



Comparison of the Personal Characteristics of the Recovered Men Through Attending Narcotics Anonymous Self-Help Groups with Those Who Have Been Recovered without Attending These Groups

Elham Zandasta * S. Hamzeh Seddigh and Sholeh Namazi

Islamic Azad University, Kish International Branch, Kish, Iran

*Corresponding Author: zandasta@yahoo.com

Abstract: This research aims to compare the personal characteristics of the recovered men through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time with those who have been recovered without attending these groups in Bandar Abbas. It is a causal-comparative descriptive research and its statistical population includes all recovered men through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time and also those who have been recovered without attending these groups in Bandar Abbas. The research sample consists of 30 recovered men through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time who were chosen through stratified random sampling and 30 recovered men without attending such groups chosen from accessible individuals. Neo Personality Inventory was applied in order to collect information. Research findings showed that the recovered addicts using NA Methods have had higher scores in neurosis, openness and conscientiousness compared to other recovered individuals, while no significant difference between two groups was observed about their extraversion, flexibility and novelty.

Keywords: Personal characteristics, recovered men, self-help groups

INTRODUCTION

Addiction is a condition brought about by repetitive use of a natural or artificial material in a way that the user would be mentally and physically dependant on it. 7.4% of the opium of the whole world is produced in Afghanistan. In last year, about 210,000,000 individuals (4.8% of the population aged between 15 and 64) have used narcotics at least once ¹.

According to the statistics of the Iran Drug Control Headquarters in 2009, the number of official addicts in the country was less than 1,200,000 and the number of recreational addicts was about 800,000 among which 94.8% were men and 5.2% were women. About 44.6% of the addicts were less than 29 years old among whom 25% were between 25 and 29. According to this research, curiosity (22.8%), pleasure (18.6%), mental problems (14%), and entertainment (13.2%) are among the causes of drug abuse.

Addiction is among mental disorder which can be affected by many different causes and factors ². The recent studies have concentrated on risk factors and multiple etiologies. Although social factors are very accentuated in the tendency to narcotics, addiction can be related to personal characteristics and individual skills as well ³.

The studies based on the five-factor model of personality by Costa and McCrea indicate a relationship between personal characteristics and addiction ⁴.

In an investigation based on three-factor model of personality by Eysenck, it was indicated that Addicts have higher scores in neurosis and psychosis ⁵.

There are different therapeutic methods among which NA self-help group meeting, outpatient and clinical pharmacotherapy can be mentioned. Almost in all of the researches related to drug abuse, personal characteristics are mentioned as a factor which leads the person toward abusing drugs ⁶.

Unfortunately, even in the treatment of the addicts with a long clean time, the high rate of recurrence is the main issue ⁷. In order to prevent recurrence and threat the addict, it is very significant to know psychological factors and personal characteristics. Therefore, American Psychological Association considers social-psychotherapy as a substantial element in any therapeutic program for drug abuse. Mental-personal characteristics of addicts are not merely derived by narcotics. Most of them suffer many mental and personal deficiencies even before addiction, which deteriorate and reappear after addiction in a more devastating and chronic way. Thus, addiction is not only a matter of narcotics, but the main issue is the mutual relationship between the personality and addiction. About 90% of those depending on narcotics simultaneously suffer a psychological disorder ⁸.

Many studies have been so far performed aiming to compare the personal characteristics of addicts and non-addicts. But during the searching process, no comparison was found between the personal characteristics of the recovered addicts through attending NA self-help groups and those who have been recovered without attending such groups.

The present research tries to investigate the role of personal characteristics in recovered addicts from using narcotics, as moderator variables in drug abuse. The Main question is that: is there a difference between the personal characteristics of the recovered addicts through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time and those who have been recovered and clean for one year through other methods?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample population and sampling method

This is a causal-comparative descriptive research. The statistical population includes all recovered men through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time and also those who have been recovered without attending these

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groups in Bandar Abbas. The research sample consists of 60 individual including 30 recovered men through attending NA self-help groups with a year of clean time who were chosen through stratified sampling from accessible cases by the personal visit of the researchers to NA meeting location (the research questionnaires were applied in the same session), and 30 recovered men without attending NA self-help groups who were chosen by random sampling through visiting different drug rehabilitation centers and collecting information about them and where they live .

Tool

1 .Neo Personality Inventory: "Neo-FFI" questionnaire designed by Costa and McCrea [9] based on their five-factor theory. This questionnaire is applied in order to investigate five main personality factors and it is designed based on factor analysis. The revised version of this questionnaire called Revised Neo Personality Inventory has been also presented by the same authors Costa and McCrae ⁹.

The longer form of this questionnaire is designed in 240 expressions in order to measure five factors inclosing neurosis, extraversion, flexibility, agreeability and responsibility. This questionnaire also has another form which includes 60 questions and can be applied to evaluate the five main factors as well. In the one with 240 questions, each factor has 6 levels or sub-scales while in the short form, each factor is evaluated by 12 questions. The scoring was based on the-five point system: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3) agree (4), strongly agree (5).

