

## Effective Social and Economic Factors in Youth Dependence on Drug Abuse in Bojnourd (Lived Experience)

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**Abstract:** The current study, with regard to the importance of addiction problem and important effect of social factors in youth dependence on drug abuse in Bojnourd, the examination provides conditions in order to control and prevent tendency toward youth addiction. In this study Participants encompassed 33 subjects (20 males and 13 females) the young men and women in the age group of 18-35 who resided in the therapeutic and care addiction centers in Bojnourd, these individuals were selected in terms of the determined criteria and the data were obtained through in-depth and semi-structured interviews and by using (meaningful) non-probability sampling. Many factors affect drug abuse that the most significant one among them is social factors. This study in the domain of social factors (Family breakdown, divorce, lack of control and supervision in the family, absence of life skills, low social capital, and loss of leisure time) influences the drug abuse.

**Keywords:** lived experience, drug abuse, social factors, youth.

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### Introduction

From the past to the present, one of the most expansive social problems and harms that have entangled human societies to its inauspicious consequences is addiction and increased tendency toward it (Hallji and Witboren, 2008). Addiction is a kind of disease that reveals itself in multifarious forms that nourishes drug abuse, gambling, sexual issues and money and so on. Most of the time, addiction causes the family breakdown and affects the livelihood of individuals, and eventually paves the way for the death of many people. There is no treatment for addiction however there is hope for managing this problem (F. Shaw et al., 2014: 21). Drug abuse and addiction are considered as one of the prominent problems in developing countries. As these countries possess a young population, naturally they will expose to greater danger. The Youth, as the most preeminent and talented group, expose to greater danger. The range of influences related to the addiction is important because not only do dangerous consequences of that encompass the addicted person, but also it includes family, friends and colleagues that will also be exposed to its destructive effects (Asayesh et al., 2012: 83). These days the world is involved in addiction and drug use and this process is increasing to a great extent. Usually, Iran is involved in this harm as well, which is owing to the existence of conditions such as neighboring Afghanistan, which is the largest producer of drugs, and also as Iran located in the transit route of carrying drugs to Europe it is more exposed to the danger of addiction prevalence than other parts of the world. The existent statistics are so disquieting and the issue of youth drug addiction and its painful complications can be converted into one of the salient challenges of the government and Iranian people. To control and improve this inappropriate and dangerous situation, proper planning, forces solidarity and national determination are needed (Haji Rasooli, 2007: 23) and (Asadi and

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Parzour, 2021). Drugs have many complications and unfavorable consequences, such as family breakdown and divorce, homeless children, youth contention, loss of financial resources and creating economic violence in the country, increasing the number of prisoners and other perversities in society. Therefore, with regard to the high rate of addiction harm, addressing the causes of addiction in any region and society is deemed as a vital and inevitable matter (Asadi and Parzour, 2021: 171). In a study, Bersing and Farow (1990) concluded that those who use a lot of drugs, most of these people possess broken and disconnected families (Bersing and Farow, 320: 1990). Some studies that have been conducted by the Islamic researchers, as Nazr Islam, Hossein and Hassan (2000) entitled, Gender, Lifestyles and Social Status of Addicts, the result demonstrated that the addiction is higher among the youth who are in low level of education, low and middle-income people, moreover It is higher among married men than single ones, and in terms of gender, the tendency toward addiction is lower among women than men (Nazr Islam, Hossein and Hassan, 1026: 2000).

Drug and stimulant use entails many negative effects in any society, but the most important negative effect of that is threatening the future of youth, therefore to prevent its destructive effects in the young generation, the comprehensive cultural programs and prevention in line with youth awareness should be planned and applied as the earliest opportunity.

The prevalence of drug abuse acceleration among the young generation is faster than other age groups in any society. Drug addiction in youth causes life expectancy reduction, unwanted pregnancies, committing suicide, increased mortality, violence and AIDS disease, and health problems. Therefore, owing to the lack of success in treatment methods and rehabilitation of addicts and relapse of addicts toward drugs, it seems that the need for proper and accurate planning and implementation of scientific intervention programs and aiming to prevent drug use are considered as a necessity and one of the most important and effective method in preventing the addiction prevalence in society, especially youth.

