

**Factors influencing Attitudes toward Drug Use among College Students  
(Case of Study: College Students University of Kharazmi)<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract:** *The sample population was consisted of 299 male and female students of the University of Khwarizmi. Theories used in this study included Social bonding theory, differential opportunity, differential association, feeling anomie and frustration (love, and academic failure). The obtained results indicate that there is the bound variables, anomie, differential association, feeling of anomie, social status, academic failure and failure of the love and dependent variable of attitudes towards drug had significant relationship. Variables failure of love and anomie do not have direct causal impact on drug use and through other variables affect attitude towards drugs. There was not significant relationship between engagement and attitudes to drug. Differential association with correlation (0.383) and beta (0.306) has maximum correlation causal impact on positive attitudes toward drug use among college students.*

**Keywords:** *college students, attitudes toward drugs, differential Association, failure of love, drug.*

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## **Introduction**

According to estimates made, each day 2000 kg various drugs are consumed in our country and yearly to be seized 120 tons of this material. Iran has become passageway transit for drugs and adolescents are potentially at risk of drug addiction and addiction among school and university students is among the issues of the day and considered in the society (Muzaffar, et al., 2010: 37- 38). The presence of students outside the place of his residence, is accompanied definitely psychological pressures and stress. Recreational amenities meager and inadequate, distance, remoteness and lack of emotional support from their families, interaction with consumer drug friends and other problems, provides social and psychological pressure fields for college students' tendency to use drug. the results of the rapid assessment of drug abuse in Iran indicates that the reasons for the drug use From the perspective addicts of the study was as follows: Curiosity (7/44%), obtaining pleasure (2/40%), family problems (25%), peer pressure (7/22%), availability of drug (1/21%), lack of emotional (9/18%), treatment of physical pain (5/17%), lack of control of the family (8/12%), failure of love (2/9 percent) (Razzaghi et al., 1381, quoted by Serajzadeh and Feizi, 2007: 84).

Data obtained from a study titled reviews the status of drug use among prisoners have graduate degrees of tehran's prison in October 2000 indicates that 3.14 percent of the student population, 59.7% of Associate Degree, Bachelor's 30.7 percent and 6.2 percent have graduate (Ismail and others quoted Amiri, 2004: 5). Now the results of studies conducted and information that is available inside and outside represents an increase in drug use among the student class (Serajzadeh, 2003; Rahimi moaghar and Sahimi ezadyan, 2005, Siam, 2006, Rahimi moaghar et al., 2006; Serajzadeh and Feizi, A., 2007; Serajzadeh and Feizi, b, 2007; Heydari, 2009; Akbari Zardkhaneh and et al., 2010; Asghari et al., 2013). Many factors, both in college and before that are involved on college students' attitudes toward drugs that present article seeks to explore and Review the factors influencing students' attitudes toward drugs.

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## Research Literature Review

The findings of a longitudinal survey with the aim of assessing the prevalence of drug and alcohol use among college students as well as evaluating the success of drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs in the years 1995, 1997, 1999, in American James Madison University shows that alcohol is the selective substance for most college students and most of them (63/3%) had consumed alcohol at least once a week. 75% of them said that they are not marijuana consumers currently, 43% has never not use marijuana, over 85% of them have not ever used cocaine, amphetamines, opiates (opium and heroin) and other illegal drugs. They also stated that in 1995, and in 1999 nearly half of the college students (43% and 49% respectively) have been under pressure by friends to use alcohol.

Sell and Robson (1998) in an article Perceptions of College Life, Emotional Well-being and Patterns of Drug and Alcohol Use among Oxford Undergraduates indicated that Drug and alcohol use among Oxford undergraduates approximates to that of a similar age group in the general population. One third of students consume more than accepted levels of safe drinking. Drug use was largely confined to drugs other than heroin and cocaine, and 56% of the respondents had tried cannabis. The illegality of drugs had little influence on levels of consumption. Drug or alcohol use did not correlate with physical or emotional problems. Students with problems were most likely to turn to other students for help, suggesting that properly-supported student counselors would be a useful resource.

