Effects of Some Social-Psychological Factors on Trend of Drugs

Zahra Erfanian Taghvayi Yazdinejhad and Reza Afshari

Pedagogical Sciences, School of Medicine, Tajikistan University and Psychological expert in Avicenna Hospital, Mashhad, Iran

School of Medicine, Mashhad University of Medical Sciences and Specialist in Clinical Toxicology, Iran

Abstract: This paper aims to study some social-psychological factors affecting trend of drugs and the relationship of depressive symptoms with methadone dose. Method of this study is cross-sectional survey and data collection is done by questionnaires. In this study, 500 available samples were used. Inferential statistics results of this study showed that between dependent variable (trend of drugs) and some independent variables (attitude towards drug, awareness about drugs, methadone use, and depression), there was a significant correlation. If between dependent variable in this study and other independent variables (age, gender, feelings of alienation) there was no significant correlation. Results of Stepwise regression analysis indicated that Knowledge about drugs, attitude toward drugs and methadone, respectively, were the most influential factors on drug tendency and Based on the analysis, it was found that rates of depression can play a role of interface variable between methadone dose and desire for drugs.

Key words: Drugs • Attitude • Awareness • Depression • Methadone

INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems in today's society is drug addiction issue. Addiction is something that has gripped human for a long time. Those who use drugs more likely, show legal and illegal actions, such as smoking, alcohol use and sexual behaviour disorders [1]. Drug problems are not only in Iran, but also it is the plague of the twenty-first century. Every world countries are involved in drug problems in some way; in fact our planet is a supermarket of mental irritating chemicals or drugs. History of addictive drug and their abuse goes back to the thousands of years ago. This sinister phenomenon, long ago in Iran and other countries, destroyed foundation of many lives and every day severity of its impact is increasing.

Objective evidence and statistics show that despite all the efforts of government officials, NGOs and international efforts, prevalence of addiction issue, decrease in age at onset for drug use and trends of chemical narcotic substance abuse are worrisome, while some developed countries have succeeded to control the drug addiction chart which had an increasing growth in the late seventies and eighties [2].

Due to its adjacency to Afghanistan which is the largest opium producer in the world as well as being the main route of transit and transport of produced substance to the West, Iran is at highest risk for addiction. The alarming statistics and the problem of youth drug addiction and its individual and social tragic effects can become one of the most important challenges facing the state and Iranian people. To control and improve this situation, proper planning, coordination of all forces, national determination and optimum use and, most importantly, education and practical knowledge are needed. In fact maybe more than 20 percent of national crimes and 10 percent of violent crime are due to the use of illegal drugs. If we estimate two million addicts in Iran as a base number and if each addict in his life involves at least one other person, It is likely that the number of drug addicts and highly exposed people will be more in the future [3].

Statistics of the country's prison population show that there are about 48 percent of those who are addicted or have been arrested on charge of buying and selling the drugs. Addiction as a phenomenon affecting both the individual and the social and can
have both physical and psychological complications such as cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal, hepatic and neurologic complications.

In 1964 the World Health Organization concluded that the term "addiction" is no longer a practical term and ‘Drug dependence’ was instead recommended. The concept of Drug dependence has had ordinary and a formal meaning during many decades. Basically in relation to the definition of dependence, two concepts have been used: behavioural dependence and physical dependence.

The most important psychological complications for the individual are inappropriate behaviours and psychological characteristics such as depression, phobia types, antisocial personality and associated addictions (e.g., alcoholism) and the most important complications of addiction on society are loosening of the family ties, divorce, poverty, unemployment, prostitution and illicit sexual relationships.

Careful consideration of economic and social damage of addiction requires many integrated activities because damage of family and other social elements, reducing the performance of individuals and relatives, addiction involvement in acts of violence and other crimes and many other problems should considered. Counselling and group therapy is a evolved structure that has several objectives. One of the most important objectives is eliminating the behaviour that caused the failure and lack of self confidence. The second objective is to change a person's character and behaviour so that people around consider him as an effective and useful person for the community. Studies show that this treatment method is efficient and cost effective, Implementing in other countries for decades. In the treatment of an addict, He should be investigated from various angles so that importance of the problem can be better understood and thus we can provide the perfect solution [5].

Advances in technologies which are due to some phenomena such as urbanization, poor growth, increasing population, poverty, war, immigration and etc, according to Durkheim’s interpretation, will cause norm of social dissociation and will increase traumatic social factors. In this situation some phenomena such as substance abuse, suicide, loneliness, depression, lack of emotional and other social-psychological problems will be highly increased. Besides these phenomena which are the result of technological advances. Other cultural changes are also occurring, causing extensive developments in different social, cultural and emotional dimensions of people life. Changing of the family performance and the role of parents and elders and growth of individualism in society, cause family organization to be weakened. Addictions can double it by isolating people and cause changes and disruptions in the relationships between people including relations of parents with children and relationship between parents in family [6].

As experts say, save of an addict is the save of society because this person lives in society and is infected [7].

