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## **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ATTACHMENT, ADAPTABILITY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN ADDICTS AND PEOPLE WHO QUIT ADDICTION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The present research aims to study the manner of attachment, adaptability and mental health in addicts and people who quit the addiction. The present research's statistical population includes addicts in Ahvaz city who have gone to drug addiction rehabilitation centers for several times in 2016 and there are people who have rehabilitated for more than 15 months. The design of this research was causal-comparative and the data were collected by Sohrabi and Samani (2011), Adolescent Attachment Scale of Collins and Reid (1996), Mental Health Scale (GHQ) (1972) and it was statistically analyzed through the SPSS tool and statistical t- test method. The findings showed that the average scores for those who rehab the addiction were significantly higher than those who were unable to rehab. The score of those who were unable to rehab the addiction in two attachment styles including secure and avoidant is less than those who rehab, but it is higher and statistically significant at anxious attachment.*

**Keywords:** Attachment, Adaptability, Mental Health.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Today, governments pay exorbitant cost to deal with drug abuse. This phenomenon has become the focus of attention of specialists in different fields as an individual-social problem. Undoubtedly, the importance of creating effective prevention and treatment strategies for many years is clear. Emphasis on the factors influencing drug dependence and frequent recurrence is more than anything else on the formation of long-lasting personality patterns and this personality pattern is strongly influenced by the evolutionary orientation of personality (Carlson & Sroufe, 1995). A review of the research literature suggests that several biological, psychological, social and familial factors are associated with drug abuse (Carr, 1999).

In summary, the results of several studies on drug abuse reveal their abnormal personality patterns, on the one hand, and the prognosis of their improvement and treatment strongly depends on these patterns of personality and drug abuse disorders on the other hand. These data indicate that people with drug abuse or drug dependency will benefit from those types of therapeutic interventions that take into account the abnormal behavior patterns and abnormalities in conceptualizing, formulating, and designing treatment. In this research, the

role of attachment styles, social adaptation and mental health is discussed as a developmental factor in the tendency toward drug addiction and addiction rehab.

There are fewer phenomena that could threaten human community such as addiction. Despite the dangers and consequences of addiction, the number of victims of this death trap is increasing every day and observing its scary scenes now cannot be considered as a serious warning to avoid other people, especially young people. Addiction has been also growing in Iran in recent years. The latest statistics suggest that there are two million dependent addicts and six million drug addicts as a hobby in Iran, but according to available evidence, the number of addicts is much higher than this and if we consider the average family size in Iran five, at least 10 million people are exposed to be addicted and if every addict spends at least 1,000 toman a day on drugs, the damage done to the country will be 2 billion toman per day.

In addition, addiction is a chronic and recurrent disorder that is a threat to human health and life. We are able to anticipate the possibility of recurrence and prevent it by Proper and a timely consideration by identifying some factors such as attachment styles, social adaptability, environmental risk factors and mental health (Radii, Rezayi, 3th Ed).

The population of Iran is now more than 70 million. About 40 million people are over 15 years old, of which about 2 million are drug abusers or drug addicts. Some statistics have reported about 4 million drug users (Makri, 1999). Maybe, it can be generally said that mental health, attachment styles, and social adaptation of addicts play an important role in the etiology and process of treatment or recurrence in the addict and neglecting the characteristics and mental health leads to resistance in the treatment and return of the disease.

A research showed that attachment style can be considered as a strong predictor of severity of symptoms, development and continuation of PTSD disorder (Post-treatment stress Disorder) (Deepring, 2008). Also, the results in another study showed that spouses of war prisoners showed a higher level of stress than the second group. And couples who had a higher level of anxious or avoidance attachment style show a higher level of stress (Dekel, 2010). In a study conducted on survivors from Bam earthquake victims' areas, there was a significant positive relationship between secure attachment style and mental health and there was a significant negative relationship between avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles with mental health and attachment styles were predictor of mental health. The secure attachment style was the best predictor of mental health (Rahimian, 2008).

A meta-analysis recently conducted by Schneider et al, suggests that there is a relationship between the quality of mother-child attachment and social adaptability. This meta-analysis included 630 types of study that examined the relationship between mother-child attachment and relationship with peer and reported that there was a significant relationship between secure attachment and positive relationships with peers. The level of aggression and antisocial behavior in this study was a good indicator of social incompatibility (Atkinson, 1992). In a study, there was relationship between attachment styles and adaptive skills with recurrence of heroin use. In this study, the level of family disputes, environmental stresses and lifestyle that show the necessity of paying attention to adaptive and mental health skills was effective in the probability of recurrence of addiction (Gassab, 2010). On the other hand, it was stated in the research that mental health education can raise awareness, develop a positive attitude and change the self-concept of individuals, and it is considered as strategy with good cost effectiveness in early prevention of psychological problems (Erfani Khanoghahi, 2001).



