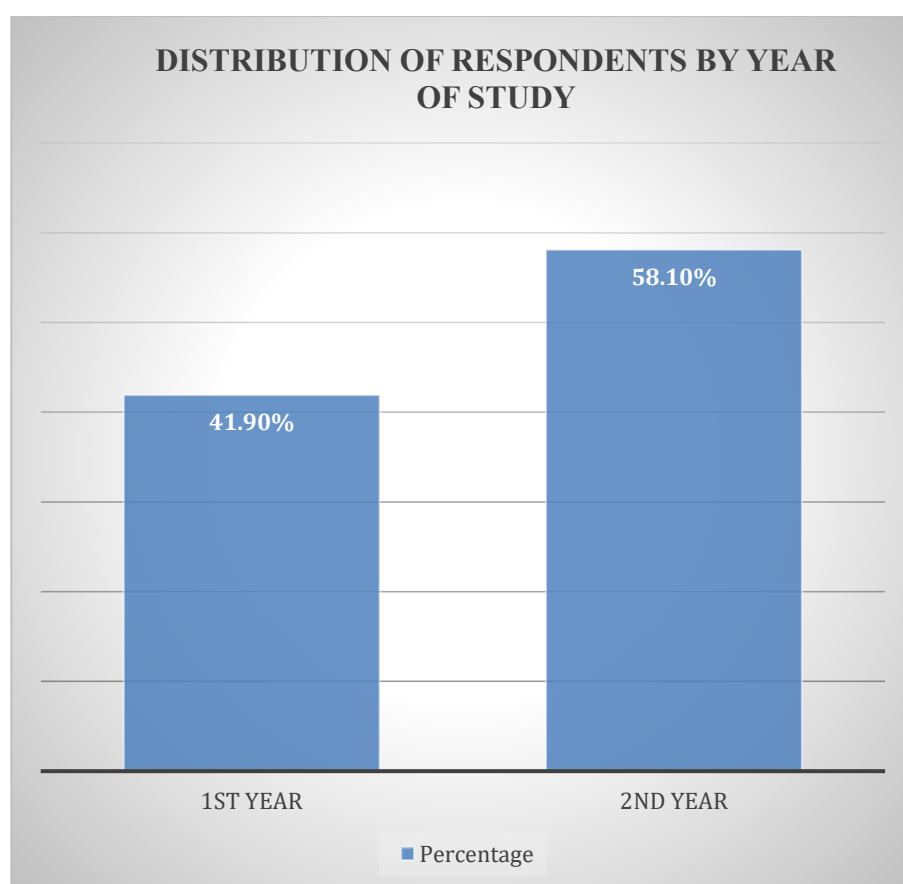


Figure 4.3 Distribution of Respondents by year of study

The figure 4.3 shows that the respondents were 2nd year Postgraduate students (58.1%). But 41.9% 1st year postgraduate students were also responded. This indicates that second-year students formed the larger proportion of the respondents who participated in the study.

Table 4.4

University-wise distribution of Respondents

University	Frequency	Percentage
Kerala University	50	66.7
Technical University	2	2.7
Calicut University	5	6.7
Other	5	6.7
Total	62	100.0

The table 4.4, presents the distribution of respondents according to their university. The majority of the respondents (66.7%) belonged to Kerala University. Respondents from Calicut University and other universities each constituted 6.7% of the sample, while 2.7% belonged to Technical University. This indicates that study was predominantly represented by postgraduate students from Kerala University. This shows the participation of the postgraduate students in contributing to the study

4.3 Objective-wise Analysis and discussion

OBJECTIVE 1: AWARENESS REGARDING THE HELPLINE, PROGRAMMES AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS ASSOCIATED WITH VIMUKTHI PROGRAMME

Table 4.5

Awareness of Vimukthi Programme

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	27.4%
No	8	12.9%
Maybe	37	59.7%
Total	62	100.0%

Table 4.5, shows that 59.7% of the respondents were uncertain about whether postgraduate students are aware of the Vimukthi Programme. Only 27.4% believed that students were aware of the programme, while 12.9% felt that they were not aware of it. The findings indicate a considerable level of uncertainty regarding awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students. This suggests that the programme and its activities have not been adequately communicated or recognized within higher educational institutions. Although

the Vimukthi Programme has been introduced to prevent substance abuse and promote a drug-free society, the limited level of awareness among students may reduce the effective utilization of its services and support mechanisms. Since postgraduate students experience various academic, personal, and career-related challenges, improving awareness about the Vimukthi Programme may encourage them to access available guidance, counselling, and preventive services whenever required. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen awareness initiatives through regular orientation programmes, seminars, workshops, and campus-based activities so that students become more familiar with the objectives and services of the Vimukthi Programme.

