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Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug Info Centre

A Study on Psychotropic Substance Abusers



Narcotics Division
Government Secretariat
Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region

A study of psychotropic substance
abusers



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1. INTRODUCTION

Objectives

- 1.1 The objectives of the study are as follows :
- a) To provide a better portrait of the abuse pattern of psychotropic substance abusers, including their previous reporting history; and
 - b) To identify the socio-demographic characteristics of psychotropic substance abusers.

Coverage of study

1.2 The study covers the psychotropic substance abusers reported to the Central Registry of Drug Abuse (CRDA) in 1997. In total, 3 486 psychotropic substance abusers are selected for inclusion in the study.

The analyses

1.3 The main analysis confines to psychotropic substance abusers reported in 1997. Separate analyses are performed on the characteristics of single drug abusers who had abused the major types of psychotropic substances, such as cannabis and methylamphetamine (ice), and of multiple drug abusers who had abused more than one type of drugs including non-psychotropic substances. Detailed statistics for the analyses are shown in Appendices I - III.

Limitations of the drug abuse statistics

1.4 As reporting to the CRDA is made through the reporting agencies on a voluntary basis, the CRDA can only record those who have come into contact with and been reported by these agencies. The drug abuse statistics presented in this report are hence based on the information available to the CRDA which is inevitably incomplete. Care should be taken when interpreting the findings of the report such that the statistics should be taken as indicators of the characteristics of reported abusers of psychotropic substances in Hong Kong.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 The characteristics of drug abusers taking psychotropic substances in 1997 can be summarised as follows:

- a) Cannabis, triazolam, methylamphetamine and cough medicine were the psychotropic substances commonly abused in 1997. It was found that except psychotropic substances, about 40% of drug abusers had also abused heroin. Among multiple drug abusers, more than 80% took a combination of two types of drug. The most common drugs taken in combination by these drug abusers were heroin and triazolam.
- b) The majority of drug abusers were males (84.2%) and in the age bracket 16 - 25 (53.0%). Single drug abusers were relatively younger than multiple drug abusers, with the mean age of 22.3 compared with 29.1 for the latter. As for the four groups of single drug abusers taking the major types of psychotropic substances, the mean age of organic solvent abusers (15.6) was lower than those for the other three groups (21.7 to 22.6).
- c) The majority of drug abusers were never married (81.8%) and had received lower secondary or above education (80.7%). These characteristics were more commonly found in single drug abusers when compared with multiple drug abusers.
- d) Kwun Tong was the district of residence with the greatest proportion of drug abusers, whether taking single or multiple drugs. As for the four groups of single drug abusers, the greatest proportions of drug abusers were found in different districts, including Kwun Tong, Central & Western, Tai Po and North.
- e) The majority (62.9%) of drug abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks. Private housing (25.6%) was the next common living quarters for drug abusers.
- f) More than half of the drug abusers were employed, either as full-time workers or casual/part-time workers. Most of them were building and construction workers, restaurant service workers or transport labourers. It was found that about two-thirds of single drug abusers were employed, as against less than half for multiple

drug abusers. Except for organic solvent abusers, the majority of those taking cannabis, methylamphetamine (ice) or cough medicine were employed (56.4% to 73.8%). It was found that some 20% of organic solvent abusers were employed and nearly half were students (47.6%).

- g) The majority of drug abusers were previously convicted. The proportion of multiple drug abusers (85.1%) having previous convictions was significantly higher than that for single drug abusers (54.5%). As regards the four groups of single drug abusers, the proportion of organic solvent abusers (26.7%) having previous convictions was much lower than those for the other three groups, ranging from 52.9% to 59.7%.
- h) The reasons for current drug use varied among multiple drug abusers. Of which, the commonly reported ones were curiosity (44.7%), avoid discomfort of its absence (43.5%) and peer influence (42.6%). For single drug abusers, their main reason for drug use was peer influence.
- i) Over 70% of drug abusers took drugs for the first time at the age below 20. Multiple drug abusers started abusing drugs at an earlier age than single drug abusers, with the mean age of first abuse at 16.5 compared with 19.4 for the latter. Compared the mean age of first abuse among the four groups of single drug abusers, it was noted that abusers taking organic solvent (13.4) tended to start abusing the drug earlier, followed by those taking cough medicine (18.7), methylamphetamine (19.1) and cannabis (20.0).
- j) In comparison, multiple drug abusers had a longer duration of drug use than single drug abusers. It was found that more than half of the multiple drug abusers had abused drugs for 10 years or more, as against less than 10% for single drug abusers.
- k) More than half (53.0%) of the drug abusers spent \$100 to \$299 on drugs per day. Comparatively, multiple drug abusers spent more money than single drug abusers. The average daily expenditure on drug abuse for the former was \$209.4 while that for the latter was \$94.2. Among the four groups of single drug abusers, the average daily expenditure for organic solvent abusers (\$8.5) was much lower than those for the other three groups, ranging from

\$56.8 to \$149.9.

- l) Multiple drug abusers had a longer reporting history than single drug abusers. It was found that more than 90% of multiple drug abusers had been reported to the CRDA more than once, in comparison with less than half (42.6%) for single drug abusers. The average length of period since the first report had been submitted for multiple drug abusers (9.2 years) was much longer than that for single drug abusers (3.3 years). As regards the four groups of single drug abusers, a longer period after the first report was observed in the abusers taking cannabis (3.5 years) or cough medicine (3.2 years) than in those taking methylamphetamine (2.4 years) or organic solvent (1.1 years).
- m) The majority (76.8%) of drug abusers had been reported by the Police. For multiple drug abusers, it was found that besides the Police (84.5%), greater proportions of them had been reported by the Correctional Services Department (CSD), methadone clinics and the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers (SARDA), ranging from 41.0% to 73.8%. As regards the four groups of single drug abusers, over 90% of organic solvent abusers had been reported by the outreaching and youth services teams while most in the other three groups (58.4% to 79.0%) had been reported by the Police.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Personal characteristics

Sex and age

3.1 The abuse of psychotropic substances was more prevalent among males. In 1997, 84.2% of the reported psychotropic substance abusers were males, as against 15.8% females. But the proportion of female substance abusers was much higher in the young age group (i.e. below the age of 21), at 23.6% in 1997.

3.2 Analysed by age, more than half (53.0%) of psychotropic substance abusers were in the age bracket 16-25. As for young female abusers, larger proportions were observed in the ages between 15 and 17, ranging from 15.9% to 18.9%.

3.3 The mean age of psychotropic substance abusers of all ages was 25.6 while that of young female abusers was 16.6.

Marital status

3.4 Over 80% of psychotropic substance abusers were never married. As for young female abusers, 94.0% of them were never married.

Educational attainment

3.5 64.3% of psychotropic substance abusers had received lower secondary education. A greater proportion (80.7%) of them had attained lower secondary or above standard.

3.6 Young female abusers were noted to have received more education, with 75.7% attaining lower secondary standard and 96.3% attaining lower secondary or above standard.

District of residence

3.7 Analysed by district of residence, larger proportions of psychotropic substance abusers were observed, according to size, in Kwun Tong (14.3%), Tai Po (8.6%), Wong Tai Sin (8.5%) and Southern (7.9%).