The results of another study with title the factors influencing the consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs among medical students (Newbury- Birch et al., 1999) revealed that 45 percent of students were drinking alcohol more than permissible limit and age of those whose first consumption of alcohol was lower than age for alcohol consumption expected. Cannabis, with 45% consumption and the most common substance, was used among the illicit drugs. Also Existence of a significant correlation between alcohol consumption and experiences such as sexual conflicts and academic failure and physical involvement was observed. Between the personality characteristics, psychosis and alcohol consumption and illegal drugs, there was a significant correlation.

In an article entitled "alcohol and drugs: from medical college Students to Ph.D." (Newbury- Birch, 2001) in a longitudinal study about the alcohol consumption and illegal substances investigated alcohol consumption and illegal substances among students in the second and fifth year undergraduate and one year after obtaining their degree were evaluated. Research results showed that the average alcohol consumption significantly ( $p < 0.015$ ) increased in all three time: 15.2- 16 - 18.8 units per week. Also investigating the situation of illegal drug use represented an increase of 50 percent to 63 percent to 65 percent over the three surveys.

In a study titled "Prevalence of Alcohol, Tobacco and Psychotropic Drug use among medical students at the Universidad federal de minas gerais" (Petroianu and Et al., 2010) The results show that alcohol and tobacco allocated the highest rates of use among college students and, respectively, 85.2 and 16.3 percent of college students reported taking these two drugs. Among psychotropic drugs reported cannabis by 16.5 % of students, LSD 6.9 %, stimulants 12%, amphetamines 7.5% and the use of inhalants by 16.8% was reported. Cocaine use crack and sedation and steroids were rarely reported. Consumers were mostly single men and most of those who lived alone and do not need to work for their funding.

Nazanin sani (2010) in study titled "addiction among undergraduate students from private universities in Bangladesh" examined addiction causes and types of drugs they consumed and their attitude to treatment. The results showed that 38/75% of respondents mentioned addicted friends as the reasons for their addictions. 31/88% of respondents just for test something new were involved in addiction. According to his conclusion students of college use drugs primarily for recreation or merely out of curiosity while their attitude to compliance of treatment is in very low level.

In another article entitled Knowledge and attitudes of college students Applied - Scientific education Tehran University of Jihad towards Ecstasy (khoshe Mehri and others, 2010) the obtained results showed that most students (88/5 percent) had no visual awareness. Audio awareness among students was (88/5%) and the attitude towards Ecstasy (73/7%). There was no significant relationship between the auditory and visual awareness of ecstasy use with the presence of parents, education level of parents, dimension of family and birth rank, but there was significant relationship between the audio awareness with marital status and religious position.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Historically, the first explanation that has been done on deviant behaviors are related to the biological approach. A major assumption then is that a biological phenomenon such as a brain tumor or some kind of chemical imbalance in the body can directly lead to deviant behavior (Ahmadi, 1998: 20). Psychological theory, they know cause of deviant reactions to personality problems and refers titles like mad, crackpot, sick, and so to people deviate that indicate an abnormality associated with personality and psychological characteristics. (Sadiq, 1988: 56). In contrast to the individualistic biological and psychological approaches, sociologists often see deviant behavior outside of individual characteristics and focus on fields of group. Sociologists believe that a substantial amount of crime and deviant behavior, that addiction is also a manifestation of this behavior, have social nature and are related to institutions and social organizations and should be explained by the sociological approach (Ahmadi, 1998: 33). In this section, sociological theories that explain the positive and negative attitudes to drug use among students of college are listed. The implications of their hypothesis about college students' drug use are also listed.

### **Merton's theory of anomie**

Robert Merton engaged to explain deviant behavior from anomie perspective. He believes that the primary source of anomie is the contradiction between cultural goals such as money, power and authority and legal institutional means for obtaining and achieving objectives (Ibid, 51). Merton, to illustrate the relationship between goals and means, typology of adaptive and relationship with the individual states, "The purpose of life" and "institutional instruments", proposed five position as follows:

1. Conformity
2. Innovation
3. Traditionalism
4. Rebellion
5. Isolationism.

The latest status of compliance with individual objectives and means, A situation in which a person reject both goals and cultural values and both means and institutional ways and acceptable to them. In fact, act the resignation of a social system and usually can be seen among the drug addicts, alcoholics, psychotic and autistic, the outcasts, the strays and.... These people due to the inability to deal with the problems of society, isolated and itself consider failed and they become secluded (Mohseni Tabrizi, 2004: 66).