By virtue of the above-mentioned cases and the increase in drug abuse in society, the present study intends to examine the effective sociological factors in youth dependence on drug abuse in Bojnourd (lived experience) and seeks to answer this question that what the social determinants of drug use among the youth in Bojnourd are existed?

Theoretically, the importance of the current study is that addiction causes the family breakdown and humiliated personalities, and moreover reveals today's human societies in more precarious situation than any other time and effectuates the advent of negative effects on the individual and society. The most important action is to identify and examine the social factors due to reducing the negative effects of this harm on individuals and society.

The significance of the current study in terms of practicality is that multifarious studies have been conducted on drug abuse, but in Bojnourd, very limited qualitative studies have been implemented and on the other hand, findings and statistics indicate that drug use and its prevalence have been increasing in Bojnourd. Therefore, the practical purpose of this study is to present results of that to the liable organizations and researchers to use the lived experience of addicted youth (Case study: Bojnourd city) owing to reducing the addiction prevalence among youth. Consequently, the study of effective social factors in the lived experience of people involved in addiction can provide conditions due to controlling and preventing the tendency to addiction.

## **Literature Review**

Karimi et al. (2016) in his study has conducted his study on the Lived Experience of Youth addicted to drugs in the Sulaymaniyah province in Iraqi Kurdistan. Six factors of youth dependence on addiction encompass "homeless family and relatives", "vagabondage and migration", "inappropriate economic situation", "unawareness and ignorance of drugs and lack of appropriate notice", "smoking and alcohol prevalence" and "disreputable friends" (Karimi et al., 2017: 7). In a study Roshan Ghiyas et al. (2017) examined the factors of women's tendency toward using drugs and psychotropic substances as well and prevention methods. The results of this study, demonstrated that the factors as family breakdown and disorganization, socio-economic status and aspirations of individuals (that conditions in which one yearns) paves the way for increasing addiction and the factors such as high sense of belonging and his commitment to society and norms cause women's tendency reduction toward addiction (Roshan Ghiyas et al., 2018: 39).

Babaei and Najafiy-e- Asl (2019) studied the causes of the rural youth's tendency toward drug abuse (a study of villages in Delfan county, Lorestan province). The results demonstrate that local subculture and structural factors and leisure drug use of elders have paved the way for drug use and social and the continuation of drug abuse has been affected by economic factors as the past conflicts in the village, employment status and leisure time situation. According to the study findings, the presence of experienced and sensible village governor along with administrative and legal infrastructure for informing the villagers and encouraging them toward participation are considered as the most important factors to prevent the drug abuse prevalence (Babaei and Najafiy-e-Asl, 2019: 7- 8).

Hezarian et al. (2022) explained the relationship between the family function and their drug attitudes along with mediation of social consistency in students. The results indicated that the direct path of family function toward drug attitudes was not significant. The direct path of family function toward social consistency was positive and significant and the path of social consistency toward drug attitudes was negative and significant. Furthermore, the relationship between family function and drug attitudes has completely been mediated by social consistency (Hazarian et al., 2022: 139).

Modabernia et al. (2013) examined the factors affecting the drug addiction in the individuals aged 15 to 30 years old. The Factors are as following: easy obtaining the psychological and physical benefits, hedonistic personality, curious spirit, tendency toward being different, lack of life skills, cultural conditions, social status and economic factors. Expansive range of intrapersonal and extra-personal conditions and factors affect the individual tendency toward drug addiction. By identifying these factors and designing a comprehensive and universal program, Narco-terrorism officials and families will be able to provide the needed conditions for preventing youth from addiction (Modbernia et al., 2013: 70).