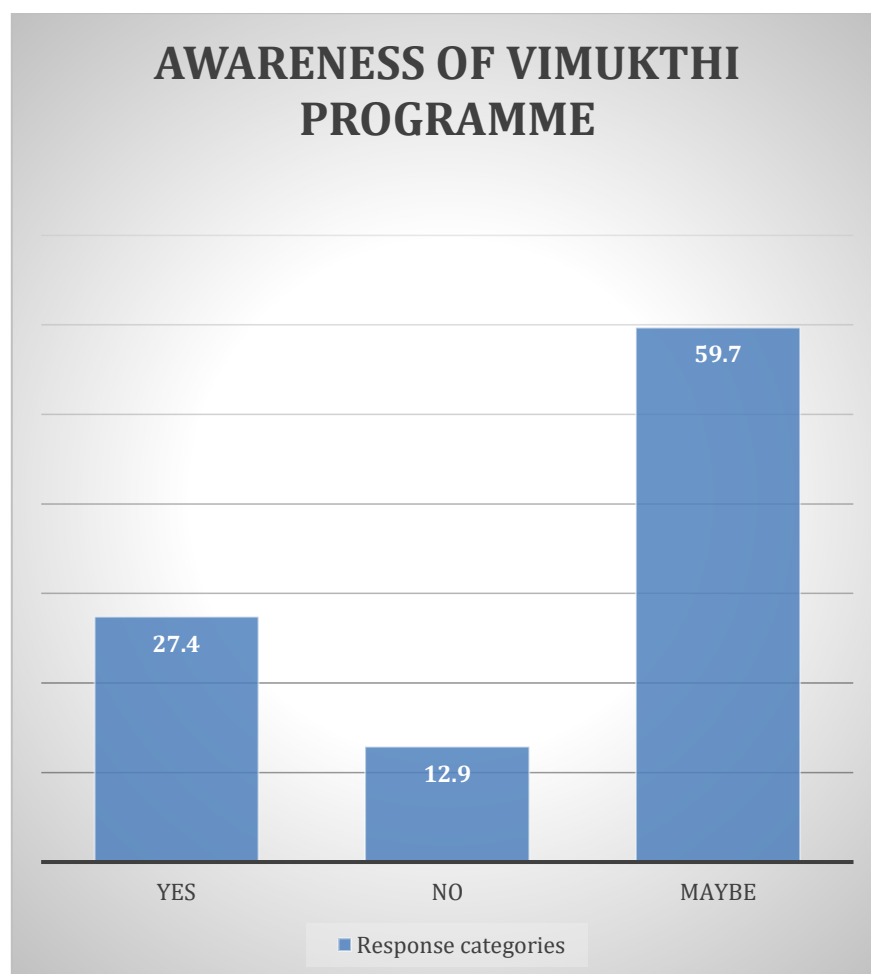


Figure 4.4 Awareness of Vimukthi programme

Figure 4.2 shows that the inadequate awareness regarding the reach of the Vimukthi programme among students. More than half of the respondents (59.7%) were uncertain about whether college students are aware of the Vimukthi Programme. Only 27.4% believed that college students were aware of the programme, while 12.9% felt that they were not. The less awareness of the Vimukthi programme was shown.

Table 4.6

Awareness of Vimukthi helpline Number

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	11.3%
No	47	75.8%
Not Sure	8	12.9%
Total	62	100.0

From the table 4.6 indicates that, the majority of respondents (75.8%) were not aware of the Vimukthi helpline number. Only 11.3% of respondents reported knowing the helpline number, while 12.9% were unsure. This suggests a considerable gap in awareness regarding an important service provided under the

Vimukthi Programme. The majority respondents were not aware about the Vimukthi programme and also about its helpline number, this shows the level of awareness of Vimukthi programme is much lesser among the students.

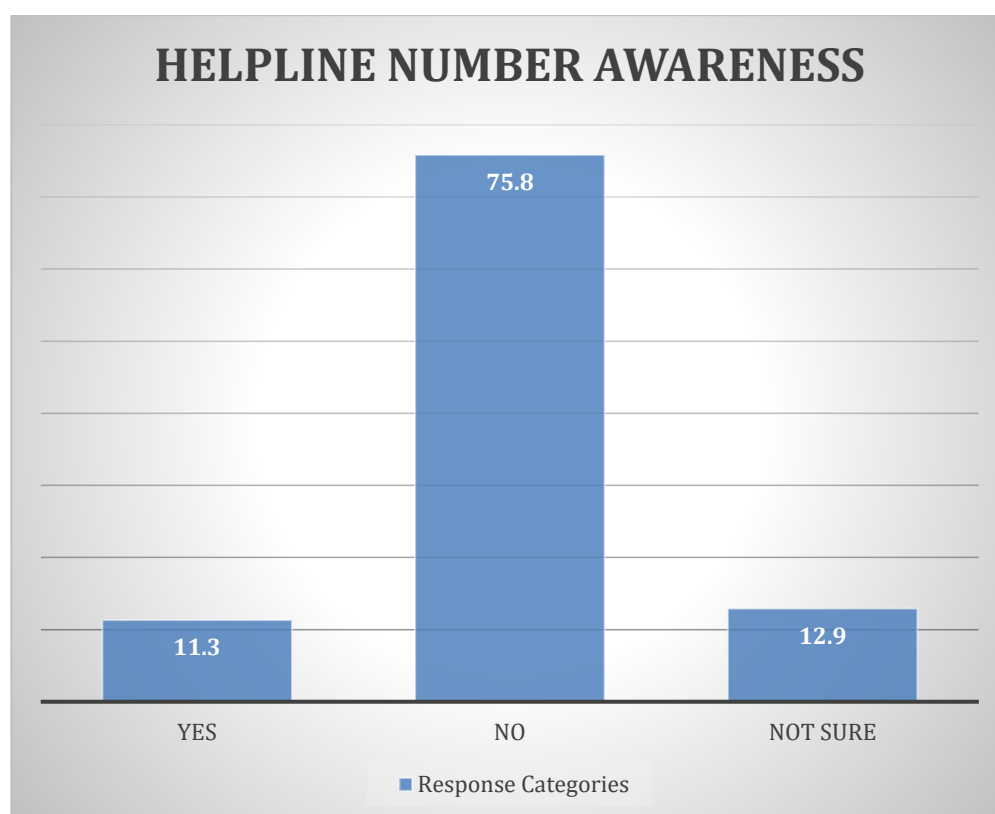


Figure 4.5 Awareness of Vimukthi helpline Number

The figure 4.5 shows the awareness of Vimukthi helpline number, 75.8% respondents were not aware of the Vimukthi helpline number. The figure shows how difference in the awareness of the Vimukthi helpline among the postgraduate students. 12.9% still unsure about the helpline number of Vimukthi. Only 11.3% respondents were having the awarenesses about the Vimukthi helpline number.

Table 4.7

Availability of Vimukthi programme in college

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	9	14.5%
No	11	17.7%
Not Sure	32	51.6%
I Don't Know	10	16.1%
Total	62	100.0%

Table 4.7 shows that, more than half of the respondents (51.6%) were not sure whether a Vimukthi Programme was available in their college. Only 14.5% reported the availability of a Vimukthi Programme, while 17.7% stated that no such programme existed and 16.1% were unaware of it. This finding indicates limited visibility and awareness of Vimukthi initiatives within higher education institutions. Most of the respondents were about 51.6% were unsure about the Vimukthi programme in their colleges. This is because of the lack of awareness of Vimukthi programme among the postgraduate students. Only 14.5% have the knowledge about Vimukthi programme are available in their college campus.

