



The relationship between identity styles and mental health, with a tendency to drug use in students 18 to 20 years of Islamic Azad University, Ramhormoz branch

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between identity styles and mental health with a tendency to drug use. The sample included 300 students 18 to 20 years of Islamic Azad University, Ramhormoz branch that were selected from the Morgan table (1970) and with simple random sampling. In order To collect research data, the questionnaires of Berzonsky Identity styles (1989), symptom chek list-25 Iranian's form (Najarian and Davoodi, 2001) and tendency to drug subscales of the scale of Iranian teenager risk-taking (Zadeh Mohammadi, Ahmad Abadi and Haidari, 2011) were used. For data analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient statistical tests and multiple correlation coefficient were used and for statistical data analysis, spss software was used. The results of the simple correlation coefficients showed a negative and significant relationship between the normative style, identity commitment and mental health with drug abuse, and a positive and significant relationship between diffuse / avoidance style and drug abuse, but there is a negative and non-significant relationship between informational identity style and drug abuse. Multiple regression analysis showed that among predictor variables, two variables of diffuse / avoidance identity style and mental health predict the tendency to drug use and explain 9.4% of the variance that is at the significant level of 0.05.

Keywords: Identity styles, mental health, tendency to drug abuse



Introduction

In Iran, the founder and the prevalence of drugs were British colonial agents, who promoted poppy cultivation ways and using opium at the time of the Safavid. Gradually, they made the poppy cultivation and opium purchase and sales common in the Qajar era. The ignorance and lack of culture development was an important factor in order to colonial exploitation for the spread of poppy cultivation and opium addiction. The British Doctors prescribed the opium as an effective medication for treatment of different diseases, such as headache, toothache, earache, etc, and after a short while, the drug found in every house as a home remedy (Ghanji, 2008).

According to the statistics of the Headquarters for Combating Drugs in 2015, there is 5.2 % of opium addicts, 26% of glass addicts, 22.6% of alcohol addicts, 15.9% of crack addicts and 9.8% of heroin addicts in the country (News Analysis website Asr-e Iran, 2016).

Studies have shown that drug use begins before age 18 (Bergman and Scott, 2001). The highest proportion of addicts in the country (45.7 percent) has started drug use between 17 to 22 years (Zade Mohammadi and Ahmad Abadi, 2008).

Studies in Iran indicate that in recent years, the drug use has spread among teenagers (Bigdeli, 2016, Ayatollahi, Mohammad pour and Rajaeefard, 2004).

Hashemian (2013) stated that there were one and a half million, drug users in 1941, two million drug users in 1963, three million drug users in 1977, two million drug users in 1987, three million and seven hundred and sixty drug users in 2004. In addition, there were seven hundred thousand and fifty to eight hundred thousand drug users in 2006 and (official statistics of Headquarters) one million and two hundred thousand drug users in 2007. In 2011, an Epidemiology of addiction has been conducted that they did not allow declaring the results, but according to Hashemian, there are four million users with considering recreational use of drug in the country (according to the Hamshahri newspaper, 2015).

The results of the previous studies indicated that identity styles have a significant role in drug abuse (Bigdeli, 2016, Noori and Ghorbani, 2010; quoted in Bigdeli, 2016). Identity style is considered one of the most important issues in developmental psychology so that in recent years, it has attracted the attention of researchers. The studies were more about the identity styles of Marcia (1966) relationship with academic achievement (Tabatabai Tabatabai, Kakaei and Mohammadi Aria, 2012), interpersonal relationship (Berzonsky, 1998), compatibility (Michaeli Manee, 2010) and mental health (Torabi, 2009).

Berzonsky (1998) hypothesized that people with different identity situations are different from each other in social-cognitive processes to solve personal issues and decision making according to the process of identity formation. Berzonsky has presented three styles for processing information on the identity. These three styles are informational style, normative style and diffuse / avoidance style.

In addition, reviewing the research evidence showed that people with drug abuse had no better mental health (Bigdeli, 2016; Alimoradi, Hoshyar and Modares Qa'ravi, 2011). The concept of mental health with cognitive health is an aspect of the overall concept of physical,



psychological and social health. Despite the efforts that have been made by the mental health pioneers, in the world, in order to provide further human health, yet, there are no decisive criteria in the definition and the full evidence of mental health (Khoda Rahimi, 1995; quoted in Bigdeli, 2016).

The World Health Organization (2004) defined the mental health, as a state of well-being, in which the individual recognizes his abilities, and uses them effectively and productively and he is useful for communities (Milani Far, 2013).

