Iranian Youth’s Attitudes Towards Drugs: Implication For Social Work Practice

Roghayeh Khosravi, Shuresh Lotfi, Azlinda Azman, Emad Abdallah Ayasreh *

ABSTRACT

This research aimed at finding the attitudes associated with common drugs among youth in Tehran, Iran. And how these attitudes are different among youth from different places of residence and socioeconomic status. A self-constructed questionnaire was administered among a sample of 400 youth age ranged 18-29 years chosen by multi-stage cluster sampling from different geographical zones in Tehran. SPSS 19 was applied accommodating descriptive analysis, Pearson Correlation Coefficient, and Kruskal-Walis test to analyze the data. The findings of the study has revealed that there is a significant difference in attitudes associated with different drugs among the respondents, socioeconomic status may not necessarily make the difference between youth attitude toward drugs, and there is a difference in attitude between them from different place of residency. The study has implications for practice, policy, and research for social work profession.

Keywords: Iran, youth’s attitude, common drugs, place of residency, socioeconomic status

1. Introduction

Substance abuse is a contemporary critical social issue that has many adverse consequences on individuals, societies; and governments. In fact, youth substance abuse is a major social problem that exacts a heavy toll on individuals, families, schools, institutions and the medical and legal systems (Barkin et al. 2002; Hyatbakhsh et al. 2008; Savinsky, 2012). The impact on societies could be devastating, short term and as well as long term, unless solutions are established and implemented. It is well established knowledge that substance abuse and abuse in youth has deleterious effects on development and psychological functioning and has created a public health risk (Burrow & Sanchez, 2006; Hyatbakhsh et al. 2008; Liddle, 2010a; Madras et al. 2009). The negative implications of substance abuse include, but not limited to, increased risk for injury and death from interpersonal violence, motor vehicle accidents and drowning (Miller et al. 2001) as well as an increased probability of engaging in high risk sexual behaviors (Biglan et al. 1990; Flisher, Ziervogel & Charlton, 1996). To add, an increased risk for suicidal ideation and behaviors are also serious concerns (Stoelb, 1998; Saving-Williams, 1994; Weiss et al. 1992). Youth substance abuse has also been associated with academic performance, declining grades, absenteeism, truancy and school drop-out (Chen et al. 2004). Furthermore, an association has been found between youth substance abuse and co-morbid psychiatric disorders, such as conduct and mood disorders (Gilrane, 2000).

However, drug use is a choice behavior influenced by a wide array of context or nondrug related variables, positive attitudes toward drug use always appear to forecast drug use or acceptance (Arthur et al. 2002; Barkin et al. 2002; Hawkins et al. 1992; Petraitis et al. 1995; Simon & Carey, 2000; Simon & Gaher, 2004; Pasha Sharifi & Rezaee, 2009). People who have a positive attitude toward drugs in comparison to the others who have negative attitude toward drugs are more at risk to use or abuse drugs (Barkin et al. 2002; Mohajer Darabi, 2007; Pasha Sharifi & Rezaee, 2009; Parsai et al. 2009).
Researchers demonstrate increases in rates of substance abuse that correlate with the decline in the perceived risks of drug abuse. Clearly, this is alarming. As youth interact with drug-using friends, they observe and learn the attitudes and values that encourage drug use (Mason & Windle, 2001; Parsai et al. 2009). It is consistent with the theory of “Mere Exposure Effect” (Zajonc, 1968) which mentions the extent that we are faced with an object or a subject invokes our evaluation of that subject or object. The repeated exposure to a phenomenon makes our responses more powerful.

Youth tend to overestimate the prevalence of substance abuse among their peers; unfortunately, youth's beliefs about their peer acceptance of drug use influence their own substance abuse behavior (Page et al. 2002). Among the young generation it is assumed that occasional and recreational use of drugs cannot make a person addicted to drugs (Aghabakhshi, 2008; Govari et al. 2011; Taramyan, 2004). The misperceived concept is based on the idea that extreme behaviors draw more attention and, therefore, shape youth’s perceptions and norms, and subsequently, their actions. For example, if a young person believes that everyone in his class smokes, he/she may view smoking as “not that bad” and, therefore, take up smoking himself/herself (Olds & Thombs, 2001).