In a study, Mousa Yu et al. (2019) examined the factors affecting the entrance to the drug abuse among youth in metropolises as Lafia: its consequences on security. Study findings indicated that drug abuse paves the way significantly for easy access to drugs and emerging the street culture in the metropolis due to absence of parental control (Mousa Yu et al., 2019: 1). In a study Wendy and Caltabiono (2017) examined the drug abuse prevalence and socio-economic differences related to drug abuse in an elderly sample that have lived in Australia. In general, the rate of drug abuse prevalence was higher in men than women. Gender, age, income, social participation and retirement were the most important influential factors. Moreover, being a woman, taking part in social groups, being retired and incapable of placing in the growth route are the protective factors of drug abuse. It seems that high middle income to be a risk factor for drug abuse (Wendy and Catalibuno, 2017:1).

## **Method**

### **Society, Sample and Sampling Method**

The current study was implemented by using a qualitative method and the grounded theory method was selected due to the subject and nature of the study that is deemed as one of the qualitative type. This type of the study intends to understand the causes and factors that create the problems and with regard to the lived experiences of drug users that were examined; it was investigated in a specific context and scope. Therefore the current study is qualitative research based on grounded theory. Among the two existent approaches, this study relies more on the constructivist approach of the grounded and the studied phenomenon and the lived experience of addicted individuals have been prioritized. Grounded theory is considered as one of the strategies concerned with implementing qualitative research that has been suggested by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 for the first time. This theory is derived from data that have been systematically collected and analyzed during the study process.

Society: in the present study the participants consisted of young men and women who settled in residential drug treatment centers in Bojnourd. Among these individuals, men and women that are in the age group of 18-35 years were selected as a research sample. Therefore in the women's camp; 13 women in this age group who had tendency to cooperate and also had placed in a better physical and mental condition were selected, it should be noted that some of them were not included in the interview as they had gone to the centers for the first time and placed in the stage of detoxification and their situation although they had been in this age group. In the centers allocated for men, these factors were considered thereby it will pave the way for observing both age group and physical and mental

condition. It should be reminded that the numbers of addicted men are higher than women, and two special centers allocated for men in the statistical population were considered; in the Javadiyeh Center 10 people were interviewed. In the compulsory treatment center based on article 16, 10 people participated in the interview as well. Demographic characteristics of participants encompass age, gender, marital status, the number of children, the place of residence, the mode of addiction, degree, parental level of education, age of first drug use, the way of getting familiar with drugs, the type of drug used for the first time, the number of years for drug use and the number of times for quitting drugs.

**Sample:** The study includes men and women who attended in medical centers of Bojnourd whether forcibly or self-reportedly and they have been considered as drug users somehow. With regard to the research method that is grounded theory the sample size of the study continued until we reached to the theoretical saturation and no difference was felt in the answers. Accordingly, the sample size of the study encompasses 33 participants for the interview and among them there are 13 women and 20 men. Considering this important fact that the number of men who use the drug is higher than women, men embrace a larger sample size than women. **Sampling method:** In this study, non-probability sampling method was applied purposefully due to in-depth interviews.

### **Research Findings**

**Specifications:** Out of the 33 participants in this study, there are 13 women and 20 men. In terms of age range, out of respondents, 8 participants are between age group of 18 to 26 years old and among them 25 participants are in the age range of 27-35 years old. In terms of marital status, there are 9 single, 7 divorced and 2 unmarried participants due to death or placing in unmarried situation owing to concubine and separation, and 15 individuals are married. Among the married individuals that the number of them are 24 individuals; 10 participants don't have any children, other participants have 1 to 5 children that among them 6 individuals have one child, other 6 individuals have two children, one person has 4 children and other one person has 5 children. In terms of residence, most of the participants stated that they live in North Khorasan and Bojnourd and they reside in marginal regions, and only 2 persons had lived in the north and 2 individuals resided in Tehran in the past. In terms of education level, most of the respondents have illiterate parents. In terms of the number of years for drug use, 12 respondents had used between 6-10 years, 8 persons between 11-15 years, 5 individuals between 16-20 years, 3 persons 1-5 years, 2 individuals 21-25 years, 2 persons 31 -35 years and 1 person between 26-30 years.