The long form of the questionnaire have been validated in various countries including Iran and the obtained results is similar to Costa test which shows that the correlation of the five sub-scales of the short form with the long one is between 0.77 and 0.92. The estimated internal consistency of the subscales is between 0.68 and 0.86 ¹⁰.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the average score and standard deviation of the research participants in its variables

Table 1. The average score and standard deviation of the research participants in its variables

variable	group	average	Standard deviation
Personality dimensions	neurosis	NA	90.83
		No NA	94.60
	extroversion	NA	106.10
		No NA	104.70
	flexibility	NA	104.30
		No NA	102.63
	openness	NA	108.60
		No NA	105.56
consciousness	NA	123.76	
	No NA	118.43	

As it is observed in table 1, the scores of NA group in some variables are different from the other group.

Hypothesis 1: there is a difference between the neurosis characteristic in recovered addicts through attending self-help NA groups and those recovered through other methods.

The T test was applied in order to investigate this hypothesis. The results are shown in table 2.

Table 2. The results of T test for the comparison of neurosis between the two groups

variable	Group	Average	Standard deviation	Freedom rate	T	Level of significance
neurosis	NA	90.83	6.17	58	-2.228	0.030
	No NA	94.60	6.90			

The achieved results show that the t value is equal to -2.228, which is significant in level of 0.030. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the scores of NA and No NA groups. I.e. the recovered addicts through NA method have lower scores in neurosis compared to the other group.

Hypothesis 2: there is a difference between the extroversion characteristic in recovered addicts through attending self-help NA groups and those recovered through other methods.

The T test was applied in order to investigate this hypothesis. The results are shown in table 3.

Table 3. The results of T test for the comparison of extroversion between the two groups

variable	Group	Average	Standard deviation	Freedom rate	T	Level of significance
extroversion	NA	106.10	6.19	58	0.786	0.435
	No NA	104.70	7.53			

The achieved results show that the t value is equal to 0.786, which is not significant. Therefore, there is no difference between the scores of NA and No NA groups in extroversion characteristic.

Hypothesis 3: there is a difference between the extroversion characteristic in recovered addicts through attending self-help NA groups and those recovered through other methods.

The T test was applied in order to investigate this hypothesis. The results are shown in table 4.

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Table 4. The results of T test for the comparison of flexibility between the two groups

variable	Group	Average	Standard deviation	Freedom rate	T	Level of significance
flexibility	NA	104.30	6.47	58	0.954	0.435
	No NA	102.63	7.04			

The achieved results show that the t value is equal to 0.954, which is not significant. Therefore, there is no difference between the scores of NA and No NA groups in flexibility characteristic.

Hypothesis 4: there is a difference between the openness characteristic in recovered addicts through attending self-help NA groups and those recovered through other methods.

The T test was applied in order to investigate this hypothesis. The results are shown in table 5.

Table 5. The results of T test for the comparison of openness between the two groups

variable	Group	Average	Standard deviation	Freedom rate	T	Level of significance
openness	NA	108.60	3.19	58	3.375	0.001
	No NA	105.56	3.74			

The achieved results show that the t value is equal to 2.375, which is significant in level of 0.001. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the scores of NA and No NA groups. I.e. the recovered addicts through NA method have higher scores in openness compared to the other group.

Hypothesis 5: there is a difference between the consciousness characteristic in recovered addicts through attending self-help NA groups and those recovered through other methods.

The T test was applied in order to investigate this hypothesis. The results are shown in table 6.

Table 6. The results of T test for the comparison of consciousness between the two groups

variable	Group	Average	Standard deviation	Freedom rate	T	Level of significance
consciousness	NA	123.76	6.50	58	2.744	0.008
	No NA	118.43	8.42			

The achieved results show that the t value is equal to 2.744, which is significant in level of 0.008. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the scores of NA and No NA groups. I.e. the recovered addicts through NA method have higher scores in neurosis compared to the other group.

DISCUSSION

The research results showed that there is a difference between personal characteristics of the recovered addicts through attending NA self-help Groups and those recovered through other methods. After analyzing the foresaid hypothesis,

it was indicated that the addicts recovered by NA self-help Groups have lower level of neurosis compared to those recovered through other methods. But in comparison of extroversion characteristic between recovered addicts through attending NA self-help Groups and those recovered through other methods, no significant difference was observed. The same result was repeated about flexibility, i.e. there was no significant difference between the flexibility characteristic in the recovered addicts through attending NA self-help groups and those recovered through other methods. As to the openness characteristic, recovered addicts through attending NA self-help groups had a higher level of openness compared to those recovered through other methods. The results also indicated that recovered addicts through attending NA self-help groups had a higher more consciousness than those recovered through other methods. Thus in one general investigation, it was denoted that there is no difference between two groups in personal characteristics such as extroversion and flexibility, but considering the others (neurosis, openness and consciousness, the addicts recovered through attending NA self-help Groups have more acceptable and better personalities.

This finding is in accordance with the results of the previous researches ^{11,12}. Characteristics such as anxiety, aggression, anger, impulsivity, negative emotions, vulnerability to mental pressure and other aspects of neurosis can negatively affect the human's behavior and pave the way for High risk behaviors such as the tendency to use drugs ¹³.

The findings of the present research can help the consultants and psychologists in relieving the patients who depend on drugs. It can also help them to recognize and identify the groups which need help.

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