## RESEARCH METHOD

The present research's statistical population includes addicts in Ahvaz city who have gone to addiction treatment centers for several times in 2016 and they are people who more than 15 months have passed from their addiction rehab. The design of this research was causal-comparative and the data were collected by Sohrabi and Samani (2011), Adolescent Attachment Scale of Collins and Reid (1996), Mental Health Scale (GHQ) (1972) and was statistically analyzed through the SPSS tool and statistical test t- test.

## CONCLUSION

- Is there a significant difference between mental health in people with addiction and those who rehab?

The average score of those who were unable to rehab drug addiction was significantly higher than those who succeeded in addiction rehab ( $P < 0.05$ ) and this suggests that the mental health of those who were successful in drug addiction rehab was better than those who were unsuccessful in issue (table 1).

**Table 1: Independent t to compare mental health in successful and those who were unable to rehab the addiction: the results of the statistical test**

| subtests                  | successful in drug addiction rehab |                    | were unable to rehab the addiction |                    | p-value |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
|                           | Mean                               | Standard deviation | Mean                               | Standard deviation |         |
| Physical problems         | 4.98                               | 3.4                | 8.67                               | 3.39               | 0.001<  |
| Anxiety problems          | 5.7                                | 3.26               | 9.2                                | 2.98               | 0.001<  |
| Social problems           | 5.68                               | 4.02               | 11.12                              | 4.21               | 0.002   |
| Depression                | 2.28                               | 3.44               | 4.73                               | 4.96               | 0.00<   |
| Total mental health score | 19.82                              | 10.5               | 34.92                              | 10.58              | 0.001<  |



- Is there a difference between attachment styles in addicts and those who rehab?
- The average score of those who failed in drug addiction rehab in both attachment style including secure and avoidant was lower than those who were unable to rehab the addiction, but it was higher and statistically significant in anxious attachment style ( $P < 0.05$ ) and it was not statistically significant in secure and avoidant attachment styles. ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Table 2).

**Table 2: comparison of different dimensions of attachment style using independent t-test**

| Dimension            | Groups                            | mean  | P value |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Secure               | Successful in rehab the addiction | 16.60 | 0.132   |
|                      | Were unable to rehab the addition | 15.58 |         |
| Avoidant             | Successful in rehab the addiction | 17.60 | 0.503   |
|                      | Were unable to rehab addition     | 17.12 |         |
| Anxious (ambivalent) | Successful in rehab the addiction | 15.39 | 0.008   |
|                      | Were unable to rehab the addition | 17.53 |         |

- Is there a significant difference between social adaptability in addicts and those who rehab?

- The average score of those who were unable to rehab drug addiction is more than those who were successful and this suggests that social adaptability of people who were successful to rehab is better than those who failed. But this difference is not statistically significant ( $p=0.108$ ) (table 3).

**Table 3: Comparison of the mean of scores obtained in terms of social adaptability using independent t-test**

| Groups               | mean  | Degree of freedom | t-value | p-value |
|----------------------|-------|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Successful to rehab  | 10.40 | 117               | -1.62   | 0.108   |
| Were unable to rehab | 12.02 |                   |         |         |

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

**The research's first hypothesis:** The mental health of successful and unsuccessful addicts to rehab the addiction is different. The mental health of those who successfully rehab the addiction was better than those who were unable to rehab the addiction. This research is consistent with research of Karami, Ahmadi, Maliki, 2010. Mental health is effective in drug abuse and also trying to rehab and recurrence. The people get again addicted because of social factors, such as inability to achieve decent jobs and unemployment and consequently poverty due to unemployment. So, the social factor due to poverty and unemployment can be considered as one of the fundamental causes of family disputes and severe mental health loss in these people.

**The research's second hypothesis:** The mental health of successful and unsuccessful addicts to rehab the addiction is different. Anxious attachment style has an impact on the frequent recurrence of addiction in addicted people who were unable to rehab. The results of this study are consistent with the research of Diprinck et al., 2010. One of the primary functions of attachment is the regulation of emotional experiences in interpersonal relationships. People with a secure attachment style seek social support when faced with emotional stress, while those with an unsecure and anxious attachment style tend to use other ways such as alcohol or drug for emotional self-regulation. Accordingly, the method of coping with emotional stress can be used as one of the mechanisms that influence the severity of drug abuse in explaining this finding. It is possible that searching social support in dealing with emotional stress in the secure people with drug abuse disorders justifies the decrease in severity of addiction in these people.

**The research's third hypothesis:** The social adaptability of successful and unsuccessful addicts to rehab the addiction is different. The social adaptability has an impact on the frequent recurrence of addiction in addicted people who were unable to rehab. But this difference was not statistically significant. Researches' findings considered social adaptability as an effective factor in addiction recurrence. In this study, it can be said that social adaptability of the individual is effective in improvement of physical symptoms, symptoms of anxiety and sleep disturbance, social functioning and depression symptoms in addicted persons. Since addiction to drug has severe physical and psychological dependency and these people suffer from a lot of problems in the field of behavior, family and social and personal relationships, psychological follow-ups along with drug interventions are inevitable necessity.



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