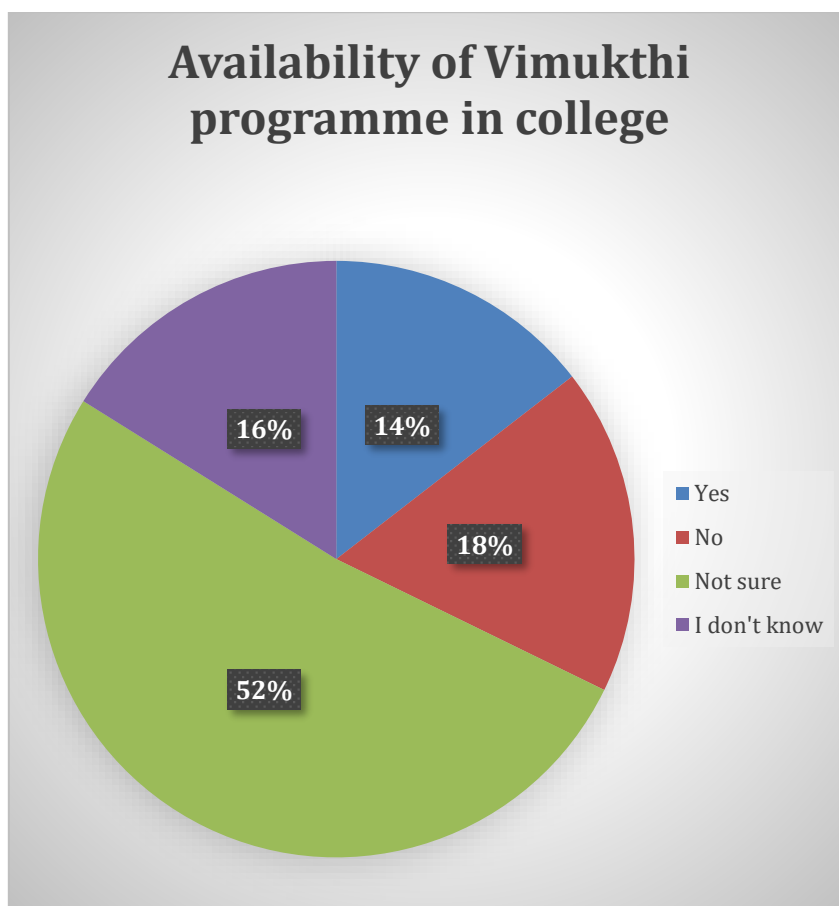


Figure 4.6

Figure 4.6 shows, most of the respondents were about 51.6% were unsure about the Vimukthi programme in their colleges. This is because of the lack of awareness of Vimukthi programme among the postgraduate students. Only 14.5% have the knowledge about Vimukthi programme are available in their college campus.

Table 4.8

Availability of Vimukthi cell in the college

Response	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Yes	6	9.7
No	14	22.6
Maybe	12	19.4
I Don't know	30	48.4
Total	62	100.0

The above table 4.8, presents the respondents' awareness regarding the availability of a Vimukthi Cell in their colleges. Nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) reported that they did not know whether a Vimukthi Cell existed in their institution. About 22.6% stated that there was no Vimukthi Cell, while 19.4% were uncertain. Only 9.7% confirmed the presence of a Vimukthi Cell in their college. The findings suggest limited awareness among postgraduate students regarding the existence of institutional support mechanisms under the Vimukthi Programme.

Although Vimukthi Cells function in colleges to promote substance abuse prevention and student support, the findings indicate that many students are unaware of their availability. This reflects the limited level of awareness regarding the Vimukthi Cell and suggests that its services and benefits are not reaching a considerable proportion of students.

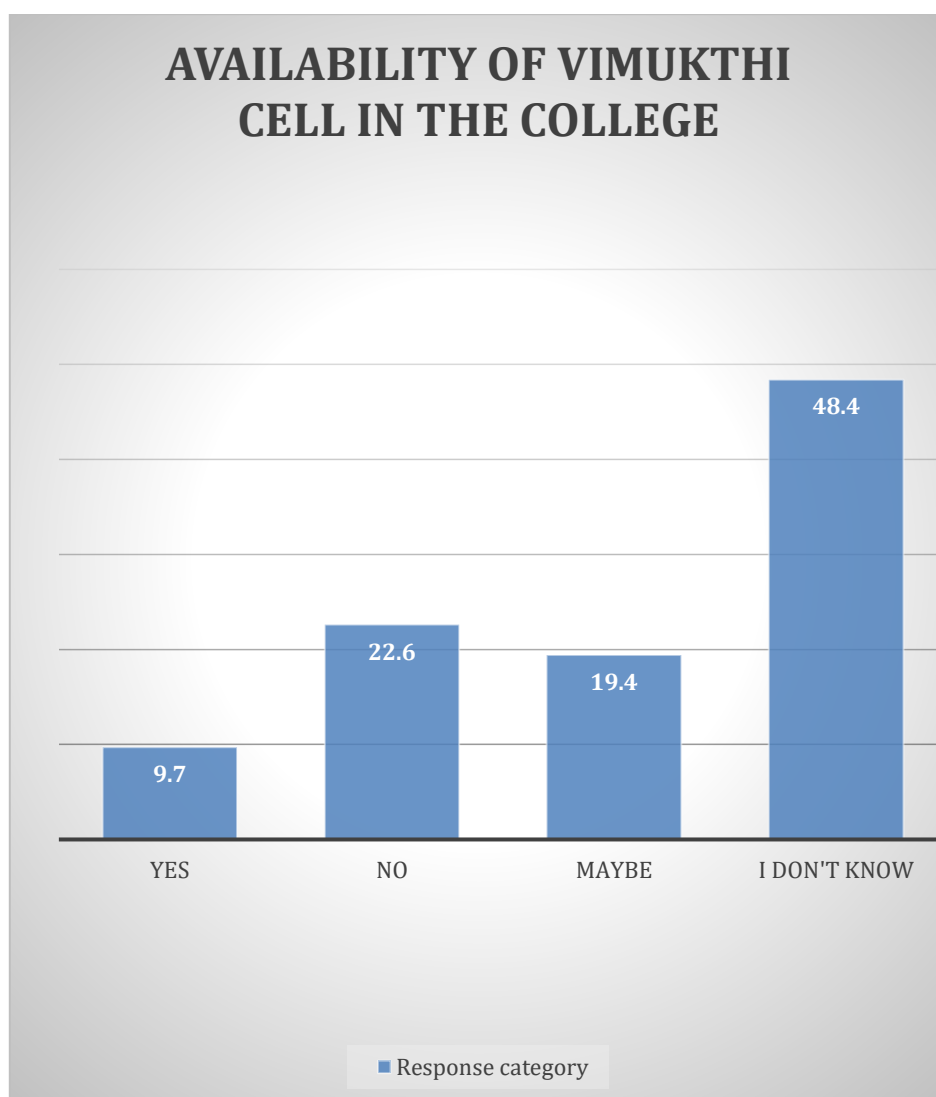


Figure 4.7 Availability of Vimukthi cell in the college

The figure shows that the respondents do not know whether there is an availability of Vimukthi cell working in their college. Nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) reported that they did not know whether a Vimukthi Cell existed in their institution. About 22.6% stated that there was no Vimukthi Cell,

while 19.4% were uncertain. Only 9.7% confirmed the presence of a Vimukthi Cell in their college.