3.8 For young female abusers, the district of residence with the greatest proportion of these persons was Tai Po (21.7%), followed by Yuen Long (11.4%), North (10.4%) and Kwun Tong (10.4%).

Type of living quarters

3.9 Most of the psychotropic substance abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks (62.9%), followed by private housing (25.6%).

3.10 Similarly, most of the young female abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks (65.1%) and private housing (24.2%).

Employment status

3.11 More than half (56.1%) of the psychotropic substance abusers were employed, either as full-time workers or casual/part-time workers, while a large proportion (37.0%) of them were unemployed.

3.12 For young female abusers, the proportion of persons who were unemployed (40.8%), was greater than those employed (32.1%). It was noted that about one-quarter (23.7%) of these drug abusers were students.

Previous conviction

3.13 Only 30.4% of psychotropic substance abusers had no previous convictions. Of those previously convicted, most were involved in both drug-related and other offences.

3.14 About 70% of young female abusers had no previous convictions and most of those who were previously convicted had committed offences not involving in drugs.

Drug abuse characteristics

Type of drug abused

3.15 Of the reported psychotropic substance abusers, 38.8% had abused heroin, 38.0% cannabis, 24.3% triazolam, 24.1% methylamphetamine (ice) and 13.0% cough medicine. Only a small proportion had abused flunitrazepam (3.6%) and MDMA (Ecstasy) (1.9%).

3.16 Nearly half (49.0%) of the young female abusers were found to have abused methylamphetamine (ice) and a significant proportion had abused such drugs as cannabis (34.8%), heroin (18.5%) and organic solvent (14.6%). It was noted that about 5% of young female abusers had abused MDMA (Ecstasy).

Reason for current drug use

3.17 Peer influence (47.3%) was the main reason cited by psychotropic substance abusers for current drug use, followed by curiosity (39.9%), to avoid discomfort of its absence (31.9%) and to seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction (31.5%).

3.18 Over 60% of young female abusers claimed they were under peer influence to take drugs. Other common reasons reported for drug use were relief of boredom (47.7%), curiosity (43.8%) and to seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction (37.0%).

Age of first abuse

3.19 Over 70% of psychotropic substance abusers started abusing drugs at the age of 19 or below. The mean age of first abuse for psychotropic substance abusers was 17.9.

3.20 For young female abusers, more than half (54.9%) of them started drug abuse at the age between 13 and 15. The mean age of first abuse for young female abusers was 14.7.

Duration of drug use

3.21 Nearly half (49.2%) of the psychotropic substance abusers had taken drugs for less than 5 years. Some 30% had taken drugs for 10 years or more. The average duration of drug use for these drug abusers was 8.5 years.

3.22 For young female abusers, 62.2% had taken drugs for less than 3 years. The average duration of drug use for this group of drug abusers was 2.2 years.

Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse

3.23 Of the reported psychotropic substance abusers, more than half (53.0%) spent between \$100 - \$299 a day on drugs. On average, they spent \$184.6 daily on drugs.

3.24 For young female abusers, more than half (54.3%) spent less than \$100 a day on drugs. Their average daily expenditure on drugs was \$132.2.

Report history to the CRDA

Time since first reported

3.25 Two-thirds of psychotropic substance abusers had been reported to the CRDA more than once. Of these persons, 18.4% had been reported for less than 1 year since submission of their first report, 36.3% for 1 - 4 years, 12.3% for 5 - 9 years and 32.9% for 10 years or more. The average length of period since they had been first reported to the CRDA was 7.2 years.

3.26 For young female abusers, about half of them had been reported to the CRDA more than once. Among them, 52.0% had their first report submitted less than 1 year ago, 42.7% had been reported for 1 - 4 years and 5.3% for 5 - 9 years. The average length of period since they had been first reported to the CRDA was 1.4 years.

Agency ever contacted

3.27 The majority of psychotropic substance abusers were reported by the Police (76.8%). Other common reporting agencies were CSD (45.2%), methadone clinics (35.5%), outreaching and youth services teams (23.4%) and

SARDA (21.8%).

3.28 For young female abusers, most of them were reported by the outreaching and youth services teams (63.9%). The Police (36.1%) and CSD (16.6%) were also the common reporting agencies of these drug abusers.

Agency first contacted

3.29 More than half (52.9%) of the psychotropic substance abusers were reported to the CRDA for the first time by the Police. Other agencies that substance abusers were commonly first reported were the outreaching and youth services teams (21.3%) and methadone clinics (14.1%).

3.30 Of the young female abusers, over 60% had been first reported by the outreaching and youth services teams. The Police (28.8%) was the next agency that these drug abusers were first reported most.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE DRUG ABUSERS TAKING THE MAJOR TYPES OF PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

Distribution by type of drugs abused

4.1 Of the 3 486 reported drug abusers under study, 51.2% (1 785) took only one type of psychotropic substances in 1997. The following shows the distribution of these single drug abusers by major type of drug abused :

<u>Type of drug abused</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Cannabis	866	48.5
Methylamphetamine (ice)	421	23.6
Cough medicine	279	15.6
Organic solvent	85	4.8
Other drugs	134	7.5
Total	1 785	100.0

Analyses in the ensuing paragraphs confine to four groups of single drug abusers taking the commonly abused psychotropic substances, namely cannabis, methylamphetamine, cough medicine and organic solvent. These persons constituted 92.5% of the total single drug abusers in this study.

Personal characteristics

Sex and age

4.2 Males more than females were more likely to abuse psychotropic substances. About 90% of the abusers of cannabis or cough medicine were males. The corresponding percentages for the abusers of methylamphetamine or organic solvent were 67.2% and 65.9% respectively.

4.3 Except for organic solvent abusers, about 66% to 74% of psychotropic substance abusers were in the age bracket 16 - 25. For organic solvent abusers, a great majority (98.8%) of them were aged under 21.

4.4 Compared the mean age among the four groups of single drug abusers, organic solvent abusers (15.6) were found to be younger than abusers

in the other three groups (21.7 to 22.6).

Marital status

4.5 The four groups of psychotropic substance abusers exhibited similar distribution pattern of their marital status, with more than 85% never married.

Educational attainment

4.6 Of the four groups of psychotropic substance abusers, more than 90% had attained lower secondary or above standard.

District of residence

4.7 Analysed by district of residence, Kwun Tong (9.0%) was the district with the greatest proportion of persons taking cannabis while Central & Western (11.5%) was the district with the greatest proportion of persons taking methylamphetamine. Both Kwun Tong (11.1%) and Tai Po (11.1%) were the districts of residence with the greatest proportion of persons taking cough medicine. As for those persons taking organic solvent, most of them were known to live in North (38.6%) and Tai Po (37.3%).

Type of living quarters

4.8 The percentage distribution by type of living quarters among the four groups of psychotropic substance abusers was quite similar. The majority of these drug abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks. Comparatively, the percentage (87.7%) of organic solvent abusers living in public and aided rental blocks was significantly higher than those (50.4% - 64.9%) for the other three groups. It was noted that a large proportion (40.1%) of methylamphetamine abusers lived in private housing, as compared with 6.2% to 29.0% for those in the other three groups.

Employment status

4.9 Except for those persons taking organic solvent, more than half of the psychotropic substance abusers in the other three groups were employed, either as full-time workers or casual/part-time workers. It was noted that nearly half (47.6%) of the organic solvent abusers were students and 31.0% of them were unemployed, as against 21.4% employed.