Research Background

Nazem (2014) in a research showed a significant and positive correlation between the tendency to addiction with the variables of normative, diffuse, adventurous, disinhibition, accepting model, experience seeking and external control. In addition, there is a reverse significant correlation between the tendencies to addiction with identity commitment variables and internal control, and this is while no correlation was observed between the tendency to addiction with informational identity style.

Hosseini (2013) showed in a research that there was no significant difference between cognitive emotion regulation of drug addicts and non-addicts. There was no significant difference between dimensions of cognitive emotion regulation (except the catastrophic dimension) in addicts and non-addicts. There was a significant difference between identity style in normative styles and commitment between drug addicted and non-addicted individuals. Overuse of catastrophic cognitive strategies to regulate and control the emotions, can have a role in the tendency to addiction. In addition, choosing a normative identity processing style and commitment will lead to reduce the tendency of people in drug abuse.

Husseini al-Madani, Ahadi, Karimi, Bahrami and Moazedian (2011) in their study showed that in the informational identity style, non-addicts have significantly higher scores than addicts and recovered addicts. In the normative identity style, the non-addicts have significantly higher levels than and addicts and recovered addicts. In comparison, of diffuse / avoidance identity style, non-addicts have significantly lower scores than the addicts.

Alimoradi, Hoshayr and Modares Qa'ravi (2011) in their study showed a significant difference between two groups in two systems of behavioral activation and behavioral inhibition, but there was no difference in the fight and escape system. The mean scores of addicts in the components of depression, anxiety and stress were significantly higher than normal group.

Furnham Adrina (2012), in his research entitled, the relationship between identity styles and emotional maturity, in addicts, came to the conclusion that, informational and normative identity styles have high level of emotional maturity, while the identity styles of diffuse / avoidance have a less emotional maturity. Therefore, the potential return and recovery of these people with this style is less than the other styles (quoting Yavari, 2013).

Beaumont (2009) and Berzonsky (2008) showed that teenagers' drug abusers had high scores in the normative and diffuse / avoidance style, while those without drug abuse had more informational identity style.



Objectives

The overall objective

1. Examine the relationship between identity styles (informational, diffuse / avoidance, normative and identity commitment) and mental health with a tendency to drug abuse in students 18 to 20 years of Islamic Azad University, Ramhormoz branch.

Detailed objectives

1. Examine the relationship between informational identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
2. Examine the relationship between diffuse / avoidance identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
3. Examine the relationship between normative identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
4. Examine the relationship between identity commitment and the tendency to drug abuse.
5. Examine the relationship between mental health and the tendency to drug abuse.

Hypotheses

General Hypothesis

1. There is a relationship between identity styles (informational, diffuse / avoidance, normative and identity commitment) and mental health with a tendency to drug abuse in students 18 to 20 years of Islamic Azad University, Ramhormoz branch.

Detailed Hypotheses

1. There is a relationship between informational identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
2. There is a relationship between diffuse / avoidance identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
3. There is a relationship between normative identity style and the tendency to drug abuse.
4. There is a relationship between identity commitment and the tendency to drug abuse.
5. There is a relationship between mental health and the tendency to drug abuse.

The statistical population and sample group

The statistical population size was 678 people, including all students 18 to 20 years of Islamic Azad University, Ramhormoz branch, and of this number, 597 were boys and 81 were girls.



In this study, 300 people were selected randomly by using Morgan and Krejcy table (1970), of which 234 were boys and 66 were girls.

Research Tool

A. Berzonsky Identity Styles Questionnaire

The questionnaire was first prepared by Berzonsky (1989) and was revised by White, Wampler and Winn (1998). The questionnaire has forty questions and the participants' answer to the questions is in the form of Likert 5-degree (from strongly disagree score 1 to strongly agree score 5). It should be noted that questions 9, 11, 14 and 20 that are related to commitment, scored reverse. Berzonsky (1992) has reported the Cronbach's alpha for informational, normative and diffuse / avoidance scales, respectively, 0.62, 0.66 and 0.73. The reliability of the questionnaire in this study was evaluated by using the internal consistency method, that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for informational style was 0.75, normative was 0.78, diffuse / avoidance was 0.69 and identity commitment was 0.65, which indicated good reliability of the test.

B. symptom check list-25 Iranian's form (SCL25)

The questionnaire contains 90 questions. It was first set by Dragotis, Lipemoan and Covey (1973; quoted in Basak Nejad, Esfahani Asl and Mahmoudi Ghale Noe, 2012) and later it was published based on clinical experiences and psychological analysis once in 1976 by Dragotis, Rickner and Rock (quoted from Basak Nejad et al., 2012). This questionnaire became the short form of 25 questions by Najarian and Davoodi (2001). The scoring method in this questionnaire was the multiple-choice of Likert, as a lot, to a certain extent, a little or none that scores from 0 to 4 were given for each option. Basak Nejad and colleagues (2012) have used two methods of Cronbach's alpha and split-half to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, that respectively, were 0.87 and 0.81. The reliability of the questionnaire in this study was assessed by using the internal consistency method that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained 0.81 and the amount of which was satisfactory.