On the other hand, drug traffickers also have found out that manipulating people by framing drug use with a positive attitude toward drugs will bring more customers for them. For instance, drug traffickers introduce Opium as a useful drug for decreasing cholesterol, prevention of stroke and heart failure, cure sexual dysfunctions, increase sexual pleasure and also it is useful for pain relief (Mohajer Darabi, 2007; Taramyan, 2004). All this irrational believes change people's attitudes and increases their tendency for substance abuse (Aghabakhshi, 2008; Darabi, 2007). As mentioned above, positive attitude toward drugs can be as a predictor of the drug use in the future, which will be emphasized throughout the paper.

According to Keyanara et al. (2007), more than 50% of Iran population is less than 30 years old and 90% of experimentations with substances commonly begin in early adolescence in Iran communities. On the other hand, early onset of drug use is a concern simply because it can increase the risk of more frequent use, which is more harmful than experimentation at a later age (Flory et al. 2004; Patton et al. 2004). Consequently, it is urging for social workers, psychologists and sociologists pay more attention to substance abuse prevention programs for youth in Iran.

As it was discussed earlier, one of the foremost reasons for substance abuse is a positive attitude toward drugs and early use of substances which is important because of its consequences later in life. In order to reduce youth demands of drugs and create ongoing negative attitudes, it is crucial for social workers to be aware of the youth attitudes toward drugs in such a way that it becomes clear to what percentage of youth have a positive attitude toward physical, mental and social effects of drugs. Also, what percentages of youth have irrational believe about drugs and have experience of using drugs.

In addition to early detection and examination of attitudes toward drugs may give researchers an insight into different pathways toward substance use; and this knowledge may be applied in a variety of ways, including prevention developing programs, counseling strategies, and social policies.

In this regard, current research seeks to advance knowledge on the attitude dimensions (cognitive, affective and behavioral intentions) of youth toward common drugs and the difference between attitudes among youth from different socioeconomic status and place of residence.

Conceptual Dimensions of Attitude

The notion of attitude has received a lot of attention among social scientists. Study of peoples' attitudes is critical in understanding their social behavior because changing people's attitudes might change their personal behavior as well (Ajzen, 1985; Karimi, 2009). According to Hogg and Vaughan (2005), “An attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols” (p. 150).

Three dimensions being identified for attitude such as cognitive, affective and behavioral intention. According to Karimi (2009), for starters, cognitive dimension is defined as knowledge and information that a person has about an attitude object. Affective dimension.
On the other hand, composes of affect that an attitude about the object provokes in a person. The object could be good or bad.

Lastly, behavioral intention demonstrates to which extent a person has the susceptibility (subjective and objective) to perform an action. Analyzing the attitude of people is very important in predicting their future behavior. As these attitudes are stronger, reliant on knowledge, experience, and training, it will be more effective on the person's future behavior (Farhodian et al. 2008). This is why studying attitudes remain very important, especially in relation to drug use and abuse.

Methodology
Sampling
A sample of 400 people between 18-29 years old in Tehran city was recruited through multi-stage cluster sampling, which was carried out in more than one stage. At primary sampling units, the city of Tehran has divided into five geographical zones that are comprised of (north, south, west, east and center). It is important to take into account that socioeconomic status is different in this five geographical zones.

During the stages, in order to choose areas, random sampling has been applied and in the last stage in order to choose dwelling units, systematic sampling has been used. The sample size was calculated using the Cochran method. Each cluster represented 20% of the sample.

After the procedure of the sampling, The choice of participants followed two main criteria: having knowledge about the drugs that are in focus of the study, and confirming that they are not addicted to any drugs.

Research instrument
The researchers performed a quantitative study using self-constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of nine socio-demographic questions and 23 questions about attitude toward drugs. Socio-demographic variables considered included gender, age, social and economic status and the place of residency. The attitude toward drugs questionnaire was composed of 11 questions for measuring cognitive attitude, four questions for measuring affective attitude and eight questions for measuring behavioral intention attitude. The attitude was assessed in the context of asking subjects about five different categories of drugs (Opium, Crack, Methamphetamine, Hashish and Tramadol).

