

Substance Use and the Role of Families:

Results of a Cross-Country Study in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine

Lee, J., Myshakivska, O., Filimonova, N., Pinchuk, I., Yachnik, Y., Chumak, S., Altynbekov, K., Muzafarov, R., Cherchenko, N., Asghar, S., Ali, S. A., Alyana, S. I.



Presented by: Rasha Abi Hana

Background

The International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) is a non-governmental membership organisation that connects and provides knowledge to the global substance use prevention, treatment and recovery support workforce. ISSUP aims to promote high quality, evidence-based and ethical policy and practice. In partnership with its National Chapters in Pakistan, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine, ISSUP undertook a research project on substance use and the role of families at the beginning of 2021. Research has shown that families can play a critical role in influencing individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs). There are a variety of evidence-based approaches that support and strengthen family functioning, but these are not extensively used in low- and middle-income countries.

Methods

Convenience sampling was used to identify the involvement of families in the treatment and recovery process of an individual using substances.

Two online surveys were created:

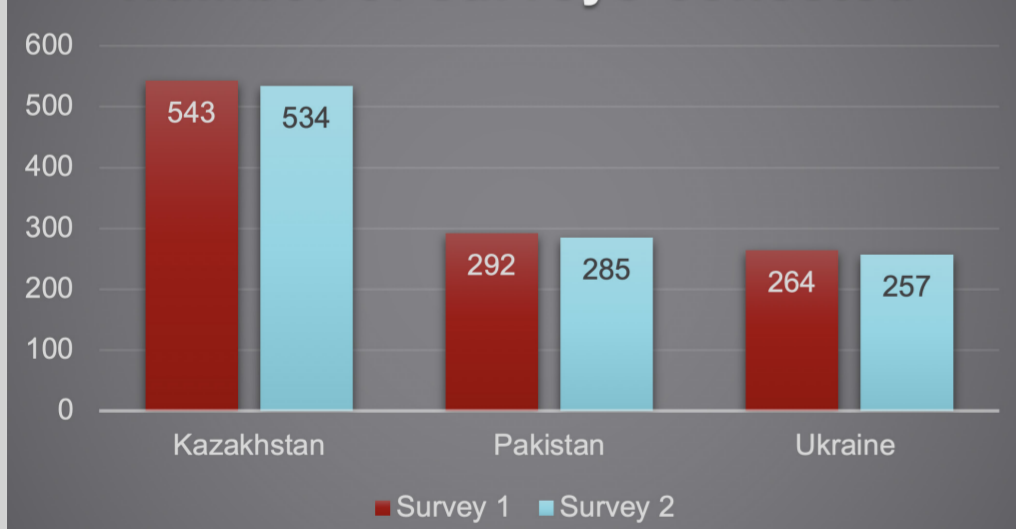
- The first survey focused on the family members of individuals who were using psychoactive substances.
- The second survey on individuals with SUDs.

Aims

- To provide new data from different countries
- To measure the impact of substance use on the family
- To identify family needs
- To obtain information about family attitudes towards the treatment of SUDs
- To evaluate if and what types of interventions are conducted