Although Vimukthi Cells function in colleges to promote substance abuse prevention and student support, the findings indicate that many students are unaware of their availability. This reflects the limited level of awareness regarding the Vimukthi Cell and suggests that its services and benefits are not reaching a considerable proportion of students. 22.6%, 19.4%, 48.4% shows that the working of Vimukthi in colleges were less known and unaware by the students. The students needed to know the working of the cell, then only the Vimukthi programme benefits will be got to the students.

OBJECTIVE 2: PARTICIPATION IN DRUG ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Table 4.9

Have you attended any drug abuse awareness sessions/ seminars/ workshops in your college?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
YES	46	74.2%
NO	16	25.8%
TOTAL	62	100%

Table 4.9 reveals that the majority of the respondents (74.2%) had attended drug abuse awareness sessions, seminars, or workshops conducted in their colleges, whereas 25.8% had not participated in such programmes. This indicates that

many colleges actively organize awareness programmes related to substance abuse prevention, reflecting a positive effort by educational institutions to educate students on this issue. However, despite participating in these awareness activities, a considerable proportion of respondents reported being unaware or unsure about the Vimukthi Programme and its services. This finding suggests that although general drug abuse awareness programmes are being conducted in colleges, specific information regarding the Vimukthi Programme, its objectives, and the services offered through Vimukthi Cells has not reached many postgraduate students effectively. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen programme-specific awareness initiatives within higher educational institutions.

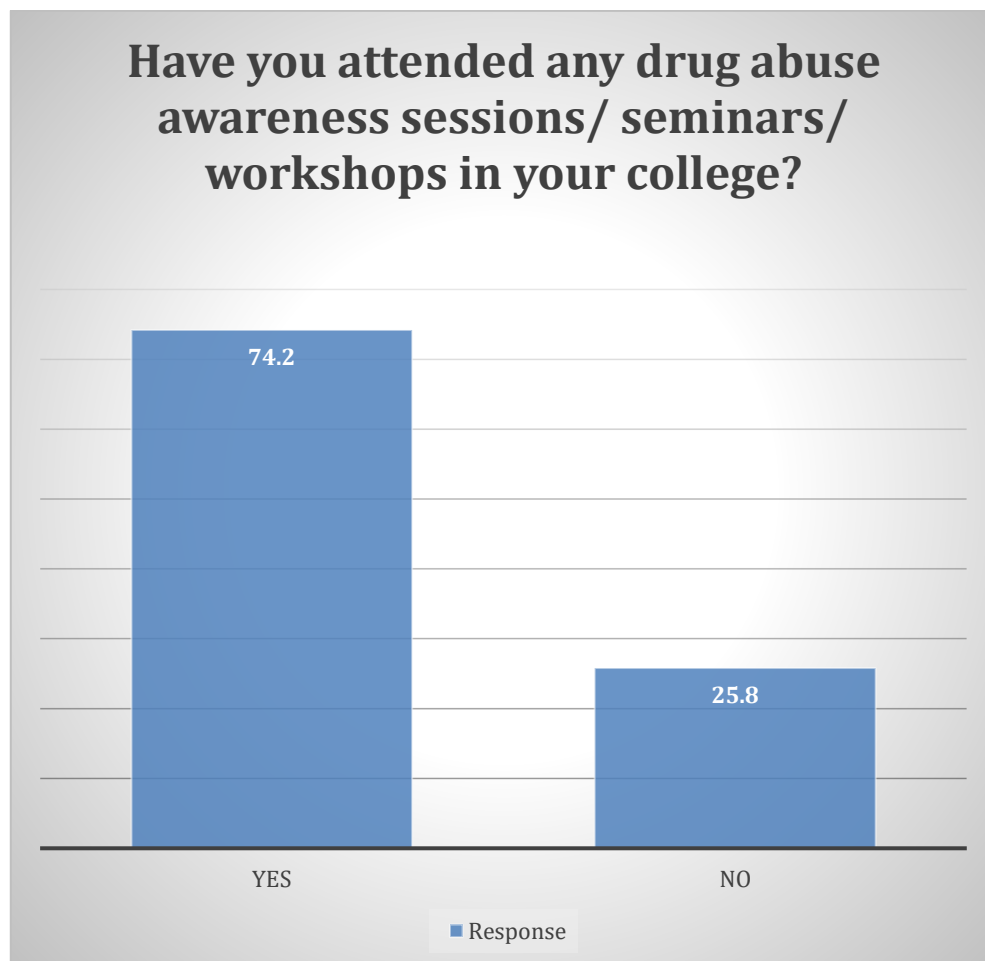


Figure 4.8 Have you attended any drug abuse awareness sessions/ seminars/ workshops in your college?

The figure shows that the majority of the respondents (74.2%) had attended drug abuse awareness sessions, seminars, or workshops conducted in their colleges, whereas 25.8% had not participated in such programmes. This finding indicates that many colleges are taking initiatives to organize awareness programmes on substance abuse prevention. The higher participation of students reflects the efforts made by educational institutions to educate students about the harmful effects of substance abuse. However, the findings of the study also revealed that awareness regarding the Vimukthi Programme and its services remained limited among many respondents. This suggests that while general awareness programmes are being conducted, greater emphasis should be given to creating awareness about the objectives, activities, and support services of the Vimukthi Programme. Strengthening such awareness initiatives may help students make informed decisions, encourage healthy coping strategies during periods of academic and personal stress, and promote a safer and drug-free campus environment.

OBJECTIVE 3: PARTICIPATION IN VIMUKTHI RELATED ACTIVITIES

Table 4.10

Willingness to volunteer for Vimukthi activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	61.3 %
No	8	12.9%
Not sure	16	25.8%
Total	62	100.0%

Table 4.10 reveals that 61.3% of the respondents expressed their willingness to volunteer for Vimukthi activities in their colleges, while 25.8% were uncertain and 12.9% reported that they were not willing to participate. This finding indicates a generally positive attitude among postgraduate students towards participating in substance abuse prevention and

awareness initiatives. The willingness of a majority of the respondents to volunteer suggests that students are interested in contributing to the promotion of a drug-free campus environment and supporting awareness programmes. However, the considerable proportion of respondents who were uncertain about volunteering may be due to limited knowledge regarding the roles, responsibilities, and activities of the Vimukthi Programme.

