

Addiction Effects on The Ego Strength Scores: A Comparing Study between Two Groups of Addicted and non- Addicted People

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Abstract--- The aim of this research was to compare the ego strength of addicted and non addicted people. The sample size of 200 men (100 addicts+ 100 non addicts) living in Karaj and Tehran cities of Islamic Republic of Iran that was selected through the availability sampling. To collect data, a 52-item BESS (Barrons ego strength scale) questionnaire was used. Averages and *t* test were applied as statistics methods and for data analysis SPSS soft ware was used. The results indicated that the differences are meaningful between the addicts and normal people.

Keywords---- Addiction, Ego strength, Addicted and normal people

I. INTRODUCTION

Ego strength represents the attitude toward problems, the predominant reaction toward frustration and shows the ability of adaptation in relation to one's emotional profile [1-6]. According to Maslow (1954), self actualization and psychological health seem to have much to have common with the concept of ego-strength. The ego strength is defined as frustration tolerance, including persistence under stress, absence of irrelevant responses, and improved performance. High scores usually indicate an ability to deal with environmental pressures. A person with a high score generally can profit from psychotherapy.

Barron' (1963) points out that most important consideration in judging the strength of a person's ego is not the amount of troubles, conflicts and crises that he encounters, but the confidence with which he encounters them with little ego-strength may feel to in between these competing demands while these with too much ego-strength can become too unyielding and external stress.

A person with a high ego strength may be able to work within the cultural, social, and personal limits of his/her society. The person with a medium score is chronically under, more stress than the person with a high Es scored. Low scores may occur when the person is feeling he/she needs help in therapy [6-8]. Extraordinarily low scores usually indicate real or imagined

poor work records and an inability to cope with every-day occurrences.

Some personality traits increase the risk of drug abuse; low self-esteem, lack of social and adaptive skills and crude methods to deal with the stresses of life are the dangerous characteristics of this kind [9, 10]. The term of ego strength is a very broad concept and includes mental wellbeing, the sense of empowerment, adequacy, understanding of intergenerational solidarity and the ability to recognize the intellectual and emotional potential in a person, in such a way that the person can recognize his/her abilities and cope with the stresses of the routine life and be productive and efficient in terms of his/her job.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

In this research the ego strength scores of the addicted and normal people were compared. The sample size of 200 people includes 100 addicted men and 100 normal men living in Karaj and Tehran cities of Islamic Republic of Iran that was selected through the available sampling.

III. RESULTS

The mean as well as standard deviations in addicted and normal men in the variables under study, are provided in table I. As you may see in table I, the mean of ego strength of non addicts is higher than addicts (32.41 versus 24.14), so addicts scores were lower than non addicts. To compare these means and also determine the differences between them, independent *t*-test was used and comparative results between addicts and non addicts have been shown in figure 1 as scatter plots. Considering figure 1, addicts have lower scores than non addicts in terms of ego strengths. So, there is a significant difference between means of the ego strength scores in addicted and non addicted group.

Results of the *t* test ($t=4.62$) for the independent variables are presented in Table I. $t=4.62$ indicates that there is a significant difference between the means of ego strength scores of the addicts and non addicts.

High scores usually indicate an ability to overcome the problems. The high score indicates that the person is able to work within the cultural, social, and personal limits of his/her environmental pressures. The low scores usually indicate real or imagined poor work records and an inability to cope with every-day occurrences (figure I).

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Table I

THE VALUE OF T SUGGESTS THAT THERE IS A STRONG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADDICTS AND NON ADDICTS. P=0.0001, INDICATING THAT THIS DIFFERENCE IS CONSIDERED TO BE EXTREMELY STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT.

Mean(addicted)	Mean(normal)	t	p
24.14±5.82	32.41±7.65	8.864±0.758	0.0001

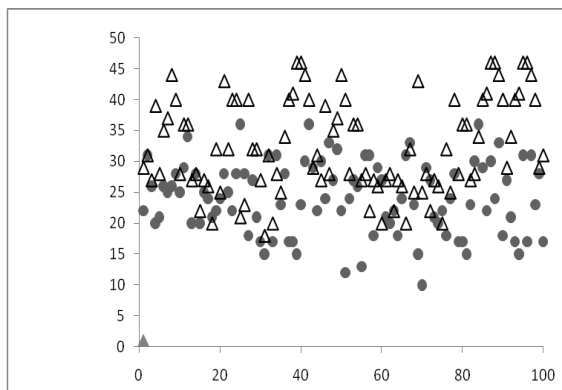


Fig. I. Comparison of the ego strength between addicted (●) and non addicts (Δ). An individual with strong ego-strength indicates that he can overcome the problem. By having strong ego-strength, he is able to cope with the problem and find new ways of dealing with struggles. These people can handle whatever life throws at them without losing their sense of self. On the other hand, ego weakness underlies the inflated sense of self, which can be associated with grandiosity and a superiority complex.

IV. DISCUSSION

Focusing attention to ego strength in addicts and non-addicts, a lower ego strength scores in addicted people is indicative of poor compliance, worsening of the psychiatric symptoms evolution toward to demoralization, anxiety and depression, with consequent costs for public health. With strong ego-strength we do not personalize things that happen in the world or what others say. We notice and we access the necessary resources to deal with it. The strong our ego-strength grows, the more of a sense of self we develop and the greater our a sense of skills and resources, and ability to handle whatever comes. Ego-strength can also be strengthened. We can develop a strong and more robust attitude about life. We can grow out of the childish wishful thinking that’s fearful, insecure, and fragile and develop a mind-set about life on its own terms that gives us a robust motivation and an optimistic attitude that allows us to sign up for life.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the results a weak ego could be one of the personality characteristics that leads to addiction so ego strengthening methods can be used as a complementary therapy for addiction treatment.

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