Previous conviction

4.10 Except for those persons taking organic solvent, more than half of the psychotropic substance abusers in the other three groups had previous conviction records. For organic solvent abusers, less than 30% of them were previously convicted. Among those drug abusers who were previously convicted, most were not involved in drug-related offences.

Drug abuse characteristics

Reason for current drug use

4.11 Peer influence was the main reason reported by different groups of psychotropic substance abusers for current drug use. Other commonly reported reasons included relief of boredom, curiosity and to seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction.

Age of first abuse

4.12 About 70% of the abusers of cannabis, methylamphetamine or cough medicine took drugs for the first time at the age between 15 and 24. Of those persons taking organic solvent, 85.2% first took drugs under the age of 15. The mean age of first abuse for this group of drug abusers (13.4) was lower than those for the other three groups (18.7 to 20.0).

Duration of drug use

4.13 For abusers of cannabis, methylamphetamine or cough medicine, most (47.3% to 65.2%) had taken drugs for less than 3 years. About 14% to 25% of these drug abusers had taken drugs for 7 years or more. In respect of those persons taking organic solvent, three-quarters of them had taken drugs for 1 - 4 years and none of them had taken drugs for longer than 6 years. The

average duration of drug use for cough medicine abusers (4.0 years) was longer than those for the other three groups of drug abusers, ranging from 2.6 years to 3.2 years.

Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse

4.14 Except for methylamphetamine abusers, the majority of psychotropic substance abusers spent less than \$100 a day on drugs. For methylamphetamine abusers, more than half of them spent \$100 - \$299 daily on drugs. In comparison, organic solvent abusers spent least money on drugs while methylamphetamine abusers spent most money on drugs. The average daily expenditure on drugs was \$8.5 for the former and \$149.9 for the latter.

Reporting history to the CRDA

Time since first reported

4.15 For abusers of methylamphetamine or organic solvent, more than half of them had been reported to the CRDA more than once. Among them, more than half had their first report submitted less than 2 years ago. As regards abusers of cannabis or cough medicine, less than half of them had been reported to the CRDA more than once. Of these abusers, about 60% had their first report submitted less than 3 years ago. The average length of period since submission of the first report was 1.1 years for organic solvent abusers, as compared with 2.4 years to 3.5 years for the other three groups of drug abusers.

Other drugs abused previously

4.16 Among the four groups of psychotropic substance abusers, about 7% to 33% had previously abused drugs other than those they took in 1997. Of these drugs, the most commonly abused were heroin and cannabis.

Agency ever contacted

4.17 Except for organic solvent abusers, the majority of psychotropic substance abusers were reported by the Police. The outreaching and youth service teams (over 20%) were another common agency that reported drug abusers. For organic solvent abusers, the agency that they were reported most was the outreaching and youth services teams (92.9%).

Agency first contacted

4.18 Except those persons taking organic solvent, most of the different groups of psychotropic substance abusers, ranging from 49.8% to 74.1%, were first identified by the Police. The next agency that these drug abusers were first commonly reported was the outreaching and youth services teams (21.0% to 28.5%). For organic solvent abusers, a great majority (91.8%) of them had been first reported by the outreaching and youth services teams.

Comparison of the characteristics among the different groups of psychotropic substance abusers

Similar characteristics

4.19 Among the four groups of psychotropic substance abusers, some characteristics were found to be similar and these are given below :

- a) The majority of psychotropic substance abusers were males, ranging from 65.9 % to 89.6%.
- b) Over 85% of psychotropic substance abusers were never married.
- c) A great majority (over 90%) of psychotropic substance abusers had received lower secondary or above education.
- d) More substance abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks (50.4% to 87.7%) than in private housing (6.2% to 40.1%).
- e) The main reason reported by psychotropic substance abusers for their current drug use was peer influence (48.8% to 82.1%).
- f) A smaller proportion (7.1% to 32.5%) of psychotropic substance abusers had previously abused drugs other than those they took in 1997. Among these drugs, the most commonly abused were heroin and cannabis.

Different characteristics

4.20 Some of the characteristics found to be different among the different groups of the psychotropic substance abusers are given below :

- a) Persons taking organic solvent were relatively younger, with 98.8% aged under 21 against 40.9% to 50.8% for the other three groups of drug abusers.
- b) Kwun Tong was the district of residence with the greatest proportion of reported persons taking cannabis while Central & Western was the district for those persons taking methylamphetamine. Both Kwun Tong and Tai Po were the districts of residence with the greatest proportion of reported persons taking cough medicines. As for those persons taking organic solvent, the greatest proportion was found in North.
- c) Except for those persons taking organic solvent, more than half (56.4% to 73.8%) of the psychotropic substance abusers were employed. For organic solvent abusers, less than one-quarter (21.4%) of them were employed. It was noted that approximately half (47.6%) of these persons were students.
- d) More than half of the persons taking cannabis (52.9%), methylamphetamine (59.7%) or cough medicine (54.9%) had previous convictions, as compared with less than 30% for those taking organic solvent.
- e) Persons taking organic solvent started drug abuse earlier than those taking other psychotropic substances. Among the four groups of drug abusers, the mean age of first abuse was lowest (13.4) for organic solvent abusers and highest (20.0) for cannabis abusers.
- f) Persons taking cough medicine were found to have a longer drug use history, with an average duration of drug use for 4.0 years compared with 2.6 years to 3.2 years for the other three groups of drug abusers.
- g) Organic solvent abusers spent less money on drugs than the other three groups of psychotropic substance abusers. The average

daily expenditure on drugs for organic solvent abusers was \$8.5, as compared with \$56.8 to \$149.9 for other psychotropic substance abusers.

- h) Among the psychotropic substance abusers who had reported to the CRDA more than once, more than half of the abusers taking organic solvent (87.0%) or methylamphetamine (52.7%) were found to have reported for less than 2 years since submission of their first report, as compared with less than half for those taking cannabis (46.2%) or cough medicine (37.0%)
- i) The majority of abusers taking cannabis, methylamphetamine or cough medicine, ranging from 58.4% to 79.0%, were reported to the CRDA by the Police. For those taking organic solvent, over 90% of them were reported by the outreaching and youth services teams.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF MULTIPLE DRUG ABUSERS

Distribution by combination of drugs abused

5.1 Among the 3 486 reported drug abusers under study, 48.8% (1 701) took more than one type of drug in 1997. The following shows the distribution of these multiple drug abusers by combination of drugs taken :

<u>Combination of drugs taken</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
1. No. of abusers taking two types of drug	1 429	84.0
<i>Major combinations of drugs taken</i>		
a) Heroin and triazolam (47.0%)		
b) Heroin and methylamphetamine (9.6%)		
c) Methylamphetamine and cannabis (8.7%)		
d) Heroin and cannabis (8.0%)		
e) Heroin and midazolam (7.7%)		
2. No. of abusers taking three types of drug	226	13.3
<i>Major combinations of drugs taken</i>		
a) Heroin, triazolam and midazolam (25.2%)		
b) Heroin, methylamphetamine and cannabis (11.5%)		
c) Heroin, flunitrazepam and triazolam (4.9%)		
d) Methylamphetamine, cannabis and cough medicine (3.5%)		
e) Heroin, cannabis and cough medicine (3.1%)		

3. No. of abusers taking four types of drug	38	2.2
4. No. of abusers taking five or more types of drug	8	0.5
Total	1 701	100.0

5.2 More than 80% of multiple drug abusers took two types of drug in 1997. The most common drugs taken in combination by these drug abusers were heroin and triazolam. It was noted that less than 1% of multiple drug abusers took five types of drug or more.