In order to find out the most popular drugs in Tehran, researchers carried out interviews with 20 medical doctors who operate Methadone Maintenance therapy (MMT) center. According to these interviews, the most common drugs were Opium, Crack, Glass, Marijuana and Tramadol, respectively.

Validity and Reliability
The questionnaire used a number of multiple-choice questions. In order to examine the validity of questionnaire, both content validity and face validity have been applied. In terms of content validity of the questionnaire, 10 lecturers from the school of social sciences at the Allameh Tabatabaee University read the questionnaire and made their professional correction and suggestion. In addition, in order to examine face validity, before setting the main questionnaire as pre-test the questionnaire filled up with some respondents and during this pretest; the questions that were unclear and ambiguous for respondents were removed or asked how to rewrite these questions to be more understandable. It is important to mention here that these respondents were eliminated to participate in data collection of the study.

In regards to test reliability, Cronbach's alpha has been tested. And then again, Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 for the questionnaire which shows a high reliability.

Statistical Analysis
In order to analyse the empirical data, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 19) was applied.

In term of demographic data the descriptive statistics was applied, and the results have been shown in percentage.

In regards to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status and attitude toward drugs Pearson correlation coefficient was used.

Finally, as test of normality by Kolmogrov-Smirnov showed that the scores are not normal, so that in order to identify different attitude among youth toward drugs in different areas of Tehran, the non parametric test of the Kruskal-Walis was applied.
Results

TABLE (1)
Demographic Findings and Different Dimensions of Attitude Toward Different Drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-25</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-29</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Attitude toward</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>27.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>22.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>19.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
<td>24.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affective Attitude toward</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>29.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>7.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>17.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>18.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
<td>27.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Intention Attitude toward</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>29.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>11.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>19.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>19.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
<td>20.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Attitude toward</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>7.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>20.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>19.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
<td>23.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=400)

Demographic Findings

Table 1 shows the results of demographic variables and percentage of different dimension of attitude toward different drugs among samples.

Of the sample of 400, 58.5% were male and 41.5% were female. The majorities ranged in age from 18 to 21 years (40.3%), 26.8% were in 26-29 years, and 33% were in 22-25 years.

Findings of Attitude Dimensions toward Drugs

In terms of cognitive attitude, the most positive cognitive attitude was toward opium by 27.97% and Tramadol with 24.84 percent were after Opium. The result of measured sub scales in this variable showed that,
37.30% of the participants did not accept Tramadol as an addictive drug and also 33.80% of them did not accept Marijuana as an addictive drug. Of the all participants, 57% of them knew Opium as a treatment for some diseases and also 20.3% of them assumed Hashish could be used as a recreational and 17.8% of them had the same idea about Opium. 18.8% of subjects assumed Methamphetamine as a thing that could be useful during the exam time. And finally, 33.8% and 20.5% of them had the idea that respectively Methamphetamine and Opium could be useful in improving sexual relationships.

Regarding affective attitude, 29.16% of participants had a positive affective attitude toward Opium. Tramadol with 27/53% is in the second rank. The results of subscales in the affective dimension showed, 31% introduced the Methamphetamine as a very enjoyable drug and 26.3% had the same thought about Hashish. A huge percentage of subjects, 63.3% thought that Opium is a very strong relieving and relaxing drug and 45.8% had the same thought about Tramadol. In the other hand, 8.3%, 6.3%, and 4%, respectively liked to have experience of using Methamphetamine, Tramadol, and Opium even once in their life.

In terms of behavioral intention, 29/10% of participants had the most positive behavioral intention, attitude toward opium followed by Tramadol with 20/07%. According to subscales, 29.8% of youth had relationships with people who were using Opium, 21% had a relationship with Methamphetamine users, 19.3% with Hashish users, and 17.3% had relationships with people who were dealing with Tramadol. Participants though 24% of their friends used Hashish and 20% of their friends used Methamphetamine. About 10.5% had experience of using Hashish, 19% used Tramadol, and 7.3% used Opium in their life. Also, 11.5% of youth reported that they lived in a family that Opium was being used by the family members.