This highlights the need for educational institutions to provide more information about volunteering opportunities, strengthen the visibility of Vimukthi Cells, and encourage active student involvement. Greater student

participation in Vimukthi activities can enhance peer education, increase awareness of substance abuse prevention, and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the programme within higher educational institutions.

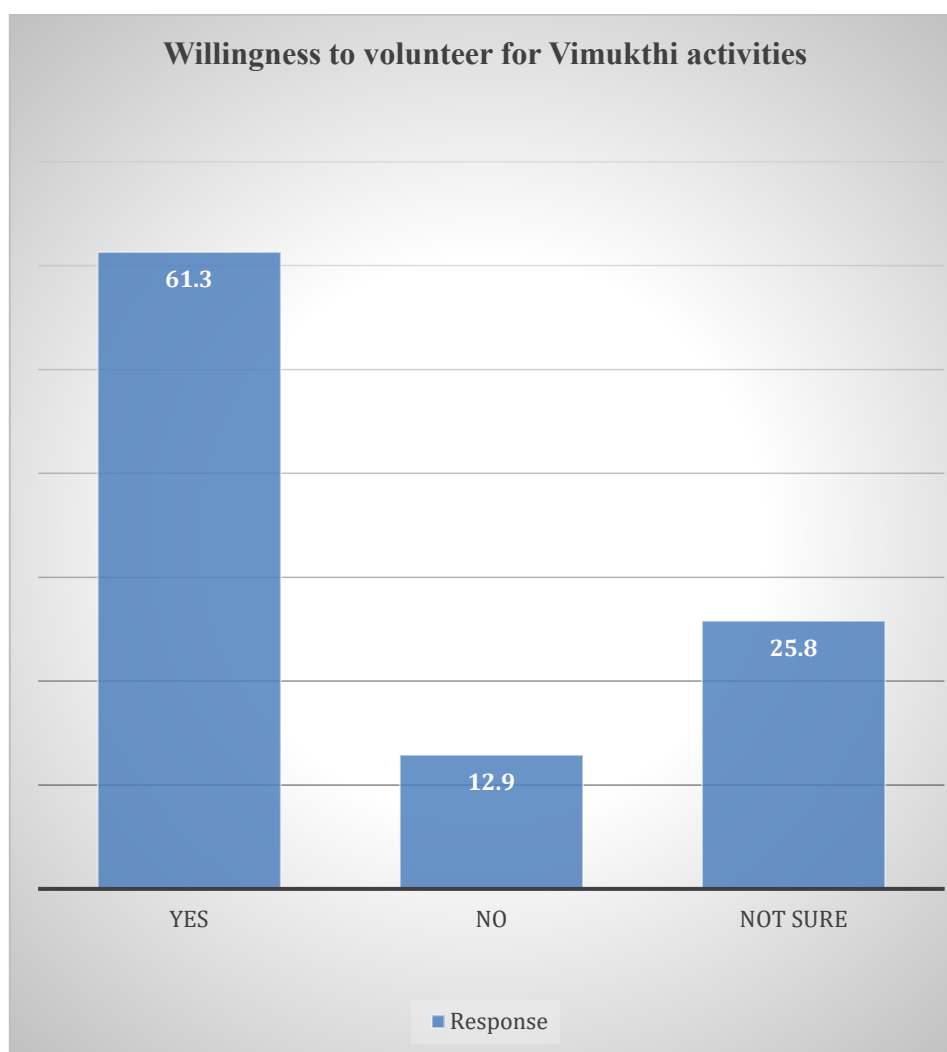


Figure 4.9 Willingness to volunteer for Vimukthi activities

From this figure 4.8 shows that the participation in Vimukthi activities is willing by majority (61.3%). But still (25.8%) where not sure about the

participation and 12.9% were not ready to be a volunteer. This shows the willingness of participation after they understood about the Vimukthi programme's importance among the postgraduate students. But still 12.9% shows an unwillingness to volunteer for Vimukthi activities.

The willingness of a majority of the respondents to volunteer suggests that students are interested in contributing to the promotion of a drug-free campus environment and supporting awareness programmes. But proper knowledge about the objectives of Vimukthi programme is needed to be aware to the students, so that a greater number of students will be willingly volunteer in the Vimukthi activities because they would understand the need for Vimukthi programmes and it will be effective among the postgraduate students. The proper guidance and the awareness are needed so that it will in improving a drug-free campus.

OBJECTIVE 4: ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE VIMUKTHI PROGRAMME

Table 4.11

Recommendation of Vimukthi programme to peer

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	59	95.2%
No	3	4.8%
Total	62	100.0%

Table 4.11 shows that 95.2% of the respondents were willing to recommend the Vimukthi Programme to their peers, whereas only 4.8% were not willing to do so. This finding suggests that postgraduate students generally have a favourable perception of the programme and acknowledge the importance of initiatives aimed at preventing substance abuse. Even though some respondents reported limited awareness about the different components of the Vimukthi Programme, they still considered it beneficial enough to recommend to others. This reflects students' acceptance of the programme and their recognition of the need for substance abuse prevention in educational institutions. At the same time, the findings indicate that improving awareness about the objectives, activities, and services of the Vimukthi Programme may encourage greater participation and help students make better use of the support available through the programme.

