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## **INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP OF LIFE SKILLS AND RELIGIOUSNESS WITH TENDENCY TOWARD DRUGS IN THE STUDENTS OF PAYAM-E NOUR UNIVERSITY OF ILAM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Addiction to drugs is a worldwide dilemma which causes considerable damages to both the individual and society and has rapidly spread among the ad descents that are the active stratum of the society. So, the aim of the present research has been to investigate the relationship between the level of life skills, religiousness and the tendency toward drugs among the students. The design of this research is correlation type. The statistical society of the research includes all of the students of Ilam Payam – e Nour University. of the students 195 were selected through stratified random sampling as the sample of the research. The instruments for data collection were life skills, Inventory, Seraj – Zadeh religiousness questionnaire, and addiction disposition, Inventory of Zargar. For data analysis the statistical indices of mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression were used. The analysis of data showed that there is a significant relationship between life skills religiousness and the disposition toward narcotic substances, so that they can be entered into regression equation as the significant predictors. From the findings it can be concluded that life skills and religiousness have an effective role in tendency toward misusing narcotic substances, that is with enhancing life skills and religiousness the disposition toward addiction will reduce.

**Keywords:** *Life Skills, Religiousness, Tendency toward Narcotic Drugs*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Today, drugs consumption is one of the great behavioral problems of human societies. And world health organization has mentioned it as alarming event in the world (World health organization, 2007). According to Bandura (2007) using drugs is learned through modeling, mimicry, and reinforcement in the realm of interpersonal relationships on one hand, and is influenced by intrapersonal factors such as the individuals self – efficiency, conceptions and beliefs, on the other. Bandura believes that narcotics consumption behavior is related to either using or misusing them among the role models such as parents, friends and mates on one hand, and is dependent to the positive attitudes and beliefs of role models about the drugs and narcotics and also the perceived ability for using or abstaining from them as a behavior, on the other.

The problem of either using or misusing narcotic substances among the adolescents is of prime importance, due to the sensitivity of this period of life and its role in future life of individuals. The becomes ever more important when using narcotic drugs in considered among the students, as they are among the main groups of the countries' human forces and have a prominent role in development, progress, and advancement of the countries. Therefore, dealing with narcotic substances misuses among the young students and suggesting effective strategies for preventing from and treating the disorders resulting from drugs misuse and addiction.

Unfamiliarity of the young people with life skills is one of the causes of tendency toward drugs misuse. Botvin and colleagues (2004) mention coping with stress, communication skills, and learning to dare as some life skills. The adolescents, who have weak social capabilities, may proceed to smoking and drinking alcohol, due to social benefits. There are evidences which show that the individuals have low social skills and capabilities display the worst prediction and the highest rate of drugs and narcotics misuse. The environment of University with its instructional stress and skilllessness to cope with the mates

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in dormitories along with the feeling of freedom from the parents control can be a dangerous factor the disposition toward drugs misuse (Sohrabi and *et al.*, 2008).

Moradi and colleagues (2009) in a study investigated the effect of resistance skills training against drugs use and preventing from drugs misuse among 181 workers of Petrochemical Company of Asalouieh in two groups of experiment and control group. The results showed the positive effect of the training on increasing the knowledge, resistance skills against drugs use, self – efficiency and balanced decision making in preventing activities in experiment group.

Mohammad Khani (2006) assessed the structural model of drugs consumption in the susceptible – to – risk adolescents and evaluated the influence of life skill training on intermediary factors of narcotic drugs usage. The results of the research showed that life skills training have created a meaningful change in the adolescents' inclination to use narcotic drugs and in the personal risk factors of narcotic drugs usage as in self – imagination, self – control skills, social skills, control canon and the attitudes towards narcotic drugs usage.

In religious psychology, due to the importance of religion in all of dimension of life, psychological factors of religion are dealt with. The relation between religion and personality has always been taken into account and has reached acceptable results. For example, Raiye and colleagues (2008) showed that religion leads to the feeling of well – being. It seems that the religious attitude, as an approach posed by Macki and Smith (2000), is effective on humans' behavior. Turiano and colleagues (200&0 suggest that religious beliefs result in enhancing health and life quality, and increasing self – esteem (Turian et al, 2012). Religious beliefs are usually counted as the preventing factors of narcotic drugs misuse. Being religious, in addition to preserving the adolescents from the problems of narcotic drugs usage, preserve the children of the addicted – to – opium individuals who are greatly susceptible to the risk (Koenig, 1998, Koenig and Kohen, 2002). The high religious individuals cope with stressful situation easily, experience lower levels of negative emotions and distress, and less anxious, abstain from alcohol and narcotics and enjoy high social support. Due to healthy ways of life, these individuals have a higher life – expectancy as to ordinary people. According to the researches performed in this field, the aim of this research was to investigate the relationship of life skills and religiousness with the tendency toward narcotic drugs usage in the students of Ilam Payam – e Nour University.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The statistical society of the research included all of the students (both genders) of Payam – e Nour University of Ilam who were studying in academic year of 2012 – 13. The volume of the sample in this research, through using Morgan's table of determining the volume of the sample, was determining to be 195 subjects. Sampling was done through stratified random sampling. The data collected was analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient and step – by – step regression

#### **Instrument**

**Iranian scale of susceptibility to addiction:** This has been built by Zargar, Najarian, and No'mani (2006) and includes 36 items and 5 lie detector items. The validity of this questionnaire by Zagar, Najarian, and No'mani (2006) through Cronbach alpha was 0.90 which was 0.92 in this study.

