



Causes of narcotics addiction and their ways of prevention in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan

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Abstract:

Today, narcotics addiction, like some other social and global threats such as poverty, climate change, wars, and deadly diseases, is a huge and serious challenge to humanity. Scholars believe that the numbers of casualties which are caused by narcotics addiction are higher than any other cause in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan. Furthermore, the number of addicted people here in Nangarhar province has been rising gradually, and currently their number has reached a half million. Narcotics have different types of effects on addicted people, such as fake happiness, lack of physical activity, body aches, redness of facial skin, vomiting, psychological and mental defects, and losing interest in making relations with friends and other social affairs.

The first part of this research paper will discuss the definition of narcotics. Then, the second part will mainly discuss the causes of narcotic addiction in Nangarhar province. Third, the paper will discuss those methods which are very important in preventing narcotics addiction in Nangarhar province. The last part will contain recommendations.

Keywords: Narcotics, addiction, Nangarhar, Afghanistan

Introduction

Apparently, narcotics cause many defects to humanity, such as social, economic, physical, and mental disorders. Therefore, the whole of humanity is acknowledged to be affected by them. For the first time, a nation by the name of *Sumerian* became familiar with the deadly substance of narcotics. Furthermore, in 400 B.C, the former Chinese started the cultivation of narcotics and then it spread to other nations. In 1500 B.C, the puppy seeds were taken from Egypt to Greece and named opium. It should be mentioned that Great Britain intended to colonize the whole globe. Therefore, Great Britain started to transfer narcotics to every place.

The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan has accelerated the cultivation of narcotics. This time, people in Afghanistan have become addicted. But when the Taliban regime collapsed in Afghanistan, the narcotics and addiction to narcotics increased so quickly, especially in the transitional government of President Hamid Karzai.

Now, I would like to discuss the addiction causes of narcotics in Afghanistan and then write down those ways which are essential in the prevention of narcotics.

1. Acknowledgement of narcotics and their types

Narcotics have many defects, such as religious, health, social, economic, mental, and others, which are discussed in detail in academic books, journals, and articles. Besides, the cultivation, use, and trade of narcotics is illegal according to the explicit provisions of the Holy Quran, Hadiths, and consensus of Islamic scholars.

Narcotics are those drugs which weaken the mind and cause intoxication. Or, narcotics are those deadly substances like opium, cocaine, and puppies that cause weakness, laziness, and some mental disorders in human beings. In other words, narcotics are substances that weaken and disorder the senses while also increasing the pressure in the brain of every human being.

Scholars are divided into two groups based on whether the intoxicating beverages and narcotics materials are the same or different. Firstly, some Islamic scholars like *Ibni Taimah*, *Ibni Hajar*, and Imam *Zahabi* believe that all the narcotics drugs such as *marijuana*, opium, and others are the same and do not have any differences because all the above-mentioned narcotics materials affect the human brain and cause mental activity. Secondly, an Islamic scholar by the name of *Oan-al-Mabood* states that the above-mentioned narcotics materials do not affect the human brain but just cause laziness and weakness in the human body.

If we could closely analyze the above two academic concepts, the first one looks logical because the usage of narcotics affects the brains of human beings; thus they are not capable of differentiating good deeds from bad, and negative from positive, and finally they commit crimes.

Apparently, narcotics have more than 200 types, and every kind has its own characteristics, way of use, mechanism of effects, and other related issues. Now I would like to study the addiction causes of narcotics in Nangarhar province.

2. The addiction caused by narcotics in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan

There are many addiction causes of narcotics in Nangarhar province, which are discussed as follows.

- ***The negative effects of parents' addiction on their children:*** sometimes, in the period of pregnancy, one of the parents is using narcotics or alcohol. This situation causes mental disorders in the embryo. These mental disorders may lead to the newborn baby becoming addicted in the future, and the child becoming a dangerous criminal. This is an obvious issue when parents are using narcotics, so the children may also become addicted to narcotics. For this reason, I had an interview with five doctors who treat addicted people in one of the hospitals in Nangarhar province. They told me that the addiction history of parents shows that when one of the parents uses narcotics or alcohol, their addiction is one of the main causes of their children's addiction.

I should say that every child follows his/her parents' path, whatever they do. Then the child practices whatever his/her parents do. The addiction of the parents has a very direct link and causes the pregnancy. In conclusion, the addiction of parents paves the way for the addiction of their children.