Personal characteristics

Sex and age

5.3 Of the multiple drug abusers, over 85% were males. Analysed by age group, slightly more than one-quarter were aged under 21. For those aged 21 and over, more than 60% were in the age bracket 21 - 35. The mean age of the multiple drug abusers was 29.1.

Marital status and educational attainment

5.4 Among the multiple drug abusers, about three-quarters were never married and more than two-thirds had received lower secondary or above education.

District of residence

5.5 Analysed by district of residence, the greatest proportion of multiple drug abusers was found in Kwun Tong (19.9%), followed by Wong Tai Sin (10.8%) and Sham Shui Po (9.1%).

Type of living quarters

5.6 About 70% of multiple drug abusers were found to live in public and aided rental blocks, as compared with 21.1% in private housing.

Employment status

5.7 Among the multiple drug abusers, more were unemployed (49.9%) than employed (46.4%), either as full-time workers or casual/part-time workers.

Previous conviction

5.8 85.1% of multiple drug abusers were found to have previous convictions. Among them, more than 60% were involved in both drug-related and other offences.

Drug abuse characteristics

Reason for current drug use

5.9 The most common reasons reported by multiple drug abusers for current drug use were curiosity (44.7%), to avoid discomfort of its absence (43.5%), peer influence (42.6%) and to seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction (32.9%).

Age of first abuse

5.10 More than half (51.6%) of the multiple drug abusers took drugs for the first time at the age between 15 - 19. About one-third started abusing drugs under 15. The mean age of first abuse for multiple drug abusers was 16.5.

Duration of drug use

5.11 Over half (52.8%) of the multiple drug abusers had taken drugs for 10 years or more. The average duration of drug use for multiple drug abusers was 13.3 years.

Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse

5.12 It was found that 60.0% of multiple drug abusers spent between \$100 - \$299 a day on drugs. The average daily expenditure on drug abuse for multiple drug abusers was \$209.4.

Reporting history to the CRDA

Time since first reported

5.13 Over 90% of multiple drug abusers had been reported to the CRDA more than once. Among them, 13.4% had their first report submitted less than 1 year ago, 28.0% had theirs submitted 1 - 4 years ago, 12.8% 5 - 9 years ago and 45.8% 10 years or more ago. The average length of period since the multiple drug abusers had been first reported to the CRDA was 9.2 years.

Agency ever contacted

5.14 The majority of multiple drug abusers were reported by the Police, CSD and methadone clinics. The proportions of drug abusers reported by these agencies were respectively 84.5%, 73.8% and 66.9%. It was noted that a large proportion (41.0%) of multiple drug abusers had been reported by the SARDA for treatment.

Agency first contacted

5.15 The agency that multiple drug abusers had been first reported most was the Police (43.6%), followed by methadone clinics (26.4%) and the outreaching and youth services teams (15.7%).

6. COMPARISON OF THE CHARACTERISTICS BETWEEN SINGLE DRUG ABUSERS AND MULTIPLE DRUG ABUSERS

6.1 In comparison of the characteristics between single and multiple drug abusers, some similarities were detected as follows :

- a) The majority of drug abusers were male and never married.
- b) More than two-thirds of drug abusers had received lower secondary or above education, but the proportion of those receiving less education (primary or lower standard) was higher for multiple drug abusers (31.9%) than single drug abusers (7.4%).
- c) Kwun Tong was the district of residence with the greatest proportion of drug abusers. More than half of the drug abusers were known to live in public and aided rental blocks.
- d) Most of the drug abusers took drugs for the first time at the age between 15 - 19.
- e) The majority of drug abusers were reported by the Police. For multiple drug abusers, it was noted that besides the Police (84.5%), most of them were also reported by the CSD (73.8%) and methadone clinics (66.9%).

6.2 On the other hand, there were differences in the characteristics between the two categories of drug abusers, as given below :

- a) Single drug abusers were relatively younger, with 46.7% aged under 21 compared with 26.3% for multiple drug abusers.
- b) About two-thirds of single drug abusers were employed while less than half of the multiple drug abusers were employed.

Statistics on Psychotropic Substance Abusers Reported in 1997

- c) Proportionally more single drug abusers (45.5%) were found to have no previous convictions than multiple drug abusers (14.9%). Among those who were previously convicted, more multiple drug abusers were involved in drug-related offences than single drug abusers.
- d) The main reason for single drug abusers to take drugs was peer influence (56.1%) while the main reasons for multiple drug abusers included curiosity (44.7%), avoid discomfort of its absence (43.5%) and peer influence (42.6%).
- e) Multiple drug abusers were found to have a longer duration of drug use, with 52.8% having taken drugs for ten years or more in comparison with 8.5% for single drug abusers.
- f) Comparatively, multiple drug abusers spent more money on drugs. 60.0% of them spent about \$100 - \$299 a day on drugs while 63.3% of single drug abusers spent less than \$100 per day.
- g) Single drug abusers were found to have a shorter time lag since they had been first reported to the CRDA, with, on average, a period of 3.3 years compared with 9.2 years for multiple drug abusers.

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I. Personal and Drug Abuse Characteristics						
(a) Sex						
Male	N.A.	N.A.	978	76.4	2935	84.2
Female	302	100.0	302	23.6	551	15.8
Total	302	100.0	1280	100.0	3486	100.0
(b1) Age group (under 21)						
Under 15	46	15.2	99	7.7		
15	50	16.6	165	12.9		
16	57	18.9	194	15.2		
17	48	15.9	218	17.0		
18	30	9.9	197	15.4		
19	35	11.6	192	15.0		
20	36	11.9	215	16.8		
Total	302	100.0	1280	100.0		
Mean age	16.6		17.3			
(b2) Age group (all ages)						
Under 16					264	7.6
16 - 20					1016	29.1
21 - 25					831	23.8
26 - 30					477	13.7
31 - 35					361	10.4
36 - 40					220	6.3
41 - 45					194	5.6
46 - 50					82	2.4
51 & over					41	1.2
Total					3486	100.0
Mean age					25.6	

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(c) Marital status						
Never married	281	94.0	1229	96.7	2838	81.8
Married/Cohabiting	16	5.4	39	3.1	473	13.6
Widowed	-	-	-	-	5	0.1
Divorced/Separated	2	0.7	3	0.2	155	4.5
Total	299	100.0	1271	100.0	3471	100.0
(d) Educational attainment						
No schooling/Kindergarten	-	-	4	0.3	44	1.3
Primary	11	3.7	57	4.5	623	18.0
Lower secondary	224	75.7	1014	79.9	2219	64.3
Upper secondary	60	20.3	193	15.2	538	15.6
Tertiary	1	0.3	1	0.1	28	0.8
Total	296	100.0	1269	100.0	3452	100.0
(e) District of residence						
<i>Hong Kong</i>						
Central & Western	13	4.3	67	5.4	118	3.5
Wan Chai	5	1.7	13	1.0	57	1.7
Eastern	6	2.0	35	2.8	223	6.5
Southern	18	6.0	111	8.9	270	7.9
<i>Kowloon</i>						
Yau Tsim Mong	9	3.0	39	3.1	167	4.9
Sham Shui Po	14	4.7	43	3.5	231	6.8
Kowloon City	18	6.0	37	3.0	146	4.3
Wong Tai Sin	8	2.7	57	4.6	291	8.5
Kwun Tong	31	10.4	127	10.2	488	14.3