Moreover, the way of getting familiar with drugs indicates that 22 respondents stated that they got familiar with drugs via friends. Age of first drug use shows that 11 respondents have started drug use between the ages of 21-25, 7 persons between the ages of 10-15, 3 individuals between the ages of 0-5 and 3 persons between the ages of 26-30. 3 respondents stated that they had used drugs during childhood and experienced it from neonatal period and through their families. Among them, only 2 have a record of drug use between 1 to 2 years. 10 participants expressed that the number of times for quitting drugs was only one time. 7 persons had quit more than 10 times, 5 individuals for 2 times, 4 persons for 4 times, 3 individuals for 9 times, 2 persons for 10 times, 1 individual for 5 times and 1 person for 3 times.

In order to analyze this study based on the instructions of Strauss and Corbin (2011) open, axial and selective coding have been implemented that in this essay, we examine only from a social and economic perspective.

**Causal conditions:** Different factors (individual, interpersonal, social and economic, environmental factors) affect the addiction problem that according to this study, the most important factors are social and economic causes that encompass the categories as: not having a suitable job, low income, low aimless social capital, unemployment, considering environment for drug use, lack of access to support and counseling systems, abundance of drug and its cheapness, being ostracized by family, negative social capital (humiliated and rejected behaviors by family and society), social isolation and lack of welfare infrastructures.

**Contextual context:** Context is a set of specific features concerned with phenomena in which action is embedded. The context is in fact a kind of organizing, arranging the general features of the phenomenon that are matched in different ways and placed in line with their next stage to specify

patterns (Strauss and Corbin, 2012: 133). In this study, the contextual conditions affecting addictions are as following: poverty and homelessness, work fatigue and long working hours, child marriage and getting married at a young age, child labor.

**Interference conditions:** The researcher can consider the interference conditions as a broader structural context concerned with the phenomenon. These conditions facilitate or limit the (action / interaction) strategies in a specific field (Strauss and Corbin, 2012: 104). These conditions include: lack of life skills, stupor, hedonism, curiosity, illusion of being vigorous and lack of awareness about the effects of drug addiction.

**Strategies:** Getting rid of physical and mental pain, achieving a sense of temporal relief, lack of welfare infrastructures, communicating with addicts and negative social capital.

**Consequences:** Divorce and family problems, getting fired, reducing family function.

**Solution:** According to the findings obtained from the interviews and the paradigm model, the proposed solutions for preventing drug abuse in the social and economic domain are as following: creating equal and suitable job opportunities, increasing material and economic facilities, teaching life skills, training problem solving, informing the consequences of drug use, family control and supervision, easy ways for encouraging to get married and family formation, family commitment, providing conditions for accessing to service and counseling systems.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to examine the social and economic variables affecting the lived experience of drugs based on a grounded theory approach. The results obtained from the interviews demonstrated that permanent and reinforced social and economic factors affect the lived experience of the drug users.

The rapid growth of technology has granted to human being significant peace and well-being. But unfortunately, psychological and social harms and problems have increased significantly with same intensity. People are ignorance of the emotional and psychological needs of themselves and their family members owing to various life concerns. Especially, the family is the first environment in which a person learns the quality of life in a way that the rate of individual's consistency in the future depends on how his personality had been in childhood. In addition to childhood, adolescence and puberty are so important and significant periods of each person's life. From the view of participants the most considerable and effective social causes in an unhealthy family are family breakdown and divorce, family problems and tensions, loss of family supervision, low social capital and emotional indifference, group of disreputable friends, considering environment for drug use and accessing to the drugs. Other factors affecting the tendency toward drug addiction encompass economic causes (poverty and homelessness, fatigue and long working hours, and child labor).

The social consequences of drug abuse among participants demonstrate that addiction causes divorce, family problems, getting fired and reduced family function, and disturbance of the family system. To prevent the addiction problem and lack of lived experience of addiction and also the loss of the relapse in individuals who recovered, the cases as providing job opportunities along with considering skills training in line with the talent of person, training and supporting the families of these people, counseling support and life skills ... should be considered in this domain.

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