- ***The death and illness of parents:*** When someone's parents die, he/she becomes very disappointed and tries to get rid of this tragic situation; therefore, he/she starts using narcotics or alcohol, and this is the beginning of narcotics addiction. Sometimes, someone's parents become ill or sick, so the child takes all the responsibilities to treat them and take them to a doctor. But the child could not cover these responsibilities; therefore, the child starts using narcotics to forget the tragic situation for a while. This is the beginning of a narcotics addiction for this innocent child. To discuss the above-mentioned issue, I interviewed three addicted people. The three addicted people revealed that their cause of addiction was the death or illness of their parents.
- ***The tense family environment may lead to mental illnesses in family members.*** When there is no unity between parents in a family, this condition may have negative effects on the family members. It is obvious that young people cannot tolerate their family's unpleasant environment; thus, they choose to use narcotics to feel comfortable for a short time. I had an interview with two addicted people's fathers. They told me that there was a very tense situation in their families, so their sons could not tolerate the conditions and started using narcotics.
- ***No or lack of control of parents over their children:*** When children grow up, their social situation changes, and they attempt to form relationships with others. Sometimes, young people cannot make good friends, so they make relationships with bad-natured people. If parents are unable to keep their children under control, they may join criminal gangs or addiction groups. Those children who were never controlled by their parents, may not consider themselves responsible. I had an interview with three addicted people in Nangarhar province. They admitted that if their parents forbade them from having relationships with bad people, they would not be living this bad life.
- ***No awareness and implementation of the Islamic rules:*** In fact, the maintenance and the implementation of religious rules and regulations, on the one hand, strengthen the power of resistance in human beings, and on the other hand, cause the prevention of narcotics addiction. The reason why people use narcotics is that most of them do not consider that narcotics are illegal under the rulings (Ahkam) of Islamic sharia and the statutory laws of Afghanistan. As we witness a large number of addicted people in Nangarhar province, therefore, in Afghanistan, the Islamic scholars, university and school teachers, and the whole nation have the responsibility to take part in public awareness.

In order to discuss the issue more effectively, I conducted interviews with two policemen, two medical doctors, two Islamic scholars, and two addicted people. All of the above-mentioned people told me that "the citizens of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan are Muslims." They realize that the cultivation, processing, selling, distribution, production, exporting, importing, using, transportation, storing, and trafficking are prohibited and not allowed under the Islamic rulings (Ahkam). Furthermore, in the remote areas of Afghanistan, residents do not know the disadvantages of using narcotics. Therefore, the government should make a strong and effective mechanism to inform the people to stop using narcotics.

I should say that the government must work in public awareness. The government should hold some seminars on the national stage and discuss the negative aspects of narcotics. Furthermore, all the people in Afghanistan ought to get together and work to find out the causes of addiction and then recommend some effective ways to bring the addiction to a very low level.

- ***The low level of education:*** Education could play a crucial role in preventing addiction. Moreover, it is strengthening the power of resistance in people. It is worth mentioning that educated people consider the consequences of their deeds more than uneducated people in every field of their life.

In order to understand the role of education in preventing addiction, I conducted an interview with three addicted people in Nangarhar province. All of the addicted people told me that "illiteracy and low level of education could cause many struggles and difficulties in a society, many of them if narcotics addiction. Furthermore, if they could get an education, they would not be in this bad and tragic situation".

I should say that education is a tool that fulfills the needs and requirements of a society. If a nation is pursuing education, that nation will never drown in the tragic ocean of life. The government should facilitate people's getting education and change the bad environment of Afghanistan forever.

- ***The cultivation of narcotics*** plays a very critical role in increasing the number of addicted people in a society. In Afghanistan, it is very easy to find and use narcotics because the rate of cultivation is very high. Furthermore, those people who work in a narcotics production factory become addicted very quickly and easily because they are always exposed to and have full access to narcotics.

I conducted an interview with two formers to find out the rules of narcotics cultivation in addiction. They said, "The economic situation of the Afghan people is very poor and most of them are poor; therefore, they cultivate narcotics to fulfill their daily needs." If the government provides work facilities and narcotics cultivation alternatives for the people, they do not cultivate narcotics. I should say that providing work facilities and narcotics cultivation alternatives could easily prevent civilians from engaging in the cultivation of narcotics. Moreover, if the former could only receive 200 Afghani, they would not intend to cultivate narcotics.

- ***The existence of an international drug market:*** According to Afghan laws, cultivation, processing, selling, purchasing, storing, distributing, producing, exporting, importing, transportation, using and trafficking is not allowed and considered a crime. Unfortunately, due to the bad economic situation, people are obliged to cultivate narcotics to fulfill their needs. Foreigners and Mafia in Nangarhar province are very active in taking and transferring narcotics out of Nangarhar province to an international market. If the international community could close the international market, the cultivation and transfer of narcotics would also be collapsed.

In order to discuss the issue deeply, I interviewed two experts, and they said, "The main reasons for narcotics are, an open international market, high income from narcotics, and poverty." If international drug smugglers are arrested and narcotics rates drop, the cultivation of narcotics will disappear".

I must say that for the ultimate demolition of narcotics, the following steps should be taken: Firstly, the international market should be closed to smugglers. Secondly, in order to ban the smuggling of narcotics, national and international drug traffickers should be arrested and handed over to judicial organs. Finally, the government ought to facilitate farmers and encourage them to plant lawful cultivation.