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
<i>New Territories and Islands</i>						
Kwai Tsing	7	2.3	65	5.2	168	4.9
Tsuen Wan	4	1.3	27	2.2	77	2.3
Tuen Mun	20	6.7	64	5.2	161	4.7
Yuen Long	34	11.4	106	8.5	202	5.9
North	31	10.4	134	10.8	178	5.2
Tai Po	65	21.7	202	16.3	293	8.6
Sha Tin	8	2.7	58	4.7	214	6.3
Sai Kung	7	2.3	42	3.4	101	3.0
Islands	1	0.3	15	1.2	30	0.9
Total	299	100.0	1242	100.0	3415	100.0
(f) Type of living quarters						
Public & aided rental blocks	194	65.1	814	65.8	2142	62.9
Public sector home ownership estates	13	4.4	55	4.4	131	3.8
Private housing	72	24.2	289	23.4	870	25.6
Housing Authority temporary housing	-	-	5	0.4	19	0.6
Squatter huts	3	1.0	9	0.7	26	0.8
Other housing	16	5.4	65	5.3	215	6.3
Total	298	100.0	1237	100.0	3403	100.0
(g) Employment status						
Full-time worker	65	21.7	499	39.5	1708	49.7
Casual/Part-time worker	31	10.4	94	7.4	220	6.4
Worker in illicit trade	-	-	7	0.6	10	0.3
Unemployed	122	40.8	460	36.4	1274	37.0
Home-maker	1	0.3	1	0.1	17	0.5
Student	71	23.7	182	14.4	185	5.4
Retired	-	-	-	-	3	0.1
Others	9	3.0	21	1.7	22	0.6
Total	299	100.0	1264	100.0	3439	100.0

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(h) Previous conviction						
Yes, drug-related offences	26	9.3	108	9.1	464	13.8
Yes, other offences	43	15.4	348	29.4	688	20.4
Yes, both drug-related and other offences	11	3.9	113	9.6	1176	34.9
Yes, offences unknown	4	1.4	9	0.8	16	0.5
No	196	70.0	605	51.1	1024	30.4
Total	280	100.0	1183	100.0	3368	100.0
(i) Type of drug abused *						
Heroin	56	18.5	250	19.5	1352	38.8
Physeptone/Methadone	1	0.3	4	0.3	16	0.5
Cocaine	-	-	2	0.2	15	0.4
MDMA	16	5.3	48	3.8	65	1.9
Methylamphetamine	148	49.0	415	32.4	839	24.1
Methaqualone	2	0.7	6	0.5	14	0.4
Diazepam	2	0.7	6	0.5	29	0.8
Flunitrazepam	10	3.3	46	3.6	125	3.6
Triazolam	16	5.3	64	5.0	846	24.3
Midazolam	1	0.3	11	0.9	194	5.6
Cannabis	105	34.8	628	49.1	1324	38.0
Cough medicine	23	7.6	213	16.6	453	13.0
Organic solvent	44	14.6	138	10.8	139	4.0
Overall	302	100.0	1280	100.0	3486	100.0

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(j) Reported reason for current drug use *						
Curiosity	103	43.8	352	37.7	930	39.9
Peer influence/To identify with peers	149	63.4	672	72.0	1104	47.3
Relief of boredom/Depression/Anxiety	112	47.7	365	39.1	639	27.4
For self-medication	3	1.3	12	1.3	71	3.0
Avoid discomfort of its absence	28	11.9	151	16.2	744	31.9
To seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction	87	37.0	279	29.9	734	31.5
Under influence of the partner	10	4.3	16	1.7	22	0.9
Other reasons	11	4.7	36	3.9	66	2.8
Overall	235	100.0	933	100.0	2332	100.0
(k1) Age of first abuse (under 21)						
Under 13	31	13.3	87	8.2		
13	42	18.0	137	13.0		
14	46	19.7	208	19.7		
15	40	17.2	178	16.9		
16	19	8.2	148	14.0		
17	29	12.4	114	10.8		
18	12	5.2	79	7.5		
19	9	3.9	57	5.4		
20	5	2.1	48	4.5		
Total	233	100.0	1056	100.0		
Mean age of first abuse	14.7		15.3			

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(k2) Age of first abuse (all ages)						
Under 15					803	25.0
15 - 19					1491	46.3
20 - 24					599	18.6
25 - 29					211	6.6
30 - 34					82	2.5
35 - 39					18	0.6
40 & over					14	0.4
Total					3218	100.0
Mean age of first abuse					17.9	
(l) Duration of drug use						
Less than 1 year	49	21.0	232	22.0	480	14.9
1 - 2 years	96	41.2	371	35.1	650	20.2
3 - 4 years	55	23.6	295	27.9	452	14.0
5 - 6 years	25	10.7	123	11.6	314	9.8
7 - 9 years	8	3.4	34	3.2	320	9.9
10 - 14 years	-	-	1	0.1	231	7.2
15 - 19 years	-	-	-	-	317	9.9
20 - 29 years	-	-	-	-	299	9.3
30 years or more	-	-	-	-	155	4.8
Total	233	100.0	1056	100.0	3218	100.0
Average duration (years)	2.2		2.3		8.5	

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(m) Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse (\$)						
Under 50	35	38.0	168	34.9	238	14.2
50 - 99	15	16.3	92	19.1	214	12.8
100 - 199	18	19.6	111	23.0	509	30.3
200 - 299	9	9.8	49	10.2	381	22.7
300 - 399	8	8.7	41	8.5	206	12.3
400 - 499	2	2.2	9	1.9	61	3.6
500 and over	5	5.4	12	2.5	69	4.1
Total	92	100.0	482	100.0	1678	100.0
Average expenditure (\$)	132.2		121.4		184.6	
II. Reporting History to the CRDA						
(n) Time since first reported #						
Less than 1 year	78	52.0	296	42.0	427	18.4
1 - less than 2 years	35	23.3	172	24.4	271	11.7
2 - less than 3 years	14	9.3	102	14.5	198	8.5
3 - less than 4 years	12	8.0	82	11.6	208	9.0
4 - less than 5 years	3	2.0	33	4.7	164	7.1
5 - less than 10 years	8	5.3	20	2.8	285	12.3
10 - less than 20 years	-	-	-	-	582	25.1
20 years or more	-	-	-	-	181	7.8
Total	150	100.0	705	100.0	2316	100.0
Mean time lag (years)	1.4		1.6		7.2	