**The inventory of religiousness:** This has been constructed by Saraj – Zadeh (1998). The questions of this questionnaire are attitudinal and are scored on five – point Likert scale (totally disagree: 1, disagree; 2, impartial; 3, agree; 4, and totally agree; 5). the validity of this questionnaire was determining through retesting and internal consistency. The level of being religious on a 10 point scale has determined to be 0.61 . The external validity of the questionnaire was determined through the relationship between the scores of the subjects on the questionnaire and the evaluation was done through three different approaches. The results supporting constructive validity and Cronbach alpha coefficient validity for the variable of religiousness has been calculated at 0.83.

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**Life skills questionnaire:** This has 31 questions and includes three skills which are self – awareness, interpersonal relationships, and decision making. This test has been constructed by Ghayasi, based on Likert scale. Scoring of the test is done in this way: skilllessness: 0; Low score: 1; slightly low score: 2; slightly high score: 3; high score: 4. Bahari – Far (2002) reported Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.93 for this test. Moreover, Yousefi (2004) has reported the Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.95 for this questionnaire.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the indices of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients) for total sample based on the score of life skills, religiousness, and tendency toward narcotic drugs usages.

**Table 1: The mean, standard deviation, and the matrix of the correlation of the scores of life skills, religiousness and tendency to use narcotic drugs**

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
Tendency to use narcotic drugs	47.85	15.50	1		
Life skills	84.87	18.26	-0.62*	1	
religiousness	87.92	9.84	-0.28*	0.73*	1

\*p=0.001

According to the results of table 1, there is a significant relationship between tendency to use drugs and religiousness (p=0.001, r=0.28), tendency to use drugs and life skills (p=0.001, r=0.62) and life skills and religiousness (p=0.001, r=0.73) which shows the internal consistency between variables. In addition, as there is significant positive relationship between each of the predictor variables (life skills and religiousness) and criterion variable (tendency to use narcotic drugs), it is possible to use regression for prediction.

To investigate the predicting role of life skill and religiousness in tendency to use narcotic drugs, multivariate step – by – step regression was used. As it can be seen in table 2, the results of regression show that there is a relationship between life skills, religiousness and tendency to use narcotic drugs.

**Table 2: the results of multivariate regression analysis of life skills, religiousness, and tendency to use narcotic drugs through step – by – step method**

Predictor variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	sig	B	Beta	t	P
Life skills	0.62	0.38	0.001	-0.76	-0.89	-11.38	0.001
religiousness	0.67	0.45	0.001	0.58	0.37	4.74	0.001

*In life skills step (R<sup>2</sup>= 0.38), it can predict, with 38% certainty, the tendency to use narcotic drugs (p<0.001), religiousness (R<sup>2</sup>=0.45) can predict, with 45% certainty the tendency to use narcotic drugs (p<0.001).*

**Discussion**

The aim of the present research was to investigate the simple and the combined relationship of life skills and religiousness and with the tendency to use narcotic drugs in the students. According to researches done, it was revealed that there is significant negative relationship between tendency to use drugs and life skills, and the results of regression analysis of life skills predict the tendency to use narcotic drugs in the students. These results indicate that increasing life skills is accompanied with reducing the tendency to use drugs in the students which is supportive of the fundamental role of life skills in reducing the tendency to use drugs. This finding is in line with the results of other researches. Barati and colleagues (2011) showed in a study that benefiting from life skills training to reduce abstract norms persuading the

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use of drugs in students, has led to effective results which is indicative of the effectiveness of bravery training on modifying the beliefs and abstract norms of the adolescents and can have a significant role both in designing and performing the programs of preventing from drugs misuse, especially in Universities.