In this study, researchers sought to explore and analyze some of the factors affecting trend of drugs use. In line with this study, the main objectives are as follows:

- Assessing the rate of tendency and desire to use drugs.
- Examining the significance relationship between respondents' attitudes and trend of drugs.
- Examining the significance relationship between respondents' awareness and trend of drugs.
- Examining the significance relationship between methadone use and trend of drugs.
- Examining the significance relationship between methadone use and the level of depression symptoms.
- Examining the significance relationship between respondents' feeling of alienation and trend of drugs.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

With the beginning of the twentieth century, most physicians believed that addiction is a disease and were trying to treat the disease. Dare to say that today almost all countries of the world have drug problems. This problem is perhaps the most important cultural, educational and social phenomenon. Many various factors such as discoveries and inventions, war and peace, movement of people towards cities and other countries, Change of social structure, cultural tastes of youth, poverty, drought, factors and natural disasters, Customs, policies and finally, the purchasing power of people, all have been effective. In such a case, each individual has the potential to be caught in its trap [5].

In term of attitude, Fish Bein and Ajzen in the theory of planned behaviour emphasize that behaviour follows the attitude toward a reasonable method. If a person thinks behaviour is related to certain attitudes and has the desired result and can easily be carried out, so the person continues to engage in behaviour [12]. According to this theory, behavioural intentions include personal factors
Sepehrmanesh [11] in his paper entitled "The effect of methadone on depression among prisoner injection drug users," has been analyzed the problem. This type of quasi-experimental study was conducted among injection drug users in prison. A questionnaire was used in this study consists of two parts: demographic characteristics and depression test of BECK. They were provided by clinical psychologist of prison. After recording the participants, filling out the questionnaire and interviewing by three psychiatrists, methadone was given orally to participants and after 3 months methadone use, with BECK test and a psychiatric interview based on DSM-IV, were reassessed. The results were analyzed using the Paired T-Test. from total of 37 subjects, 35 persons were enrolled and participants were examined in terms of age, education, occupational status, marital status and type of crime. Based on clinical interviews, from 35 subjects, 26 people (74.28%) were diagnosed having a depressive disorder. Two of them, due to suicidal ideation, were referred for treatment and were excluded from the study and 9 peoples (25.71%) had no depression. after treatment, from the total of 24 subjects, 19 cases (79.16%) showed relative to optimal recovery in depression And 5 ones (20.83 percent) remained unchanged. A significant decrease in the mean depression score of subjects, based on Beck Test, was seen after treatment ($p<0.001$).

Based on above views it can be argued that Human behavior is influenced by the information he obtains and in relevance of knowledge, human behavior changes. This idea can be used in forming research theory, based on the relationship between awareness about drugs and the amount of drug use. The term of estrangement and alienation In Marx's terms thoughts means that people are feeling alienated from the social life of their own, have no control over their social life. Process of alienation is associated with a feeling of worthlessness, aversion to self and others, powerlessness, distrust of others, indifference and so on, which eventually these feelings lead to aggressive and delinquent behaviours. In this condition, people will reject values and social norms and seek to change them. Marx's theory of alienation can explain relationship between social alienation and trend of drugs.

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Sepehrmanesh [11] 在他的论文中提到“甲基苯丙胺对囚犯注射药物使用者抑郁症的影响”，分析了该问题。这种类型的准实验性研究是在监狱中进行的。研究使用了两种类型的问题： demographic characteristics and depression test of BECK。他们由监狱的心理咨询师提供。在记录参与者后，他们填写了问卷表并通过三种精神病学家的面谈和治疗，每人被给予甲基苯丙胺。在3个月内使用甲基苯丙胺后，使用BECK测试和DSM-IV的面谈，进行了重新评估。结果使用Paired T-test进行分析。共有37名参与者，35人被纳入。参与者被评估的年龄、教育水平、职业状况、婚姻状况和犯罪类型。根据临床访谈，从35名参与者中，26人（74.28%）被诊断为抑郁症。其中两人，由于自杀观念，被转介至治疗，被移除。此后，从24名参与者中的19例（79.16%）显示出在治疗后抑郁症的相对恢复。5人（20.83%）情况没有改变。甲基苯丙胺在使用后的BECK测试中显示出显著降低（$p<0.001$）。

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha

Independent T-test Results: The results of the independent t-test show that the rate of desire for men (38.96) and women (32.8) is not much different with their parents’. The results suggest that the t-statistic and significance level are equal to -2.73 and 0.155, respectively, which are not satisfactory. In this regard, statistically, there is no significant relationship between gender and trend of drugs.

Correlation Test Results: The results of the Pearson test between respondents' attitude and trend of drugs show a significant relationship. The correlation coefficient is about 0.46 and a significance level of 0.000. Since this coefficient is positive, it can be concluded that there is a direct relationship between respondents' attitude and trend of drugs, so the assumption is not rejected.