Appendix I

Variables under study	Aged under 21				All ages	
	Female		Both sexes		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
(o) Agency ever contacted *						
Police	109	36.1	612	47.8	2676	76.8
CSD	50	16.6	284	22.2	1576	45.2
Methadone clinics	24	7.9	143	11.2	1237	35.5
SARDA	13	4.3	55	4.3	760	21.8
SRO	-	-	3	0.2	284	8.1
PS33	6	2.0	31	2.4	118	3.4
St. Stephen's Society	2	0.7	13	1.0	232	6.7
Wu Oi Christian Centre	11	3.6	38	3.0	286	8.2
Other treatment agencies	13	4.3	83	6.5	308	8.8
SWD	13	4.3	75	5.9	354	10.2
Outreaching and youth services	193	63.9	693	54.1	815	23.4
Hospital and clinics	6	2.0	21	1.6	148	4.2
Overall	302	100.0	1280	100.0	3486	100.0
(p) Agency first contacted						
Police	87	28.8	482	37.7	1845	52.9
CSD	5	1.7	37	2.9	124	3.6
Methadone clinics	6	2.0	37	2.9	492	14.1
SARDA	1	0.3	9	0.7	99	2.8
SRO	-	-	1	0.1	10	0.3
PS33	3	1.0	13	1.0	51	1.5
St. Stephen's Society	1	0.3	2	0.2	7	0.2
Wu Oi Christian Centre	3	1.0	5	0.4	22	0.6
Other treatment agencies	3	1.0	16	1.3	41	1.2
SWD	2	0.7	11	0.9	23	0.7
Outreaching and youth services	188	62.3	660	51.6	743	21.3
Hospital and clinics	3	1.0	7	0.5	29	0.8
Total	302	100.0	1280	100.0	3486	100.0

Notes : All figures are based on reports with the specific characteristic known.

CSD : Correctional Services Department

SARDA : The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers

SRO : The Society for the Rehabilitation of Offenders, Hong Kong

PS33 : Hong Kong Christian Service PS33

SWD : Social Welfare Department

N.A. : Not applicable

* : Multiple answers are allowed.

: Psychotropic substance abusers who had been reported to the CRDA only once are excluded.

- : Nil

Appendix II

Statistics on Single Drug Abusers Taking the Major Types of Psychotropic Substances in 1997

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I. Personal and Drug Abuse Characteristics								
(a) Sex								
Male	776	89.6	283	67.2	249	89.2	56	65.9
Female	90	10.4	138	32.8	30	10.8	29	34.1
Total	866	100.0	421	100.0	279	100.0	85	100.0
(b) Age group								
Under 16	74	8.5	42	10.0	10	3.6	49	57.6
16 - 20	307	35.5	172	40.9	104	37.3	35	41.2
21 - 25	261	30.1	122	29.0	102	36.6	-	-
26 - 30	131	15.1	48	11.4	46	16.5	-	-
31 - 35	63	7.3	24	5.7	10	3.6	1	1.2
36 - 40	22	2.5	6	1.4	2	0.7	-	-
41 - 45	5	0.6	7	1.7	2	0.7	-	-
46 - 50	1	0.1	-	-	2	0.7	-	-
51 & over	2	0.2	-	-	1	0.4	-	-
Total	866	100.0	421	100.0	279	100.0	85	100.0
Mean age	22.5		21.7		22.6		15.6	
(c) Marital status								
Never married	758	87.8	363	86.2	252	91.0	83	97.6
Married/Cohabiting	86	10.0	50	11.9	22	7.9	2	2.4
Divorced/Separated	19	2.2	8	1.9	3	1.1	-	-
Total	863	100.0	421	100.0	277	100.0	85	100.0

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(d) Educational attainment								
No schooling/Kindergarten	6	0.7	2	0.5	2	0.7	-	-
Primary	70	8.1	18	4.4	9	3.3	1	1.2
Lower secondary	575	66.6	292	70.9	199	72.6	79	92.9
Upper secondary	199	23.1	93	22.6	61	22.3	5	5.9
Tertiary	13	1.5	7	1.7	3	1.1	-	-
Total	863	100.0	412	100.0	274	100.0	85	100.0
(e) District of residence								
<i>Hong Kong</i>								
Central & Western								
Wan Chai	19	2.3	47	11.5	12	4.4	-	-
Eastern	25	3.0	7	1.7	4	1.5	-	-
Southern	36	4.3	27	6.6	21	7.8	-	-
<i>Kowloon</i>	62	7.4	31	7.6	20	7.4	4	4.8
Yau Tsim Mong	56	6.7	33	8.0	8	3.0	-	-
Sham Shui Po	43	5.1	19	4.6	9	3.3	-	-
Kowloon City	42	5.0	29	7.1	10	3.7	3	3.6
Wong Tai Sin	58	6.9	18	4.4	18	6.7	-	-
Kwun Tong	76	9.0	25	6.1	30	11.1	-	-
<i>New Territories and Islands</i>								
Kwai Tsing	70	8.3	18	4.4	16	5.9	-	-
Tsuen Wan	26	3.1	7	1.7	7	2.6	3	3.6
Tuen Mun	54	6.4	14	3.4	21	7.8	3	3.6
Yuen Long	67	8.0	22	5.4	18	6.7	6	7.2
North	49	5.8	24	5.9	18	6.7	32	38.6
Tai Po	44	5.2	40	9.8	30	11.1	31	37.3
Sha Tin	54	6.4	33	8.0	23	8.5	1	1.2
Sai Kung	46	5.5	9	2.2	3	1.1	-	-
Islands	13	1.5	7	1.7	2	0.7	-	-
Total	840	100.0	410	100.0	270	100.0	83	100.0

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(f) Type of living quarters								
Public & aided rental blocks	455	53.8	206	50.4	176	64.9	71	87.7
Public sector home ownership estates	48	5.7	11	2.7	9	3.3	3	3.7
Private housing	245	29.0	164	40.1	71	26.2	5	6.2
Housing Authority temporary housing	4	0.5	2	0.5	1	0.4	-	-
Squatter huts	9	1.1	5	1.2	-	-	-	-
Other housing	85	10.0	21	5.1	14	5.2	2	2.5
Total	846	100.0	409	100.0	271	100.0	81	100.0
(g) Employment status								
Full-time worker	610	70.6	208	50.4	162	59.3	14	16.7
Casual/Part-time worker	28	3.2	25	6.1	12	4.4	4	4.8
Worker in illicit trade	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.4	-	-
Unemployed	159	18.4	139	33.7	83	30.4	26	31.0
Home-maker	-	-	1	0.2	2	0.7	-	-
Student	62	7.2	32	7.7	10	3.7	40	47.6
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	3	0.3	6	1.5	3	1.1	-	-
Total	864	100.0	413	100.0	273	100.0	84	100.0
(h) Previous conviction								
Yes, drug-related offences	53	6.3	53	13.4	31	11.6	-	-
Yes, other offences	233	27.7	104	26.3	77	28.7	20	26.7
Yes, both drug-related and other offences	154	18.3	78	19.7	35	13.1	-	-
Yes, offences unknown	4	0.5	1	0.3	4	1.5	-	-
No	396	47.1	159	40.3	121	45.1	55	73.3
Total	840	100.0	395	100.0	268	100.0	75	100.0

