



## A Study on The Tendency of The People to Use Drugs and Alcohol in The Gem Mining Industry

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### Abstract

Sabaragamuwa province is a forerunner in Sri Lanka's gem mining industry. Miners will dig through multiple layers of earth until they come upon the seam. It will then be brought to the top and washed/lixiviated, and jewels will be extracted from the sediments. This industry necessitates a large amount of people, hard work, and dedication. Because stones are in high demand both locally and internationally, people will take any risks to obtain them. This industry is prevalent in Sabaragamuwa province's Ratnapura, Eheliyagoda, Balangoda, and suburbs. In general, it can be observed that the use of intoxicants is increasing in society. The concern of this research was how people in these places became addicted to intoxicants as a result of mining jobs. This study took place in the Grama Niladhari sections of Naluwela, Ratmalawinna, and Oluganthota under Imbulpe and Balangoda regional secretary divisions. This information was gathered after interviewing all the 144 people who work in all 13 licensed mines in these areas. As a result, many young individuals who did not go through their primary and secondary education have chosen this career. At various stages, some of them are apprehended. Aside from that, 21 persons were charged with family and land disputes, thievery, and other minor offences. The rate of heroin use is also reported, with 31 of them having used it. Cannabis/ganja use is fairly frequent, with 76 of them having used it. There were just seven people who were sober. It is obvious that even young people obtain parental permission to work in mines because it is a common full-time or part-time job in these places. As a result, they tend to use alcohol and other intoxicants because of curiosity and to relieve stress from hard labor. In conclusion, individuals in this area tend to work in mines owing to a lack of education and sufficient income, as well as the expectation of making large profits, and due to the factors described, they are prone to use intoxicants.

**Keywords:** Alcohol, Gem mining, Intoxications, Sabaragamuwa