### **Different opportunities theory**

This theory has been proposed by Cloward and Ohlin. It talks about different types of criminal behavior and illicit opportunities available to the lower classes (Sigel, 2002: 209). According to Cloward, Contrary to popular perception, ability to perform all the functions of criminal easily is not provided to everything except in areas where crime is rooted and institutional learning conditions of the criminal role is to provide. According to the two sociologists, different types of opportunities can lead to different sets of cultural adaptation. Three types of adaptation are featured: 1. criminal subculture, 2. Subculture of militant, 3. Isolated subculture. The third of the three categories of Cloward and Ohlin where some young people are not able to achieve success through legitimate and illegitimate, they will suffer a defeat which results from non-achievement of targets and failure. For example, drug addicts can fit in this group and many young abnormal behavior in competition with other groups and street gangs, sexual and ethical deviance are in this category (Saremi, 2001: 119).

### **Sutherland's theory of differential companion**

Sutherland called companion diagnostic used as an explanation of deviant behavior. Differential company is built on the premise that deviant behavior is inborn and innate, but learnt the same way that any other behavior learnt fits. The learning process, retainers of legal rules as appropriate or inappropriate for defining moved. Because individuals at risk to define that prefer violations in respect to the law become delinquent or criminal. Obviously, all people have to deal with these definitions but the main problem is how to deal with. Sutherland has not paid attention to the association with delinquents, criminals or honest people. But his emphasis is subject to appropriate

and inappropriate define of legal rules (Ahmadi, 1998: 95). Sutherland's theory about drug use by students can be concluded, that drug use is the result of contact with friends and consumer products.

### **Control theory or social relations**

Social control theory, originally was formulated by Hirschi in his effect's book by title causes of delinquency in 1969 and was replaced as the dominant theory of social control theories. The underlying assumption of this theory is unlikely to satisfy the human nature and in this sense it backs the theory of Durkheim of Hobbes (Momtaz, 2002: 119). This theory knows conformity result of social ties among individuals and control exercised by society over the individual and knows nonconformity caused by the rupture of the bond order contract with society (Sedigh, 2008: 60). Hirschi believes that the components belonging and attachment to the community include: attachment, commitment, engagement and belief (Hirschi, 1969: 16, quoted by the Momtaz, 2002: 123-120, Rubington and Weinberg, 2004: 21). In this research two of the four dimensions of the theory of Hirsch that are commitment and engagement is used, because of the high correlation between these two dimensions with drug use among students.

**Commitment:** population to achieve the target such as school, work, home and friends which they have invested for them and have spent their time and energy, they are committed to activities of common life. Hence, in order to maintain the position and social status gained by effort, not deviance. **Engagement:** usually those involved in work, family life or hobbies, community involvement and etc., they have less opportunity to norm violations. Conversely, someone who is unemployed became more deviant. For this reason, social pathologists argue that increasing years of education, military service and the provision of sports facilities reduces the deviance and crime among young people (Ahmadi, 1998: 91). According to Hirsch, the variables included in the study, the relations and communication with family and participation in extracurricular activities and academic reduce drug consumption.

### **Hypotheses**

Here, considering the implications of the theory, assumptions about the variables of the study are discussed:

**Anomie:** Students who have more of a sense of anomie have a more positive attitude to drugs.

**Differential association:** college Students who have among their friends drug users, have a more positive attitude to drugs.

**Differential opportunities:** college students who have more access to drugs in the university and city, have a more positive attitude to drugs.

**Engagement:** college students who have actively participate in normal student activities, have more negative attitudes toward drugs.

College students who have further relationships with families during education, have more negative attitude towards drugs.

College Students who have more access to facilities at the University of Regular Leisure Time, have more negative attitude to drugs.

College students who participate in substance abuse prevention programs in university, have more negative attitude to drugs.

**Commitment:** college students who have more hope for the future, (Employment and marriage) have more negative attitude to drugs

**Failure:** College students who have during education experience of failure (academic), have more positive attitudes toward drugs.

College students who have during education experience of failure (love) have more positive attitudes toward drugs.