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(i) Reported reason for current drug use *								
Curiosity	93	31.3	85	37.8	48	28.9	13	15.5
Peer influence/To identify with peers	166	55.9	119	52.9	81	48.8	69	82.1
Relief of boredom/Depression/Anxiety	81	27.3	70	31.1	73	44.0	47	56.0
For self-medication	2	0.7	5	2.2	12	7.2	2	2.4
Avoid discomfort of its absence	12	4.0	15	6.7	49	29.5	6	7.1
To seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction	76	25.6	74	32.9	46	27.7	24	28.6
Under influence of the partner	2	0.7	7	3.1	-	-	1	1.2
Other reasons	3	1.0	9	4.0	10	6.0	2	2.4
Overall	297	100.0	225	100.0	166	100.0	84	100.0
(j) Age of first abuse								
Under 15	96	12.6	66	17.7	44	16.9	52	85.2
15 - 19	303	39.8	161	43.2	121	46.5	8	13.1
20 - 24	215	28.3	96	25.7	64	24.6	-	-
25 - 29	96	12.6	28	7.5	23	8.8	-	-
30 - 34	40	5.3	17	4.6	5	1.9	-	-
35 - 39	10	1.3	2	0.5	-	-	1	1.6
40 & over	1	0.1	3	0.8	3	1.2	-	-
Total	761	100.0	373	100.0	260	100.0	61	100.0
Mean age of first abuse	20.0		19.1		18.7		13.4	

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(k) Duration of drug use								
Less than 1 year	242	31.8	100	26.8	55	21.2	7	11.5
1 - 2 years	254	33.4	113	30.3	68	26.2	23	37.7
3 - 4 years	107	14.1	60	16.1	49	18.8	23	37.7
5 - 6 years	52	6.8	39	10.5	23	8.8	8	13.1
7 - 9 years	54	7.1	34	9.1	44	16.9	-	-
10 - 14 years	31	4.1	18	4.8	17	6.5	-	-
15 - 19 years	14	1.8	6	1.6	3	1.2	-	-
20 - 29 years	4	0.5	3	0.8	-	-	-	-
30 years or more	3	0.4	-	-	1	0.4	-	-
Total	761	100.0	373	100.0	260	100.0	61	100.0
Average duration (years)	2.9		3.2		4.0		2.6	
(l) Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse (\$)								
Under 50	37	42.5	14	12.6	57	50.9	26	100.0
50 - 99	27	31.0	19	17.1	36	32.1	-	-
100 - 199	12	13.8	38	34.2	17	15.2	-	-
200 - 299	2	2.3	21	18.9	1	0.9	-	-
300 - 399	2	2.3	15	13.5	1	0.9	-	-
400 - 499	3	3.4	2	1.8	-	-	-	-
500 and over	4	4.6	2	1.8	-	-	-	-
Total	87	100.0	111	100.0	112	100.0	26	100.0
Average expenditure (\$)	91.8		149.9		56.8		8.5	

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
II. Reporting History to the CRDA								
(m) Time since first reported #								
Less than 1 year	88	30.1	76	34.5	25	18.5	21	45.7
1 - less than 2 years	47	16.1	40	18.2	25	18.5	19	41.3
2 - less than 3 years	37	12.7	31	14.1	29	21.5	5	10.9
3 - less than 4 years	35	12.0	29	13.2	15	11.1	1	2.2
4 - less than 5 years	24	8.2	22	10.0	15	11.1	-	-
5 - less than 10 years	35	12.0	16	7.3	23	17.0	-	-
10 - less than 20 years	24	8.2	6	2.7	3	2.2	-	-
20 years or more	2	0.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	292	100.0	220	100.0	135	100.0	46	100.0
Mean time lag (years)	3.5		2.4		3.2		1.1	
(n) Type of other drugs abused previously *								
Heroin	60	58.3	85	62.0	26	40.6	2	33.3
Physeptone/Methadone	1	1.0	3	2.2	1	1.6	-	-
Methylamphetamine	12	11.7	N.A.	N.A.	5	7.8	1	16.7
Cocaine	1	1.0	1	0.7	1	1.6	-	-
Methaqualone	1	1.0	6	4.4	5	7.8	1	16.7
Cannabis	N.A.	N.A.	59	43.1	30	46.9	2	33.3
Brotizolam	1	1.0	1	0.7	1	1.6	-	-
Flunitrazepam	19	18.4	15	10.9	10	15.6	1	16.7
Flurazepam	1	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Triazolam	4	3.9	5	3.6	2	3.1	-	-
Cough medicine	23	22.3	17	12.4	N.A.	N.A.	-	-
Organic solvent	-	-	5	3.6	3	4.7	-	-
Midazolam	-	-	1	0.7	1	1.6	N.A.	N.A.
Overall	103	100.0	137	100.0	64	100.0	6	100.0

Appendix II

Variables under study	Cannabis		Methylamphetamine		Cough Medicine		Organic Solvent	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(o) Agency ever contacted *								
Police	684	79.0	296	70.3	163	58.4	1	1.2
CSD	91	10.5	135	32.1	55	19.7	1	1.2
Methadone clinics	25	2.9	33	7.8	15	5.4	-	-
SARDA	17	2.0	19	4.5	15	5.4	-	-
SRO	1	0.1	2	0.5	-	-	-	-
PS33	12	1.4	15	3.6	38	13.6	1	1.2
St. Stephen's Society	1	0.1	7	1.7	2	0.7	-	-
Wu Oi Christian Centre	2	0.2	7	1.7	4	1.4	1	1.2
Other treatment agencies	5	0.6	16	3.8	18	6.5	3	3.5
SWD	25	2.9	28	6.7	10	3.6	-	-
Outreaching and youth services	186	21.5	129	30.6	72	25.8	79	92.9
Hospital and clinics	1	0.1	11	2.6	14	5.0	3	3.5
Overall	866	100.0	421	100.0	279	100.0	85	100.0
(p) Agency first contacted								
Police	642	74.1	249	59.1	139	49.8	-	-
CSD	15	1.7	16	3.8	15	5.4	1	1.2
Methadone clinics	10	1.2	15	3.6	4	1.4	-	-
SARDA	1	0.1	6	1.4	5	1.8	-	-
SRO	1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
PS33	3	0.3	3	0.7	25	9.0	1	1.2
St. Stephen's Society	1	0.1	2	0.5	-	-	-	-
Wu Oi Christian Centre	-	-	3	0.7	-	-	1	1.2
Other treatment agencies	3	0.3	2	0.5	10	3.6	2	2.4
SWD	7	0.8	1	0.2	1	0.4	-	-
Outreaching and youth services	182	21.0	120	28.5	69	24.7	78	91.8
Hospital and clinics	1	0.1	4	1.0	11	3.9	2	2.4
Total	866	100.0	421	100.0	279	100.0	85	100.0

Notes : All figures are based on reports with the specific characteristic known.

CSD : Correctional Services Department

SARDA : The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers

SRO : The Society for the Rehabilitation of Offenders, Hong Kong

PS33 : Hong Kong Christian Service PS33

SWD : Social Welfare Department

N.A. : Not applicable

* : Multiple answers are allowed.

: Psychotropic substance abusers who had been reported to the CRDA only once are excluded.