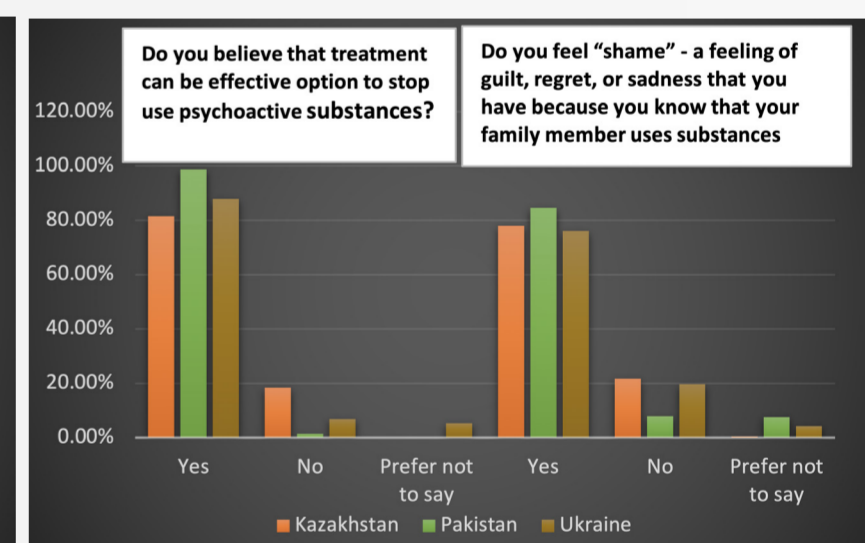
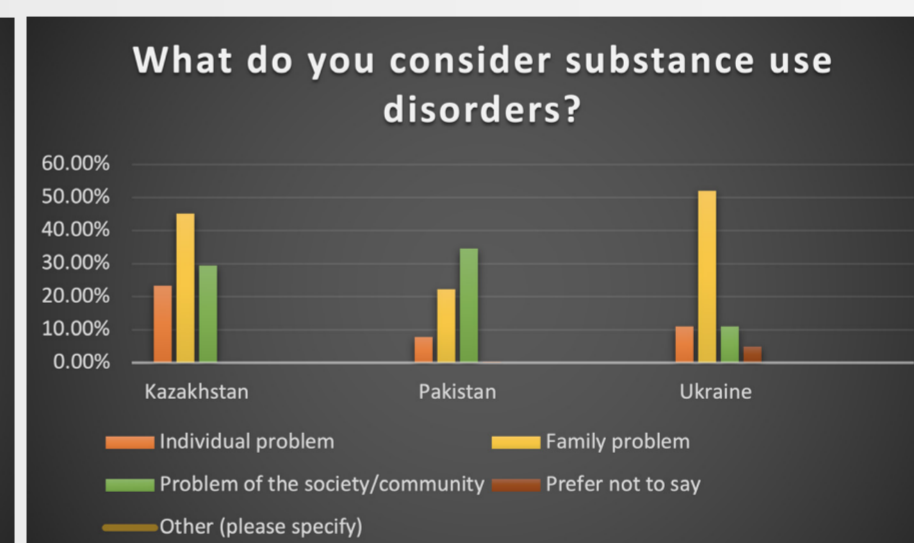
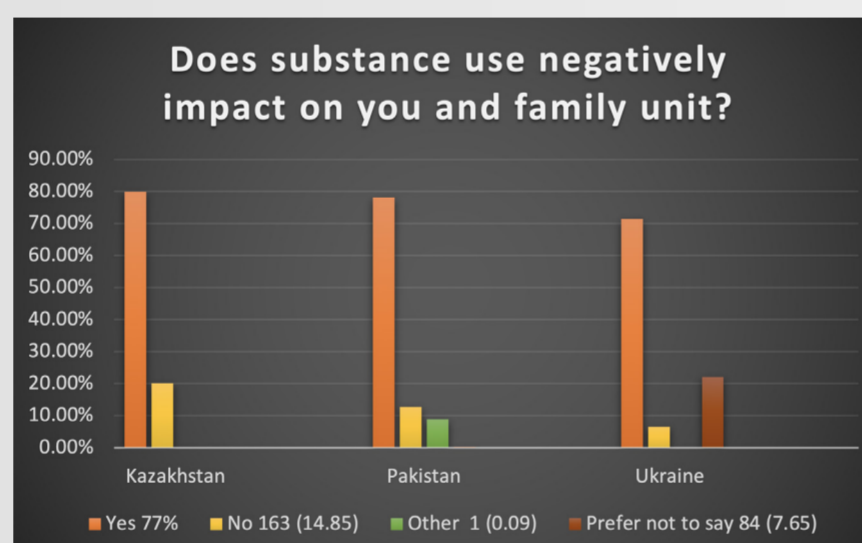
Results