The results of the Pearson test between respondents' awareness and trend of drugs show a significant relationship. The correlation coefficient is about -0.68 with a significance level of 0.000. Since this coefficient is negative, it can be concluded that there is an inverse relationship between respondents' awareness and trend of drugs. In this respect, this relationship is statistically significant; therefore, this assumption is not rejected.

The results of the Pearson test between age of respondents and trend of drugs do NOT show a significant relationship. The correlation coefficient is -0.001 with a significance level of 0.092. Since this is not an acceptable level, the relationship is not significant, thus this assumption was rejected.
### Table 1: Results of factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the main variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Number of deleted Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trend of drugs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drug awareness</td>
<td>No deleted Items</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>No deleted Items</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>General health</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Desire to use drugs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondents in terms of measured variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low (%)</th>
<th>Average (%)</th>
<th>High (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drug awareness</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General health</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to use drugs</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methadone use</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total respondents</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Independent t-test results of respondents’ gender and the desire to drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Average desire rate</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Standard error of the mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>38.96</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-2.73</td>
<td>0.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Correlation test results (dependent variable: trend of drugs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Pearson correlation coefficient(R)</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Reject / accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' attitude</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' awareness</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of alienation</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methadone use</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Correlation test results (dependent variable: depression)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Pearson correlation coefficient(R)</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Reject / accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methadone use</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5: Multivariate regression results about factors influencing attitudes towards drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Predictor variables</th>
<th>R² adj</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig. T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First step</td>
<td>drug awareness</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-38.364</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-1.472</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second step</td>
<td>attitude towards drugs</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>13.837</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.184</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third step</td>
<td>methadone use</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>6.458</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-5.02</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the Pearson test between feeling of alienation and trend of drugs also do NOT show a significant relationship. Its correlation coefficient is -0.13 and significance level is 0.132. Since this is not an acceptable level, the relationship is not significant, thus this assumption was rejected.

The results of the Pearson test between methadone use and trend of drugs show a significant relationship. The correlation coefficient is -0.48 and significance level is 0.01. Since this coefficient is negative, it can be concluded that there is an inverse relationship between methadone use and trend of drugs. This relationship is statistically significant; therefore, this assumption is not rejected.

The results of the Pearson test between use of methadone and depression show a significant relationship. The correlation coefficient is -0.31 and significance level is 0.000. Since this coefficient is negative, it can be concluded that there is an inverse relationship between methadone use and depression. This relationship is statistically significant; therefore, the assumption is not rejected.

**Multivariate Regression Results:** The results indicate that among the independent variables in this study, 3 variables of drug awareness, attitude towards drugs and methadone use have been entered into equation in order of effectiveness. Stepwise regression results are shown in the following table:
Desire to use drugs

Methadone use

Drug awareness

-0.12

-0.085

-0.01

-0.01

0.01

0.0078

0.15

0.01

0.12

-0.01

-0.01

-0.01

0.14

Alienation

Depression

Attitude towards drugs

Age

Path analysis diagram and direct and indirect effects of independent variables

First Step: Based on the above table, the first predictor variable entered in regression equation was drug awareness variable. Nearly 4.1 percent of the adaptation variance of young people and their parents was determined.

Second Step: In the second step, the variable of attitude towards drugs was entered in regression equation and about 9.2 percent of adaptation variance was obtained.

Third Step: in the third step, the variable of methadone use was entered in regression equation and about 12.9 percent of adaptation variance was obtained.

**CONCLUSION**

Attitude is a combination of beliefs and emotions that can prepare a person in advance to have negative or positive view about people, things and different groups. Attitudes are summary evaluations of objects and thus, predict future behavior or conducting actions [10]. According to Fish Bein and Ajzen, The best predictors of voluntary behaviours are their behavioural intentions. Beliefs and attitudes towards a behavior which a person can have, is one of the determinants of behavioural intentions. Accordingly, in this study assumptions associated with attitude towards drugs, are tested.

Another assumption was awareness about drugs that was examined in relation to the trends of drugs and the results showed that between these two variables, there is a significant correlation. This means that more and more negative attitudes to drugs, he tends less to these drugs and the more he becomes aware, his tendency to drugs will be less.

Methadone is from opioid family of drugs to treat dependence on other opioids such as heroin, codeine and morphine. Methadone maintenance dose in the treatment of addicts is not alone, but as part of the process is used to treat opiate addicts. Methadone is a powerful industrial drug that is less addictive than morphine or heroin. And often is used as a maintenance medicine to control drug addiction. Methadone is considered as the most effective treatment for heroin and other drugs.

Substance abuse is associated with a high prevalence of psychiatric disorders and these disorders also include mood disorders, especially depression. Sepehrmanesh [11] in his paper entitled "The effect of methadone on depression among prisoner injection drug users," has been analyzed this issue. The results of this research have approved the effect of methadone use on depression. In the present study direct effect of methadone use on reduction of depression and desire to drug use, also was also confirmed where depression was the interface variable.
REFERENCES