- : Nil

Statistics on Psychotropic Substance Abusers Reported in 1997 by Type

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
I. Personal and Drug Abuse Characteristics				
(a) Sex				
Male	1473	86.6	1462	81.9
Female	228	13.4	323	18.1
Total	1701	100.0	1785	100.0
(b) Age group				
Under 16	77	4.5	187	10.5
16 - 20	370	21.8	646	36.2
21 - 25	313	18.4	518	29.0
26 - 30	231	13.6	246	13.8
31 - 35	246	14.5	115	6.4
36 - 40	182	10.7	38	2.1
41 - 45	173	10.2	21	1.2
46 - 50	75	4.4	7	0.4
51 & over	34	2.0	7	0.4
Total	1701	100.0	1785	100.0
Mean age	29.1		22.3	
(c) Marital status				
Never married	1281	75.8	1557	87.5
Married/Cohabiting	288	17.0	185	10.4
Widowed	5	0.3	-	-
Divorced/Separated	117	6.9	38	2.1
Total	1691	100.0	1780	100.0

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
(d) Educational attainment				
No schooling/Kindergarten	32	1.9	12	0.7
Primary	505	30.0	118	6.7
Lower secondary	985	58.5	1234	69.8
Upper secondary	159	9.4	379	21.4
Tertiary	4	0.2	24	1.4
Total	1685	100.0	1767	100.0
(e) District of residence				
<i>Hong Kong</i>				
Central & Western	36	2.1	82	4.7
Wan Chai	20	1.2	37	2.1
Eastern	136	8.1	87	5.0
Southern	142	8.4	128	7.4
<i>Kowloon</i>				
Yau Tsim Mong	59	3.5	108	6.2
Sham Shui Po	153	9.1	78	4.5
Kowloon City	56	3.3	90	5.2
Wong Tai Sin	182	10.8	109	6.3
Kwun Tong	334	19.9	154	8.9
<i>New Territories and Islands</i>				
Kwai Tsing	53	3.2	115	6.6
Tsuen Wan	32	1.9	45	2.6
Tuen Mun	61	3.6	100	5.8
Yuen Long	83	4.9	119	6.9
North	45	2.7	133	7.7
Tai Po	144	8.6	149	8.6
Sha Tin	97	5.8	117	6.7
Sai Kung	41	2.4	60	3.5
Islands	7	0.4	23	1.3
Total	1681	100.0	1734	100.0

Appendix III

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
(f) Type of living quarters				
Public & aided rental blocks	1153	69.2	989	56.9
Public sector home ownership estates	56	3.4	75	4.3
Private housing	351	21.1	519	29.9
Housing Authority temporary housing	12	0.7	7	0.4
Squatter huts	11	0.7	15	0.9
Other housing	83	5.0	132	7.6
Total	1666	100.0	1737	100.0
(g) Employment status				
Full-time worker	633	37.8	1075	60.9
Casual/Part-time worker	144	8.6	76	4.3
Worker in illicit trade	4	0.2	6	0.3
Unemployed	834	49.9	440	24.9
Home-maker	12	0.7	5	0.3
Student	34	2.0	151	8.6
Retired	2	0.1	1	0.1
Others	10	0.6	12	0.7
Total	1673	100.0	1766	100.0
(h) Previous conviction				
Yes, drug-related offences	318	19.1	146	8.6
Yes, other offences	219	13.2	469	27.5
Yes, both drug-related and other offences	871	52.4	305	17.9
Yes, offences unknown	6	0.4	10	0.6
No	247	14.9	777	45.5
Total	1661	100.0	1707	100.0

Appendix III

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
(i) Reported reason for current drug use *				
Curiosity	673	44.7	257	31.1
Peer influence/To identify with peers	641	42.6	463	56.1
Relief of boredom/Depression/Anxiety	353	23.4	286	34.6
For self-medication	49	3.3	22	2.7
Avoid discomfort of its absence	655	43.5	89	10.8
To seek euphoria or sensory satisfaction	495	32.9	239	28.9
Under influence of the partner	12	0.8	10	1.2
Other reasons	41	2.7	25	3.0
Overall	1506	100.0	826	100.0
(j) Age of first abuse				
Under 15	529	32.2	274	17.4
15 - 19	849	51.6	642	40.8
20 - 24	191	11.6	408	25.9
25 - 29	53	3.2	158	10.0
30 - 34	16	1.0	66	4.2
35 - 39	4	0.2	14	0.9
40 & over	2	0.1	12	0.8
Total	1644	100.0	1574	100.0
Mean age of first abuse	16.5		19.4	

Appendix III

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
(k) Duration of drug use				
Less than 1 year	44	2.7	436	27.7
1 - 2 years	170	10.3	480	30.5
3 - 4 years	203	12.3	249	15.8
5 - 6 years	182	11.1	132	8.4
7 - 9 years	177	10.8	143	9.1
10 - 14 years	154	9.4	77	4.9
15 - 19 years	282	17.2	35	2.2
20 - 29 years	284	17.3	15	1.0
30 years or more	148	9.0	7	0.4
Total	1644	100.0	1574	100.0
Average duration (years)	13.3		3.5	
(l) Usual daily expenditure on drug abuse (\$)				
Under 50	96	7.3	142	39.2
50 - 99	127	9.7	87	24.0
100 - 199	433	32.9	76	21.0
200 - 299	356	27.1	25	6.9
300 - 399	186	14.1	20	5.5
400 - 499	56	4.3	5	1.4
500 and over	62	4.7	7	1.9
Total	1316	100.0	362	100.0
Average expenditure (\$)	209.4		94.2	

Appendix III

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
II. Reporting History to the CRDA				
(m) Time since first reported #				
Less than 1 year	209	13.4	218	28.7
1 - less than 2 years	131	8.4	140	18.4
2 - less than 3 years	90	5.8	108	14.2
3 - less than 4 years	119	7.6	89	11.7
4 - less than 5 years	96	6.2	68	8.9
5 - less than 10 years	199	12.8	86	11.3
10 - less than 20 years	536	34.4	46	6.1
20 years or more	176	11.3	5	0.7
Total	1556	100.0	760	100.0
Mean time lag (years)	9.2		3.3	
(n) Agency ever contacted *				
Police	1437	84.5	1239	69.4
CSD	1256	73.8	320	17.9
Methadone clinics	1138	66.9	99	5.5
SARDA	697	41.0	63	3.5
SRO	278	16.3	6	0.3
PS33	46	2.7	72	4.0
St. Stephen's Society	221	13.0	11	0.6
Wu Oi Christian Centre	270	15.9	16	0.9
Other treatment agencies	258	15.2	50	2.8
SWD	280	16.5	74	4.1
Outreaching and youth services	321	18.9	494	27.7
Hospital and clinics	110	6.5	38	2.1
Overall	1701	100.0	1785	100.0

Variables under study	Multiple drug abusers		Single drug abusers	
	No.	%	No.	%
(o) Agency first contacted				
Police	742	43.6	1103	61.8
CSD	71	4.2	53	3.0
Methadone clinics	449	26.4	43	2.4
SARDA	84	4.9	15	0.8
SRO	9	0.5	1	0.1
PS33	16	0.9	35	2.0
St. Stephen's Society	4	0.2	3	0.2
Wu Oi Christian Centre	18	1.1	4	0.2
Other treatment agencies	20	1.2	21	1.2
SWD	14	0.8	9	0.5
Outreaching and youth services	267	15.7	476	26.7
Hospital and clinics	7	0.4	22	1.2
Total	1701	100.0	1785	100.0

Notes : All figures are based on reports with the specific characteristic known.

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- : Nil