Regarding the overall attitude, 28.57% had a positive attitude toward Opium, 23.89% toward Tramadol, 20.46% and 19.26% had respectively positive attitude toward Methamphetamine and Hashish. Results showed that there was a difference between youth attitudes toward different drugs. Generally, youth had a positive attitude toward Opium, Tramadol, Methamphetamine, Hashish, and Crack, respectively.

### TABLE (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic Status and Attitude Toward Drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 5% level**

The relationship between socioeconomic status and attitude toward drugs was investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient (Table 2). There is only one significant relationship between family socioeconomic status and attitude toward Opium. As it is shown in the table 2 there was a weak positive correlation between family socioeconomic status and attitude toward Opium, r=.116, n = 400, p <0.05, means that high levels of family socioeconomic status associated with higher levels of attitude toward Opium. There is no significant correlation between family socioeconomic status and attitude toward other drugs.

In summary, attitude toward drugs are not different among youth’s attitudes from different socioeconomic background.
### Table 3: Attitude Toward Drugs in Different Areas of Tehran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Drug</th>
<th>Crack (Md)</th>
<th>Hashish (Md)</th>
<th>Opium (Md)</th>
<th>Tramadol (Md)</th>
<th>Methamphetamine (Md)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>236.50</td>
<td>200.50</td>
<td>240.59</td>
<td>230.42</td>
<td>234.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>167.30</td>
<td>179.27</td>
<td>157.15</td>
<td>181.81</td>
<td>148.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>210.75</td>
<td>219.10</td>
<td>201.41</td>
<td>208.76</td>
<td>228.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>205.78</td>
<td>215.48</td>
<td>214.53</td>
<td>197.29</td>
<td>220.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>182.18</td>
<td>188.15</td>
<td>188.83</td>
<td>184.22</td>
<td>170.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$</td>
<td>18.127</td>
<td>7.126</td>
<td>23.083</td>
<td>9.621</td>
<td>36.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P$</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degree of Freedom=4

Table 3 presents results from Kruskal-Wallis Test to identify different attitude among youth toward drugs in different areas of Tehran.

A Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed a statistical difference in attitude toward Crack across five different areas of residence (GP1, n=80: south, GP2, n=80: center, GP3, n=80: east, GP4, n=80: west, GP5, n=80: north) $\chi^2$ (n=400) = 18.127, DF=4, $p = 0.001$. The south area recorded a higher median score (Md=236.50) than the other four areas and center recorded a lowest median score (Md=179.27) than other four areas.

In terms of attitude toward Hashish, the test showed a non statistically significant difference across five areas. $\chi^2$ (n=400) = 7.126, DF=4, $p = 0.129$.

In addition, test indicates a statistically significant difference in attitude toward Opium across five different areas. $\chi^2$ (n=400) = 23.083, DF=4, $p = 0.000$. The citizens in west area recorded a higher median score (Md=214.53) than other areas and center recorded the lowest median (Md=157.15) than the other four areas.

Also in testing attitude toward Tramadol, the analysis indicates a statistically significant difference across five different areas. $\chi^2$ (n=400) = 9.621, DF=4, $p = 0.047$. The south area recorded a higher median (Md=230.42) than the other areas and center recorded the lowest median (Md=181.81) than the other four areas. Finally, in terms of attitude toward Methamphetamine the finding of the test indicates a statistically significant difference across five different areas. $\chi^2$ (n=400) = 36.343, DF=4, $p = 0.000$. The south area recorded a higher median (Md=234.82) than the other areas and center recorded the lowest median (Md=148.28) than the other four areas.

In summary, youth attitude toward drugs except Hashish are different between subjects from different place of residence.

### Discussion

The study was designed to investigate the attitudes associated with some common drugs among youth in Tehran. According to the interview with 20 medical doctors who operate a Methadone Maintenance therapy (MMT) center, the more common drugs among youth were Opium, Crack, Methamphetamine, Hashish and Tramadol, respectively.

In conclusion, the findings of this study have revealed that there is a significant difference in attitude associated with different drugs among youth. These findings also indicate that socioeconomic status may not necessarily make the difference between youth attitude toward drugs. Additionally, the findings found differences in attitude among youth from different places of residency.