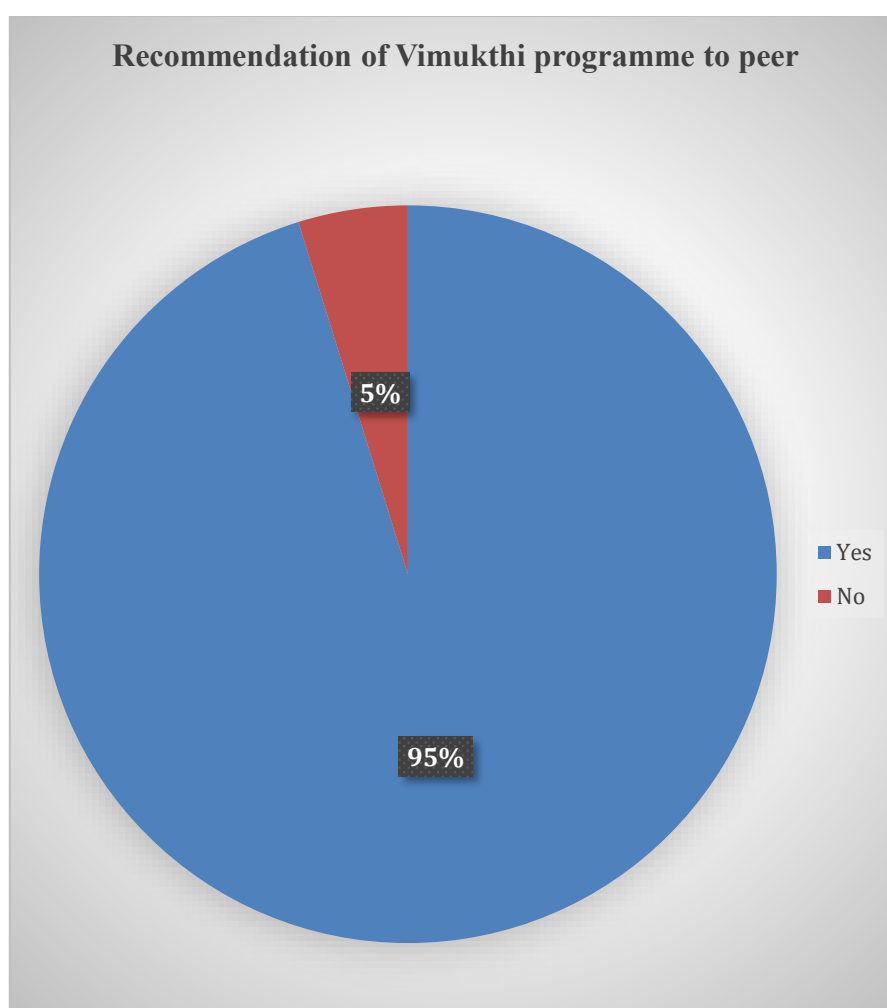


Figure 4.10: Recommendation of Vimukthi programme to peer

The Figure majority of respondents (95.2%) expressed their willingness to recommend the Vimukthi Programme to their peers, while only 4.8% did not. This finding indicates a positive attitude towards the programme and suggests that students perceive the initiative as beneficial despite varying levels of awareness about its specific component. The findings indicate that improving awareness about the objectives, activities, and services of the Vimukthi Programme may encourage greater participation and help students make better use of the support available through the programme.

4.5 Conclusion

The present chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from postgraduate students regarding their awareness of the Vimukthi Programme. The findings were analysed using descriptive statistics and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the study. The analysis revealed that although a majority of the respondents had participated in general drug abuse awareness programmes conducted in their colleges and expressed a positive attitude towards recommending and volunteering for Vimukthi-related activities, awareness regarding the specific components of the Vimukthi Programme, such as the Vimukthi Cell, helpline, and institutional services, remained limited. A considerable proportion of respondents were uncertain about the availability and functioning of these services, indicating the need for improved dissemination of programme-related information within higher educational institutions. The findings also highlighted the willingness of students to actively support substance abuse prevention initiatives, suggesting the potential for greater student participation in awareness activities. Overall, the analysis indicates that while the attitude of postgraduate students towards substance abuse prevention is encouraging, there is a clear need to strengthen awareness of the Vimukthi Programme and its services. The next chapter presents the major findings of the study, suggestions based on the findings, and the overall conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The concluding chapter of this research brings together the insights gained from the data analysis and interprets them in light of the study's objectives and the broader theoretical context. This chapter presents the major findings of the study, followed by discussion, suggestions, and conclusions. The findings are derived from the analysis of data collected from postgraduate students regarding their awareness of the Vimukthi Programme. The chapter highlights the key observations related to awareness of the programme, participation in awareness activities, attitudes towards the programme, and the need for strengthening Vimukthi initiatives in higher educational institutions.

This chapter begins by summarising the key findings of the study in relation to objectives. Then the major practical suggestions offered.

5.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study assessed the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. The major findings are presented objective-wise as follows:

Objective 1: To assess postgraduate students' awareness regarding the helpline, programmes, and institutional support mechanisms associated with the Vimukthi Programme.

The findings indicate that the overall awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students is not at a satisfactory level. A majority of the respondents reported that

they were only partially aware or uncertain about the programme. Awareness of the Vimukthi helpline number was found to be particularly low, with most respondents indicating that they were unfamiliar with this important support service. Similarly, many students were unsure whether Vimukthi awareness programmes were conducted in their colleges, and nearly half of the respondents did not know whether a Vimukthi Cell existed in their institution. These findings suggest that although the programme has gained some recognition, detailed knowledge about its services and institutional support mechanisms remains limited.

The results emphasize the need for educational institutions and the concerned authorities to strengthen awareness efforts among postgraduate students. Simply introducing a programme is not sufficient unless students are informed about its objectives, available services, and methods of accessing support. Increasing the visibility of the Vimukthi Programme through regular awareness activities, orientation sessions, campus campaigns, and effective dissemination of information can improve students' understanding and encourage them to make use of the available resources whenever required.

Objective 2: To identify participation of postgraduate students in drug abuse awareness programmes.

The study found that a large majority of the respondents had participated in drug abuse awareness programmes conducted either within educational institutions or through other organizations. This indicates that awareness activities on substance abuse have reached a considerable proportion of postgraduate students. The participation of students in these programmes reflects the growing importance given to substance abuse prevention within educational settings and

demonstrates that institutions are making efforts to address this social and public health concern.

Many students had attended awareness sessions, knowledge regarding the Vimukthi helpline, campus support mechanisms, and programme activities remained limited. This finding suggests that future awareness programmes should include more detailed information about the objectives, services, and institutional support provided through the Vimukthi Programme so that students gain both general knowledge about substance abuse and specific awareness of available support systems.

Objective 3: To assess participation in Vimukthi-related activities among postgraduate students.

The findings reveal that a majority of the respondents expressed their willingness to participate in Vimukthi-related activities as volunteers. This positive response indicates that many postgraduate students are interested in contributing to substance abuse prevention initiatives and are prepared to support awareness activities within their educational institutions and communities. At the same time, a considerable proportion of respondents remained uncertain about volunteering, while only a small percentage expressed unwillingness to participate.

These findings suggest that there is significant potential to increase student participation through appropriate motivation and institutional support. Educational institutions can encourage greater involvement by creating structured volunteer opportunities, peer education programmes, leadership training, and community outreach initiatives. Such efforts may not only strengthen the implementation of the Vimukthi Programme but also help students develop social responsibility, leadership skills, and a commitment to promoting healthy and drug-free environments.

Objective 4: To examine postgraduate students' attitudes towards the Vimukthi Programme.