### **Methodology**

#### **Statistical population and sample size**

The study population consisted of third and fourth year students studying, and master's students generally were enrolled at the University BS in academic year 91/92. The sample size was 299. The sampling method used in this study is non- probability. The proportional sampling was used. Data collection was prepared by researcher-made questionnaire. In this study, the observation and analysis unit is individual.

## Variables

### Dependent variable

Attitude toward the drugs: Attitude is kind of previous position to do the positive or negative toward people, objects and events (Klein Berg, 1368: 538). In this study, purpose of attitude is to determine the degree of acceptance and readiness to do act positively or negatively toward drugs for students. For example, for Items of attitude can be asked that whether college students should use drugs or not. To operationalize this variable were used measures of attitudinal items Serajzadeh (2003) with a range of responses with the very agree until very disagree.

### Independent Variables

**Commitment:** indicates the acceptance of common goals and a sense of religious community that the person to feel burdened society stems. This variable was measured using 6 Questions 5-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree totally.

**Engagement:** This dimension reflects the level of involvement and participation in social roles and activities. This variable were measured using Serajzadeh' measures (2003), which consists of 6 questions as closed questions with a range of very high to very low

**Differential association:** namely, that the amount and intensity of the relationship with the person who have agreed definitions with crime be more than who have opposing definitions (Salimi and Delavari, 2001: 513). This variable was measured using Serajzadeh' measure (2003), which consists of 5 questions as closed questions with a range of very high to very low.

**Differential opportunity:** Purpose of differential opportunity is that the individuals for Deviant have access to opportunities illegitimate. This variable was examined using Serajzadeh' measure (2003), with 4 questions.

**Feeling of anomie:** Durkheim's definition of anomie refers to a state of disorder, disturbance, fragmentation and anomie in social system which gradually led to the decline of moral authority and society loses effective ethical management and social control to the person. Individual mutually indifferent to society's normative system (Marjaee, 2003: 26). To operationalize this variable was measured using Sherafat's measure (2007) which consists of 5 questions as closed questions with a range of very high to very low.

**Love Failure:** The meaning of this variable is "do student during the study face with the failure of love or not"

**Study Failure:** The meaning of this variable is "Do students during college face with the fall in education or not"

**Validity and reliability:** A preliminary questionnaire was prepared and then using by the experts was confirmed its content validity. Then, in order to obtain criteria validity used the measures which were identified. Finally, the matching hypothesis with theoretical expectations was provided construct validity of the questionnaire. After pre-test, to assess the reliability of the study Cronbach's alpha was used. Alpha is obtained as follows: Commitment: 0.67, Anomie: 0.68, Engagement: 0.74, Differential opportunities: 0.79 and Views: 0.76.

## Research Findings

### Characteristics of Respondents

In terms of gender, 39% of sample were women and 61 percent of them were men. 85% of the sample were single. Married and divorced were 12% and 1% respectively. 1% of the participants were widows or widowers. The percentage of students in the humanities, sciences and engineering was 64.5%, 20.7% and 14.7% respectively. 52% of the participants were not employed. 27.4% of them were doing casework. 12% of respondents had a part time job and 8% of the sample comprised individuals who have had a full time job. In terms of socio-economic base, 62% of respondents had low base, and 32% and 7% of them had the average and high base respectively.

### The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables

The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables as shown in Table 1 there is the significant relationship between the independent variables commitment and social status with the attitude towards drugs, this relationship is negative reversed and has been meaningful at the level of error less than 0/01, so that with increasing student's engagement and higher social status, their attitudes to drugs becomes more negative and vice versa. The intensity of this relationship is such that indicate that the correlation between these two variables is not very strong. Engagement and differential opportunity are two variables that have not significant relationship

with attitudes toward substance. Anomie, differential association and academic failure have direct and significant positive correlation with attitude towards the substance. That means that with the increase in these three variables attitude towards drugs will be more positive. The intensity of this relationship for the two variables of anomie and academic failure is not very strong. However there is relatively strong relationship between attitudes to drugs and the differential bond.