These results also revealed that religiousness has a negative relationship with the tendency to use drugs and inversely predict this behavior, that is, when religiousness and religious attitude are low. The tendency to use drugs increases. According to the findings of the research, religious attitude is one of the significant negative correlations with tendency to use drugs. Religious attitudes and religiousness factor are often observed in the researches in the field of mental well – being today. The importance of the role and position of religion in human life is so great that it has overshadowed all of his/her physical and psychological life. The researches of mental and physical health have found increasing evidences which imply that the human's spiritual life is related to his/her physical and mental well – being (O'conor, Cub and O'corner, 2003). The individuals enjoying high religiousness can more appropriately cope with stressful situations, abstain from drugs and alcohol, and enjoy higher social support. Due to pursuing healthy ways in life, they have a higher life expectancy as to ordinary people (Queeng and Kohen, 2002). Boutovin and colleagues (2004) concluded their studies that life skills training has had an effective role in preventing from addiction. The results of an investigating in Fredrick University has showed that life skills not only has a preventing role in nonsmoking and nonalcoholic individuals, but also has had a prominent effect on smoking and alcoholic ones.

In the end, it can be said that life skills and religiousness are among the factors affecting the tendency to use narcotic drugs. So, enhancing these two factors can reduce the tendency to use drugs in the youth. Therefore, based on the obtained results it is suggested that through training life skills program and confronting with the problems of the students with the aim of preventing from psychological and social injuries and creating appropriate contexts, reinforce and spread the norms training programs and religious values.

**Table 3: The coefficients of regression analysis of attachment styles on self – esteem**

Variables	B	SEB	Beta	T	Sig
Safe attachment	3.55	0.17	0.66	20.88	0.001
Stressful/ambivalent	-1.47	0.20	-0.25	-7.22	0.001
Avoiding style	-0.37	0.17	-0.06	-2.10	0.005

Moreover, the results of variance analysis and the statistical indices of social self – esteem regression and the strategies of coping with tension are provided in table 3. As it can be observed in table 3, the level of observed F for coping strategies is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) and can 52 percent explain the variance of self – esteem.

**Table 4: The summary of regression model of tension coping strategies on self – esteem**

	SS	df	MS	F	P	R	R <sup>2</sup>	S.E
Regression	23441.28	3	7813.76	139.09	0.001	0.72	0.52	0.52
remaining	21121.71	379	56.17					

The coefficients of regression of predictor variables show that tension coping strategies can explain the variance of the variable of the students' self – esteem. Problem – centered strategy ( $B = 0.47$ ) and avoidance – centered ( $B = -0.17$ ) with significance level of  $p < 0.00$  show that these variables with 99% certainty have significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) centered strategy ( $B = -0.14$ ) and can with, 95 percent certainty predict the changes related to social self – esteem variable. This means that increasing the level of problem – centered strategy in individuals can increase his/her self – esteem, and increasing the level of emotion – centered and avoidance centered strategies can reduce self – esteem.

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**Table 5: The results of regression coefficients of stress coping strategies on self – esteem**

Variables	B	SEB	Beta	T	Sig
Problem-centered	0.47	0.06	0.46	6.88	0.001
Emotion-centered	-0.14	0.07	-0.14	-1.96	0.005
Avoidance-centered	-0.17	0.04	-0.18	-3.62	0.001

### Discussion

The findings of present research showed that self – esteem is related to attachment styles. The adolescent having safe attachment style enjoys higher self – esteem.

This is in line with social relationship theory which is in accord with Bolbi attachment theory. According to this theory, the child who, in his/her years of life, sees his/her parents as good, respected and lovely, honors him/her self greatly. Therefore, the individuals having safe attachment styles possess a high self – esteem. The researches have revealed that this self – esteem in individuals having safe attachment styles is higher than those having avoiding/ambivalent styles. On the other hands, the individuals the individuals who have avoiding/ambivalent styles, due to improper social relationships and emotional vulnerability as to tension, possess lower self – esteem (Hun singer & Lucan, 2004; Peter, Monaco & Fledman, 2005; Seriestava, 2005). The results of Mccarti (1999) research showed that the level of self – esteem in women having unsafe attachment style (avoiding, stressful/ambivalent) is lower than those having a safe attachment style.

According to the findings of the research, the adolescents having high self – esteem more frequently use problem – centered coping strategies, compared to those having lower self – esteem. The one having high self – esteem know the environmental symptoms of tension well and selects them in a way to be able to response them. But those having low self – esteem, do not see the ability to cope with tension in them and understand fewer factors of tension and are not capable of understanding the effective factors for coping with tension and cope with tension with earlier symptoms. So, self – esteem is a supportive factor in increasing resilience and the manner of coping with tension. Sovarez and Garousi (2000) showed in a research that a positive and significant interaction exists between problem – centered coping and self – esteem. King and others (1999) showed in their study that high self – esteem is related to efficient coping strategies and reported a positive correlation between self - esteem and coping. Toes (1995) showed that individuals have low self – esteem, compared to those having high self – esteem, more frequently use avoiding coping strategy.

The limitation of the statistical society of the research makes generalization difficult. It is advised this research to be done on larger samples and different age groups. According to the results found, it is suggested to use proper strategies for increasing self – esteem to enhance the adolescents mental well – being. It is also necessary to perform similar researches on other societies.

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