

# CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN MALAYSIAN PSYCHOLOGY

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# **DRUG ABUSE – RESEARCH, PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES IN MALAYSIA**

**MOHAMMAD ABDUR RASHID & SHUKRAN ABDUL RAHMAN**

*This article discusses the extent and nature of drug abuse in Malaysia. Drug use started in Malaysia with the immigration of Chinese and Indian labourers in the early nineteenth century. After the independence of Malaysia in 1957, a new trend of opium use emerged. Previously opium use was confined to elderly people, but now a younger group of people, many of them still in their teens, increasingly turned to heroin use. A number of research studies have been carried out in the area of drug abuse. Most of them are epidemiological researches, and some of the research deal with the psychosocial factors of drug abuse in Malaysia. The programmes for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of the drug addicts carried out by the government and non-government organizations are described. The new approach adopted by the government of Malaysia with greater involvement of the family and community in combating the drug problem and the goal of making Malaysia a drug-free country by*