*Table (1): The Pearson correlation coefficient between independent variables and the dependent variable*

Independent variable	The correlation coefficient Pearson With Dependent Variable	P- value	Result of Test
Commitment	-0.247	0.00	Confirmed
engagement	-0.075	0.196	Rejected
Differential opportunities	0/020	0.732	Rejected
Anomie	0.138	0.017	Confirmed
Differential association	0/383	0.00	Confirmed
Social status	-0.214	0.00	Confirmed
Academic failure	0.179	0.002	Confirmed

Considering to the level of measurement of variables for the test, the relationship between failure of love and attitude towards the drug chi-square test was used. The test results showed a significant correlation between the failure of love and positive attitude to drugs, means that the higher college students' love failure rate is the more positive is their attitudes toward drugs. Cramer's V value indicates a moderate relationship between these two variables. It should be noted that this relationship has been significant at the level of error of less than 0.01.

*Table (2): The relationship between love of failure and attitude towards the drug*

Independent variable	dependent variable	Low attitude	Average Attitude	High Attitude	The correlation coefficient	
love failure	Attitude to drug	Yes	53.2	27.7	19.1	0.226**
		No	57	38	5.1	
	Total		55.2	33.1	11.7	100

\* Error probability less than 0.05

\*\* Error probability less than 0.01

Data obtained from multiple regression analysis between the independent variables and attitude towards the substance indicate that multivariate correlation scores between independent variables and attitude towards the substance is 0/481. The coefficient of determination is equal to 0/231 which indicates that the sum of independent variables entered into the regression equation can to explain 23% of the changes of dependent variable. Among the variables entered into the regression equation the differential association with beta 306/0 had the highest causal impact on the dependent variable. This is a direct relationship, so that whatever the differential association students be more their attitude to substance becomes more positive. Social status, after the differential association with the Beta -0/206, has the greatest causal impact on the attitude toward substance. Direction of relationship between Social status and attitude towards the substance is negative, that means that whatever Social status students raised her attitude to drugs becomes more negative. Commitment with Beta -0/177 is another variables that has causal's greatest impact reversed and negatively on attitude towards the substance, such that the greater be the commitment of students, their negative attitude toward substance becomes higher. Variables differential academic failure and opportunity respectively had after noted variables significant impact on attitude towards the substance. Also the

data indicate that variables anomie, engagement and failure of love have no causal significant impact on attitude towards the substance

**Table (3): Regression analysis between the independent variables and the dependent variable**

dependent variable	independent variable	B	SE	Beta	p-value	R <sup>2</sup>	R
Attitude toward drug	Constant	2.247	0.457	-	0.00	0.231	0.481
	Differential association	0.306	0.049	0.333	0.00		
	Anomie	0.045	0.058	0.045	0.437		
	Social status	-0.206	0.074	-0.147	0.006		
	engagement	-0.001	0.054	-0.002	0.980		
	commitment	-0.177	0.069	-0.162	0.011		
	Differential opportunities	0.089	0.046	0.108	0.055		
	Academic failure	0.113	0.055	0.111	0.039		
	Love failure	-0.037	0.071	-0.028	0.602		

### Discussion and Conclusion

The information gained from this study indicate that various factors are effective, either directly or indirectly on college students' attitudes toward drugs. The results indicated that the hypotheses raised from theories differential association, commitment, differentiation opportunities, academic failure have direct causal influence on college students' positive attitudes towards drugs. The variables were derived from the theories of anomie and love failure although had not a direct causal effect on the attitude of the college student toward drug, their influence had been effective indirectly and with influence on other research variables on the attitude of college student to drugs. In fact findings of this research are confirmation of the mentioned theories in relation attitude to drugs. Among variables entered into this research only aspect of the engagement from social control the theory of Hirsch had no effect on attitudes toward drug use among students. Differential association was variable that with correlation (0/383) the highest correlation and with beta (333/0) had greatest Causal impact on college students' positive attitudes to drug that illustrate the undeniable influence of friends and the direct and indirect pressures of this group is in shaping to behavior and attitudes of college students. When will be highlight influence variable differential association that the students are away from family is also taken into consideration. From most influential factors on students' positive attitudes to drugs is having the experience of failure of love during college. Although this has not direct impact on the attitudes to drugs according to lack of emotional support for families at this time away from their children, indirectly drives college students to have likely positive attitude to drugs.

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