

LETTER TO EDITOR

Necessity of Rethinking about the Preventive Strategies of Addiction

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According to the last official statistics of national organization, there are nearly 220 million addicted people in the world until 2008. Therefore, it seems that addiction has become a scourge of the world which cannot be dealt with by countries alone. Generally, social damages prevention has priority over other methods, especially in addiction. We can see two approaches in this field: community based and risk-awareness preventive strategies.¹

Obviously, prevention approaches are developed on theoretical basis. Some of the theories on which the first strategy is based are as follows: *Talkot Parsons* had the opinion that if social institutions like family, school and media don't have proper functioning, the society will be suffering from the ravages and it will be deviant. *Travis Hirsch's* social control theory is generally based on the *Durkheim's* social cohesion. Social control theory, instead of focusing on the main causes of social deviations, focuses on the explanation of the need to avoid criminal activities: interest, obligation, partnership, and belief. *Sutherland* believes that more criminal behaviors prevail among the first groups, such as peer groups. Delinquency primarily takes place through social interaction with intimate groups. One of the important theories was suggested by *Lyder*. He combined theories of sociology and social psychology. He processed the difficulty of distinguishing individual and social fields; the concept of a bio-psycho refers to the "personality as a unique individual identity who immersed in social processes". Various elements such as mental bio-psycho, social reality of social domain theory and bio-psychological domain will be used in developing a prevention program which is based on social harms of this theory.^{2,3}

On the other hand, awareness-raising approaches are developed on the basis of theories such as "Rational Choice Theory", "Value-Rational Action", "Health Belief Model", and "Problem-Behavior Theory". According to these theories, human action focuses on wisdom and reasoning. However, unfortunately, evaluating the efficacy of various methods of prevention based on risk-awareness theories reveals unwanted damages. The following examples can be noted: in "Separation Schema" project in Italy after assessment of the project, it was found that its harmful consequences are more than its advantages. In Life Education project in Australia after implementation and evaluation of the project within 6 years, 19% to 22% of young people who used alcohol and tobacco were associated with this project. "US Youth National Media Campaign against Drugs" was conducted in 1997 with a budget of nearly 1.5 billion dollars. The main objective of this project was training of US young people to say No to illegal substances. In this project, nearly 2000 students were studied. They were given 10 training packages within a retraining session on reducing drug. The results showed that average consumption of drugs had increased in comparison with the control group. The last one is "Educational delay sexual involvement program". This plan aims to reduce sexual risk behaviors. After assessment, the

frequency of sexual intercourse, multiple sexual partners, peers, on peer and pregnancy had been raised.^{4,5}

The family is the common factor in the above theories. Most researches in addiction focus on the factors affecting the tendency to addiction. Using drugs tends to be relatively high in rural areas. Factors such as the spread of unemployment, easy access to drugs and connection with other addicts affect this procedure. According to Glantz, Weinberg, Miner, and Colliver, the youth between 12 to 25 years are more in danger of using drugs.⁶ Moreover, the older the age of the first experience, the higher the risk of addiction and drug abuse in adulthood. Liraud and Verdoux indicated that variables including gender, ethnicity, addiction duration, education and occupational status do not have a significant relationship with addiction.⁷ Accordingly, given theoretical frameworks and experimentation, what enjoyed the highest conformity to reality and has been the most effective in the target society were plans and activities based on social skills development, taking the first human life source, i.e. family, into consideration.

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