C. Subscale of tendency to drug use

Subscale of tendency to drug use is one of the seven subscales, Iranian teenagers' risk-taking (Zadeh Mohammadi et al., 2011). The scale includes 38 items to assess the vulnerability of teenagers in the seven categories of risky behaviors. Such as a tendency toward dangerous driving, a tendency toward violence, a tendency toward smoking, a tendency toward consuming of drugs, a tendency toward consuming alcohol, a tendency toward relationships with the opposite sex and a tendency toward a sexual relationship and behavior. The respondents express their agreement or disagreement with this item on a 5-choices scale from strongly agree (= 5) to strongly disagree (= 1). In this study, the tendency to drug abuse subscale was used that involved eight questions from the questionnaire above. Zadeh Mohammadi et al (2011) have studied Iranian teenagers' risk-taking scale reliability with the internal consistency method and by using the Cronbach's alpha. The results showed that the amount of IARS credit and its subscales is at a desirable and appropriate level and the Cronbach's alpha for the tendency to drug abuse subscale was reported 0.90. The reliability of the subscale, in this study was evaluated by using internal consistency method and the



Cronbach's alpha coefficient for tendency to drug abuse was 0.79, which indicates good reliability of this test.

Findings

Table 1 shows descriptive data such as Average, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores of research variables.

Table 1. The descriptive findings related to the research variables

Variable	Average	standard deviation	Minimum score	maximum score
The tendency to drug abuse	11.78	6.06	8	40
Informational style	40.07	6.08	11	55
Diffuse/avoidance identity style	28.78	6.92	10	47
Normative identity style	32.84	5.26	9	44
Identity commitment	34.13	5.03	20	47
mental health	88.88	16.95	35	125

As the results in Table 1 show, the average and (SD) of the people participating in the study (n = 300), in variables of tendency to drug abuse are 11.78 (6.06), informational identity style are 40.07 (6.08), diffuse / avoidance identity style are 28.78 (6.92), normative identity style are 32.84 (5.26), identity commitment are 34.13 (5.03), and mental health are 88.88 (16.95).

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients of predictor variables with the criterion variable of the research.

Table 2. Correlation coefficients of predictor variables with the criterion variable

predictor variable / criterion variable	Informational identity style		Diffuse/avoidance identity style		Normative identity style		Identity commitment		mental health	
	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P
The tendency to drug abuse	-0.047	0.422	0.168	0.004	-0.142	0.014	-0.193	0.001	-0.248	0.001

Table 3 shows the multiple correlation between predictor variables (informational identity style, diffuse/avoidance identity style, normative identity styles, identity commitment, and mental health) and tendency to drug abuse with the same entry method.

Table 3. Regression analysis results between predictor variables with a tendency to drug abuse and by the same input method

Statistical Indicators	Regression coefficient (β) and (B)					Constant (a)					
	MR	RS	F Ratio	P possibility							
				1	2		3	4	5		
Predictor variables											



1- Informational style	0.306	0.094	F =6.086	0.068	0.107	-0.147	-0.083	-0.065	B	19.402
2- Diffuse/ avoidance identity style			p = 0.000	0.068	0.123	-0.128	-0.069	-0.181	β	
3- Normative identity style				1.017	1.997	-1.785	-0.991	-3.022	t	
4- Identity commitment				0.310	0.047	0.075	0.322	0.003	P	
5- mental health										

Discussion and conclusion

As the results in Table 2 showed, the correlation between informational identity style and tendency to drug use ($r = -0.047$, $p > 0.422$) was not negative and significant. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was rejected. Including those who have achieved these results in their research are Bigdeli (2016), Hussein al-Madani and colleagues (2012), Nazem (2014), Javad Ghaznavi (2008), Berzonsky (2008) and Beaumont (2009). Research showed that informational identity style is positively correlated with coping style focused on the problem, conscious decision-making, active self-explore, internal control source, and high need for cognition, cognitive complexity and facilitator anxiety. These people define their identity in person (my values, my goals, etc.) and have clear career and academic goals and a bright future and brilliant and certain life. In an academic environment, they have higher academic autonomy, self-monitoring academic performance, educational engagement and interpersonal growth, than their fellows. They seek less confirmation of others, trust their judgments, and judge independently and without interference from others in their opinion, while they have greater tolerance and receptivity to deal with new and vague situations and people than the other two styles. Because people with informational identity style have passed the crisis and have reached commitments, therefore, they have been less involved in drug abuse. Commitment to ideological, family and career values acts as a protective factor and is effective in preventing the teenagers' tendency in high-risk behaviors (Nezami, 2014, quoted by Bigdeli, 2016, Ahmadi et al., 2009).