Findings about attitude components showed that youth had more positive behavioral intentions toward drugs followed by affective and cognitive attitudes, respectively. The data indicate that a sizable proportion of youth either they had the experience of drug use (About 10.5% had experience of using Hashish, 19% used Tramadol, and 7.3% used Opium in their life) or they had friends who were using drugs (29.8% of youth had relationships with people who are using Opium, 21% had a relationship with Methamphetamine users, 19.3% with Hashish users, and 17.3% had relationships with people...
who were dealing with Tramadol). Also, 11.5% of youth reported that they lived in a family which Opium has been used by family members.

As it was discussed, the behavioral intentions are regarded as a summary of the motivation required to perform a particular behavior. In other word, behavioral intentions reflect individuals’ decisions due to course of actions. Also, the behavioral intention can be treated as an index for the willingness of people to try and perform the behavior (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980).

In the context of this research, this means that, as the behavioral intentions - which compose of having the experience of using drugs, having family members who are using drugs, and relationship with friends who are using drugs – are more stronger, the cognitive and affective dimensions of attitude also will be more strong. All these, consequently, will increase positive attitudes toward drugs.

These findings are congruent with the mere exposure effect theory that was indicated in the introduction, and also congruent with ecological risk and resilience theory which shows individuals as developing within a complex system of relationships and provides a framework to examine factors that may help explain substance abuse.

In addition, these findings are consistent with former researches which indicate that as youth interact with drug-using friends and living in family with drug-using member, they observe and learn the attitudes and values that encourage drug use (Govari et al. 2011; Mason & Windle, 2001; Parsai et al. 2009; Taramiyan, 2004).

The research results also demonstrate the irrational believe of youth toward drugs. A sizeable proportion (37.30%) of the participants did not accept Tramadol as an addictive drug and this followed by the Marijuana (33.80%). Among the whole participants, 57% of them were believed in Opium as a treatment for some diseases, and also 20.3% of them assumed that Hashish could be used as a recreational, and 17.8% of them had the same idea about Opium. 18.8% of subjects assumed Methamphetamine as a useful drug during the exam time. And also, 33.8% and 20.5% of them have the idea that respectively Methamphetamine and Opium could be useful in improving sexual relationships. These results are congruent with the decision model of risk taking which demonstrate that variables could have an effect on risk-taking behavior by influencing the evaluation of the consequences of risk (Furby & Beyth-Maram, 1992). Also, these findings are consistent with Govari et al. (2011) and Jazayeri et al. (2002) research that talked about the relationship between irrational beliefs about drugs and substance abuse.

Furthermore, among drugs, a sizeable proportion (28.57%) of youth had a positive attitude toward Opium. The positive attitude and irrational believe about Opium could be as one of the reasons for the high rate of Opium use among Iranian youth (Mohajer Darabi, 2007). According to the Delavar (2007) research about the relation between attitude and behavior, it could be predicted that youth are more at risk of using Opium because attitude toward this drug among youth is very potent and clear, affective and cognitive attitude toward this drug are highly interdependent and finally the attitude toward this drug are more positive and higher than the other drugs.

Moreover, these findings are consistent with Mohajer Darabi (2007) research which posits that youth have higher levels of positive attitude toward Opium, and also they consider Opium as a useful drug in dealing with some disease.

Although of many prior studies such as (Govari et al., 2011; Jazayeri et al. 2002; Jodati et al. 2007; Mohajer Darabi, 2007) whom they found a strong association between attitude toward drugs and socioeconomic status, this research findings indicate that youth socioeconomic status is do not play a strong role in their attitude toward drugs. In spite of these findings, it can be noticed that in today’s Iran community, substance abuse is common among all Iran’s communities, not only among some special groups or social classes.

Finally, the research results found differences in attitude among youth from different places of residence which is in an agreement with that of Jazayeri et al. (2002) that the place of residence is the risk factor for youth intent for substance abuse.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The strength of this study rests on the notion that it addressed a gap in the existing literature by focusing on different components of attitude toward common drugs among youth in Tehran. Further, the research adds to the
body of knowledge about differences in youth attitude toward different drugs by separating and testing different components of attitude. As well as examining the differences of youth attitude by the place of residence and socioeconomic status.