The study demonstrates that postgraduate students generally hold a positive attitude towards the Vimukthi Programme. An overwhelming majority of the respondents stated that they would recommend the programme to their peers. This finding reflects students' recognition of the importance of substance abuse prevention initiatives and their willingness to support programmes that promote the health and well-being of young people.

Although the study identified gaps in awareness regarding certain services and institutional mechanisms of the programme, the positive attitude expressed by respondents is encouraging. A favourable perception towards the Vimukthi Programme provides a strong foundation for improving student engagement and expanding awareness initiatives in higher educational institutions. By addressing the existing gaps in knowledge while building on students' positive attitudes, educational institutions and programme authorities can further strengthen the effectiveness and reach of the Vimukthi Programme.

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala. The findings indicate that although respondents generally have a favourable attitude towards the programme, their awareness of its specific services and institutional support mechanisms was limited. More than half of the respondents reported only partial awareness of the programme, and a large majority were unaware of the Vimukthi helpline number. Similarly, many respondents were uncertain about the availability of Vimukthi programmes and the existence of Vimukthi Cells within their educational institutions. These findings suggest that while the programme has gained some public recognition, information regarding its support services has not reached many postgraduate students effectively.

The findings are consistent with the study by (Husam Abazid, 2023) ,which reported that although university students were generally aware of the harmful effects of substance abuse, gaps remained in their knowledge of available prevention strategies and institutional support services. The authors emphasized that awareness alone is insufficient unless students are provided with accessible information, regular educational programmes, and appropriate preventive interventions. Similarly, the present study found that respondents lacked adequate awareness of the Vimukthi helpline and campus-based support mechanisms despite recognizing the importance of substance abuse prevention.

The study further revealed that a majority of respondents had participated in drug abuse awareness programmes. This finding suggests that educational institutions are already making efforts to address substance abuse through awareness activities. However, participation in these programmes did not necessarily result in adequate knowledge of the specific objectives, services, and support mechanisms of the Vimukthi Programme. This indicates that future awareness programmes should place greater efforts on introducing students to the programme's helpline, counselling services, referral mechanisms, and institutional initiatives rather than focusing only on the general harmful effects of substance abuse.

Overall, the findings suggest that postgraduate students recognize the importance of substance abuse prevention and demonstrate a willingness to support initiatives such as the Vimukthi Programme. However, the study also highlights a gap between positive attitudes and adequate awareness of the programme's services and institutional mechanisms. Addressing this gap requires regular awareness campaigns, improved dissemination of information, strengthened Vimukthi Cells, greater involvement of social workers and counsellors, and active collaboration between educational institutions and the Vimukthi Mission. Such measures can contribute to improving programme visibility, increasing student participation, and strengthening substance abuse prevention efforts among young adults.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS

1. Regular awareness programmes on substance abuse prevention and the Vimukthi Programme should be conducted in higher educational institutions.

Higher educational institutions should organize regular awareness programmes, seminars, workshops, and interactive sessions on substance abuse prevention and the Vimukthi Programme. These programmes should be conducted periodically with the support of trained professionals, social workers, and resource persons to improve students' knowledge and promote healthy lifestyles.

2. Information regarding the Vimukthi helpline number and support services should be disseminated more effectively among students.

The Vimukthi helpline number and the support services offered by the programme should be widely publicized among students. Educational institutions should display the helpline number on notice boards, websites, student handbooks, and social media platforms to ensure that students are aware of the available assistance and can access timely support whenever needed.

3. Colleges and universities should strengthen the functioning and visibility of Vimukthi Cells to improve student awareness.

Colleges and universities should establish and strengthen the functioning of Vimukthi Cells as active centres for awareness generation and substance abuse prevention. These cells should organize awareness campaigns, counselling sessions, peer support activities, and regular outreach programmes to enhance students' awareness and participation.

4. Student participation in Vimukthi-related activities should be encouraged through volunteer programmes and peer-led initiatives.

Students should be encouraged to actively participate in Vimukthi-related activities through volunteer programmes, peer education initiatives, awareness campaigns, and community outreach activities. Such participation can promote leadership skills, social responsibility, and active involvement in substance abuse prevention efforts.

5. Social media platforms and digital communication channels may be utilized to increase the reach of Vimukthi awareness campaigns among young adults.

Considering the widespread use of digital technology among young adults, social media platforms, mobile applications, institutional websites, and other digital communication channels should be effectively utilized to disseminate information about the Vimukthi Programme, its services, awareness campaigns, and preventive initiatives. This can significantly improve the programme's visibility and outreach

6. Collaborative efforts between educational institutions, social workers, and the Vimukthi Mission may enhance the effectiveness of awareness initiatives.

Collaborative efforts between educational institutions, social workers, the Vimukthi Mission, the Excise Department, healthcare professionals, and non-governmental organizations should be strengthened to ensure the effective implementation of awareness programmes. Such multidisciplinary collaboration

can enhance the quality, sustainability, and impact of substance abuse prevention initiatives among postgraduate students.

7. Views regarding the need for Vimukthi awareness initiatives in Higher Education Institutions.

Major suggestions for improving the Vimukthi programme

The respondents suggested:

- Increasing awareness programs in colleges
- Conducting regular seminars and workshops
- Strengthening counselling services
- Improving publicity regarding the Vimukthi helpline
- Encouraging student volunteer participation

Suggested changes in Kerala drug prevention system

- The respondents recommended
- Stricter control over drug distribution
- More awareness campaign among youth
- Enhanced rehabilitation and counselling facilities
- Greater parental involvement
- Increased community participation in prevention effort

5.4 CONCLUSION

The present study titled ‘**Awareness of the Vimukthi Programme among postgraduate students in Kerala**’, was undertaken to assess the level of awareness of postgraduate students regarding the Vimukthi Programme, its helpline, institutional support, participation in drug abuse awareness programmes, involvement in Vimukthi-related activities, and attitudes towards the programme. Substance abuse has emerged as a significant public health and social issue, particularly among young adults, making preventive awareness programmes an important component of health promotion and social development. The findings of the study provide valuable insights into the extent to which postgraduate students are aware of the various components of the Vimukthi Programme and the role of educational institutions in promoting substance abuse prevention.

The findings revealed that awareness regarding important components of the programme, such as the Vimukthi helpline, programme availability, and institutional support mechanisms, was relatively limited among the respondents. A considerable proportion of students were uncertain about the existence of Vimukthi programmes and Vimukthi Cells within their educational institutions. These findings indicate the need for improving the dissemination of information related to the programme among postgraduate students.