As the results in Table 2 showed, the correlation between diffuse-avoidance identity style and a tendency to drug use ($r = 0.168$, $p < 0.004$) was positive and significant. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Bigdeli (2016), Ahamdi and colleagues (2009), Hussein al-Madani and colleagues (2012), Nazem (2014), Berzonsky (2008) and Beaumont (2009). People with diffuse-avoidance identity style disgust of dealing with personal issues and decisions. If these people stay too long and encounter delays, they show behavioral reactions and they will be controlled with situational demands and incentives. It was found that there is a positive relationship between diffuse or avoidance identity orientation with social deal, self- debilitation, guidance of others and non-adaptive decision strategies and a negative relationship with self-reflection, consciousness and cognitive resistance (Berzonsky, 1994; Berzonsky and Ferrari, 1996; Dallinger, 1995).

As the results in Table 2 showed, the correlation between normative identity style and tendency to drug use ($r = -0.142$, $p < 0.014$) was negative and significant. Thus, Hypothesis 3



was confirmed. The finding is consistent with the results of Bigdeli (2016), Ahamdi and colleagues (2009), Hussein al-Madani and colleagues (2012), Nazem (2014), Berzonsky (2008) and Beaumont (2009). People with normative style respond to questions of identity and decision-making situations by following the suggestions and expectations of important people. The research showed that they are also alert and cheerful, but have a low tolerance for ambiguity and have a strong need to structure and cognitive fence (Berzonsky & Sullivan 1992, Dollinger, 1995).

As the results in Table 2 showed, the correlation between identity commitment and tendency to drug use ($r = -0.193$, $p < 0.001$) was negative and significant. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was confirmed. The findings of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of Bigdeli (2016), Hosseini (2013). To explain this hypothesis, it can be said that, commitment is a referential framework of values and beliefs that may be self-made or suggested by others (Berzonsky, 2003). Commitment is some degree of personal investment that a person expresses to his job or beliefs (Marcia, 1966). Hejazi and Borjalilu study (2009) showed that the commitment to people with informational identity style is in the form of cognitive commitment. It is based on searching and it consists of a range of viewpoints and beliefs that are founded in cognitive and carefully, in a coherent network of beliefs and rational ideas. However, commitment in normative style takes place without critical process and relevant information evaluation. Berzonsky (1989) believes that the Identity Style questionnaire has not considered the commitment in interpersonal relations. Berzonsky (2004) emphasizes that in the Identity Styles questionnaire, questions that assess the commitment, solely follow the commitment in relation to life goals, career goals, religious and political ideology. On the other hand, he notes that scores of people's commitment in relation to the areas mentioned, could not be extended to interpersonal relationships that is an important part of identity structure.

As the results in Table 2 showed, the correlation between mental health and a tendency to drug use ($r = -0.248$, $p < 0.001$) was negative and significant. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was confirmed. The results are consistent with the results of Bigdeli (2016), Ali Moradi and colleagues (2011), Katibayi and colleagues (2010). A person with mental health cares for himself, his family and others and he is compatible with others. He respects himself and others and has a constructive relationship with others. He is aware of his strengths and weaknesses, has a positive attitude to himself and tolerates failures easier. He is flexible and does not lose his control in the face of social problems, and his knowledge of the facts is accurate and acts based on sense and wisdom to get to his goals. He has the ability to solve his problems and meets his needs in a way that is inconsistent with the social values. He uses his spare time desirably to grow his talents well. He considers the world as a passage to reach hereafter; He is not pessimistic, and he is patient, honest, righteous, and generous and he is considered as a justified person in the eyes of another (Bagheri Yazdi, 2006).

As the results in Table 3 showed, among the predictor variables of informational identity style ($\beta = 0.068$, $P > 0.310$), diffuse / avoidance identity style ($\beta = 0.123$, $P < 0.047$), normative identity style ($\beta = -0.128$, $P > 0.075$), identity commitment ($\beta = -0.069$, $P > 0.322$), and mental health ($\beta = -0.181$, $P < 0.003$), two variables of diffuse/avoidance identity style and mental



health predict the tendency to drug use and explain a total of 9.4% of the variance. As previously mentioned in the explanations, people with high informational, normative identity style, identity commitment and mental health have less tendency to drug use than people with diffuse / avoidance identity style and people without high mental health.

Acknowledgments

Researchers of this study tend to thank scholars who helped us a lot during data collection phase.

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International Journal Of Social Science And Psychology Issn: **2348-3016**
Volume 1, Issue 3, July 2016

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