Moreover, this study may benefit those who work in school settings such as social workers, educators and counselors. Schools are important places in which youth forms friendships, the possibility of having peers, participation in activities, and learn pro-social or anti-social behaviors. Social workers can help to promote pro-social behaviors among youth by assisting the implementation of appropriate programs that cultivate a positive school environment and healthy peer relationships, and by supporting parents’ efforts to grown up their children in an appropriated way.

Above all, Social workers need to expand the peer group of youth in universities, schools and in their local communities in order to manage the youth thoughts, beliefs and attitude toward drugs. This paramount important because it is established that youth assessment of how common a behavior is among their peers influences their engagement in that behavior. Therefore, providing youth with accurate information about their peers’ substance abuse can reduce the risk of substance abuse by them (Haines & Spear, 1996).

Further, Social workers need to enlarge preventive intervention programs according to the local culture and the place of residency. According to the findings, there is a difference between youth’s attitude toward drugs from different places of residence, therefore the intervention programs which will be designed by social workers should be locally based and in line with the existing problem in that place of residence. Specifically, extra attention needs to be paid to youth who are living in the area that shows more positive attitude toward drugs.

The findings of this study and literature review also indicate the need to inform youth about new drugs and the irrational beliefs about positive functions of drugs while at the same time, educate families about the parenting strategies which could be as a protective factor for youth. Social workers should also be aware of the increased number of new drugs and design preventative strategies that could be applied against the positive advertisement about these new drugs which are trying to show them as useful drugs.

Education and knowledge are described as important factors shaping attitude and behavior (Delavar, 2007; Aghabakhshi, 2008). This research findings besides emphasizing on teaching knowledge about drugs, also emphasis on changing the approach to focus on changing behavior associated with drugs. A lesson learnt from this research is that while it is important to identify the youth attitude associated with drugs, social workers should also bear in mind the factors that have a positive or negative impact on the youth attitude and also the protective factors that could be used in order to prevent substance abuse.

Above all, the study findings add to the body of knowledge the basement for prevention programming and program adaptation. Preventative interventions need to occur early and focus on enhancing drug resistance skills, self-efficacy, and critical decision-making among youth that will directly affect their behavior. Arguably, more research is warranted in the social work field to approve the results of this study and thus allowing for a certain generalization of the results.

It is, however, important to mention that this study had limitations. The study used a cross-sectional design which only associations could be explored and no claim to causality could be made. Also, this study relied on self-reported answer about socially unacceptable and illegal behaviors, so the validity and reliability can be questioned.

REFERENCES


مواقف الشباب الإيراني تجاه المخدرات: مساهمة في العمل الاجتماعي

رقية خسروي، شهريش لطفي، آز lyna آزمان، عماد عبد الله عياصرة *

ملخص

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على المواقف الشخصية المرتبطة بالأدوية المخدورة الشائعة بين الشباب في طهران في إيران. وكيف يمكن لهذه المواقف أن تختلف بين الشباب باختلاف مكان الإقامة والجامة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية. تم توزيع استبانة أدناها الباحثين على عينة من 400 شاب تتراوح أعمارهم ما بين 18-29 سنة، ثم اختيارهم بطريقة العينة العشوائية متعددة مراحل من مختلف المناطق الجغرافية في طهران. تتم تحليل الاستبانة باستخدام تطبيق (SPSS19) بالاعتماد على التحليل الوصفي، ومعالج الرباط بيرسون، واختبار كروسكال واليس لتحليل البيانات.

كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن أن هناك اختلافات كبيرة في المواقف المرتبطة بالأدوية بين أفراد العينة، كما أن الوضع الاجتماعي والاقتصادي لا يلعب دورًا فاعلاً في التأثير في مواقف الشباب من المخدرات. في حين أن اختلاف المواقف يتأثر في اختلاف مكان الإقامة.

لهذه الدراسة أثر مرتبتة على الممارسات، السياسات، والأبحاث المتعلقة بالعمل الاجتماعي.

الكلمات الدالة: إيران، مواقف الشباب، المخدرات شائعة الاستخدام، مكان الإقامة، الوضع الاجتماعي والاقتصادي.

كلية العلوم الاجتماعية، جامعه ساينس، ماليزيا، تاريخ استلام البحث 16/5/2015، وتاريخ قبوله 30/6/2015. *