Number of surveys collected

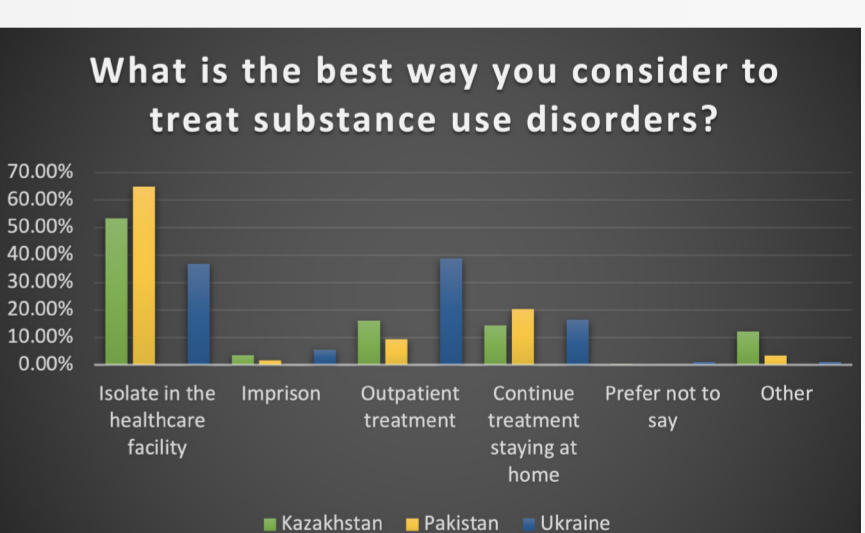
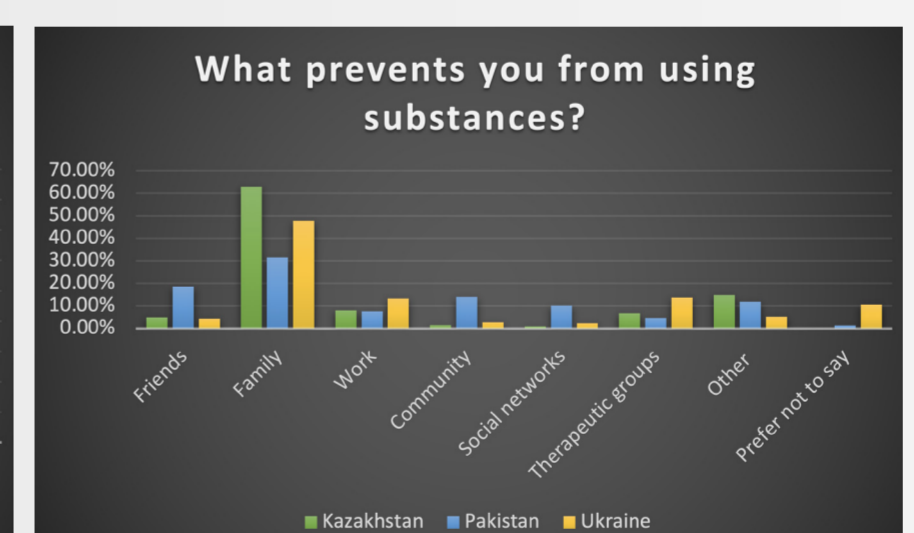
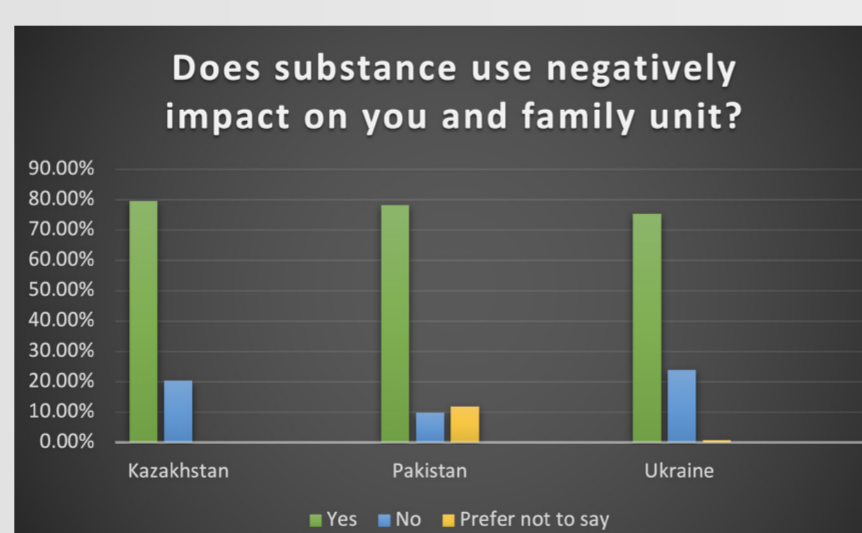


In total, 47% of the relatives indicated that they did not receive treatment interventions, and 87% believed that treatment could be an effective option to address the use of substances. 69% of family members across the three countries viewed isolation of the individual with SUDs as the best way to treat SUDs.

A. Survey of family members



B. Survey of people who use substances



63%–76% of all responses to Survey B described the family's main role as preventing them from using substances and supporting their treatment and recovery.

Conclusion

The family plays a very important role in the treatment and recovery of those with substance use disorders. The survey results showed that family therapy was not accessible and available. The majority of family members across the three countries viewed isolation of the individual using substances as the best way to treat SUDs. The survey highlighted that stigmatisation and a feeling of shame among both families and individuals using substances were prevalent in the majority of the responses. Not only substance use professionals can support service users, our research indicates that individuals with a substance use disorder themselves highly appreciated the significant influence of relatives and family on their successful treatment and recovery.