The study emphasizes the importance of educational institutions, the Kerala State Excise Department, the Vimukthi Mission, social workers, and other stakeholders in enhancing awareness and strengthening preventive interventions among young adults. Regular awareness programmes, effective dissemination of information regarding the Vimukthi helpline, active functioning of Vimukthi Cells, and increased opportunities for student participation can contribute significantly to improving the effectiveness of the programme. The findings also highlight the important role of social workers in planning, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based awareness programmes that promote healthy lifestyles and prevent substance abuse among students. Despite the limited

awareness of certain services, the respondents demonstrated positive attitudes towards the Vimukthi Programme. A majority of the students expressed willingness to recommend the programme to their peers and showed interest in participating in Vimukthi-related activities. Therefore, strengthening awareness initiatives,

increasing programme visibility within higher educational institutions, and encouraging active student participation can contribute significantly to substance abuse prevention efforts and support the broader objectives of the Vimukthi Mission.

Although the study was limited to postgraduate students and a relatively small sample, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on students' awareness of the Vimukthi Programme in Kerala. The findings may serve as a useful resource for educational institutions, policymakers, programme administrators, and researchers in strengthening future awareness initiatives and developing more effective preventive strategies. It is expected that the recommendations of the present study will contribute to enhancing the visibility, accessibility, and effectiveness of the Vimukthi Programme and support the broader objective of creating healthy, informed, and drug-free educational environments.

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ANNEXURES

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What is your age?

2. What is your gender?
 1. Male
 2. Female
 3. Non- Binary
 4. Prefer not to say

3. What is your year of study?
 1. 1st year PG
 2. 2nd year PG

4. Name of your University?
 1. Kerala University
 2. Technical University
 3. Calicut University
 4. Kannur University

5. Other

5. College Name:

6. On a scale of 1- 5(1=Very Poor,2=Poor, 3=Fair,4=Good,5=Excellent), rate your knowledge of common drugs abused in Kerala (eg. Ganja, MDMA)

1. 1

2. 2

3. 3

4. 4

5. 5

7. Identify risks of injecting drugs?

1. Cause HIV transmission

2. Overdose

3. Addiction

4. All of the above

5. None

8. How much awareness do you have about the negative aspects of drug use?

1

2

3

4

5

9. Where have you learned most drug risks?

1.School

2.College

3.Vimukthi

4. Media or social media

5. Friends

6.Family

7. Never

10. How do you manage your academic workload and personal life as a PG student?

1. Prioritising tasks and creating a schedule

2. Follow time management

3. Seeking help from professors or peers

4. Other

11. On a scale 1- 5, (1= Strongly agree, 2= Agree,3= neutral, 4= disagree, 5= strongly disagree) do you agree that drug usage among the college students are increasing?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

12. What do you think are the most significant factors that contribute to substance use among college students?

1. Peer pressure
2. Stress and academic pressure
3. Easy availability of substance
4. Lack of awareness about risks

13. Drugs help manage college stress (1= strongly agree,2= disagree,3= neutral,4=agree,5= strongly agree)

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

14. Have you ever felt pressured to use drugs due to academic stress?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe
4. Prefer not to say

15. Have family members or relatives discussed drug risks with you?

1. Yes
2. No

16. On a scale of 1- 5, how often do you see Anti-drug messages on Social Media?

(1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= sometimes, 4= often, 5= Always)

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

17. Have drugs been offered to you or friends on campus?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say
- 4.

18. Are you aware of any substance abuse issues among the students in the college?

(1= Very unaware, 2= Unaware, 3= Neither aware nor aware, 4= aware, 5= very aware)

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

19. On scale of 1-5, (1= very satisfied, 2= dissatisfied, 3= neither dissatisfied not satisfied, 4= satisfied, 5= very satisfied), how safe do you feel reporting drugs in campus?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

20. Have you attended any drug abuse sessions/ seminars/ workshops?

1. Yes
2. No

21. How often do you witness drug use in your local community?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

22. Rate community Anti- drug campaigns effectiveness

(1= Very dissatisfied, 2= dissatisfied, 3= neither dissatisfied not satisfied, 4= satisfied, 5= very satisfied)

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

23. Can yoga and wellness practices help students resist drug temptations?

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

24. Do you know about the Vimukthi Programme by Excise Department?

1. Yes
2. No

25. How do you rate your your knowledge in Vimukthi mission programmes?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

26. How do you come to know about the Vimukthi Programmes?

1. Through media
2. Social media
3. Family or Friends
4. College
5. Through ads
6. Other

27. If other, please specify

28. Who is the brand ambassador of Vimukthi?

29. In which year the VIMUKTHI MISSION had launched?

1. 2010
2. 2013
3. 2016
4. 2020
5. I don't know

30. Are College students aware of the Vimukthi Programmes?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

31. If no, what do you think is the reason for this lack of awareness?

32. Have you attended a Vimukthi Programme?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

33. If yes, how many sessions?

34. Do you know the helpline number of Vimukthi?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

35. What Vimukthi activities have you joined?

1. Workshops
2. Street plays
3. Counselling
4. Yoga Session
5. None

36. Have you attended any competitions of Vimukthi programme?

1. Yes
2. No
- 3.

37. Is there a Vimukthi Programme available at your college?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure
4. I don't know

38. Is there Vimukthi cell in your college?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

4. I don't know

39. Did Vimukthi improve your ability to spot drug abuse signs?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

40. Would you be willing to report suspected drug use to Vimukthi, despite any fear or stigma associated with it?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

41. On a scale of 1-5, (1= very concerned, 2= unconcerned, 3= neutral, 4= concerned, 5= very concerned), rate your concern about drug- related mental health issues like depression?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5

42. Can counselling and awareness programmes effectively reduce drug use among college students?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

43. Is there a perception that Vimukthi Programmes have lower awareness and effectiveness among college students?

1. Yes
2. No

44. What do you think is most useful in Vimukthi?

1. Expert talks
2. Role playing
3. Videos
4. Group discussion
5. Nothing

45. Would you recommend Vimukthi to peer?

1. Yes
2. No

46. Are you willing to be a volunteer for the Vimukthi in your college?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

47. Why do some college students still use drugs despite awareness?

48. If you witness a friend in your college is using drugs, what action will you do? Will you contact the helpline number of Vimukthi?

49. Personal experience with drug offers/ pressure? (Optional)

50. One change needed in Kerala's drug prevention?

51. Suggest improvements for Vimukthi Programme?