3. Narcotic addiction prevention methods

The only creation that has free will is a human being. Every human being dissolves any matter by using their sound mind. But some human beings start using narcotics to damage their brains. While it is true that every bad environment encourages people to become criminals, the majority of them become drug addicts. There are some very effective ways which play a very crucial role in preventing narcotic addiction:

- **Public awareness: Informing people of the sacred rules of Islam.** The sacred religion of Islam is a complete and inclusive religion and has many and various rules in every aspect of life. Therefore, the holy religion of Islam prohibits the cultivation, processing, selling, purchasing, distributing, producing, transporting, using, importing, exporting, storing, and trafficking of narcotics. The state is responsible for informing the whole population of the tragic damage of narcotics in light of the rulings of the holy religion of Islam.

2.3 Educating the public: Education is the only way to distinguish between bad and good deeds, as well as inmates and non-inmates in society. The holy religion of Islam urges people to get an education, as it is narrated in a holy Hadith of the prophet Mohammad. "Prophet Mohammad says seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim man and woman". Furthermore, a well-known author, Victor Hugo, says about education, "He who opens a school door, closes a prison." Based on some statistics, educated people proportionally commit fewer or zero crimes than uneducated people.

- **Deterrence of narcotics cultivation:** The prevention of narcotics cultivation plays a very critical role in deterring drug addiction. Those who have easy access to narcotics become easily addicted because there is no obstacle to using narcotics. Unfortunately, the level of narcotics cultivation in Afghanistan is getting higher and higher rapidly. However, there are strong provisions regarding the cultivation, processing, selling, purchasing, storing, and trafficking of narcotics. People do not stop cultivating narcotics because the provisions of the specific law are not implemented in action. If the government pays attention to the enforcement of laws, narcotics addiction could be reduced to a low or zero level.
- **Failure to comply with laws:** It is very hard to deter people from using narcotics in society, despite government efforts. Moreover, governments try hard to control and get rid of narcotic addiction, but they have not been successful in doing so. The reason why the government is not able to get control over narcotics is that the laws which are combating narcotics are not implemented completely. The government could not control the use of narcotics without the assistance of the public. It means that the public should not cultivate narcotics in order to get rid of addiction.
- **Providing life-altering alternatives for farmers:** It is one of the most effective ways to combat narcotics and deter addiction in society. It is obvious that if the government could provide a facility for each person to make 200 Afghani per day, no one would cultivate

narcotics in Afghanistan. On the one hand, the government is not eager to provide such an environment for the former, and on the other hand, it spends lots of money without doing anything fruitful.

- **Treatment of narcotics addicts:** Approximately 2 million people are using narcotics in Afghanistan, but there is a lack of hospitals to treat addicts. According to an estimation, there is one 20-bed hospital in the eastern region of Afghanistan. In terms of the treatment of addicts in the mentioned hospitals, there are two big problems: Firstly, the treatment facilities in the mentioned hospital are very small. Secondly, if the addicts are treated normally and become healthy, they should be financially supported, but none of the above issues are taken under consideration.
- **Closing the selling and buying market for narcotics:** The trade in narcotics plays an important role in the increasing rate of narcotics addiction in Afghanistan. If the Afghan government and the international community intend to prevent the selling and buying of narcotics inside and outside of Afghanistan, the drug traffickers should be arrested and punished. Furthermore, in order to have a society free of narcotics, those markets which are selling and buying narcotics, should be closed for ever.
- **Preventing joblessness in society:** Joblessness is one of the main causes of increasing narcotics addiction in a society like Afghanistan. If people do not have jobs and they are not busy doing something positive, this situation could pave the way for them to start using narcotics and become addicts. People who are busy doing something or have a job will find that this condition will have a positive impact on their lives. If the Afghan government intends to demolish narcotics addictions, it should find jobs for the people.

Recommendations

1. The government should ban the products of poppy, cocaine, narcotics, and other materials that could harm human beings physically and intellectually. Moreover, those people who are engaged in processing, producing, and trafficking narcotics should be arrested and punished.
1. The government must enhance public awareness and should ban the narcotics markets.
1. The government should find reasonable jobs for individuals who are involved in the production and trafficking of narcotics and are not able to find other financial sources to feed themselves.
1. The government should control and govern the media, not make broadcast announcements related to the usage of narcotics.
1. The government must concentrate and take care of narcotic addicts after they stop using narcotics.

Conclusion

Nowadays, like other global issues (poetry, diseases, war, climate change...), narcotics addiction causes public order and treats human health. Scholars believe that the damage from narcotics is a few times higher than other issues, and they are increasing frequently. According to some

unverified statistics, the number of narcotics addicts is about two million in Nangarhar province. In this academic research, I have tried to talk about different internal and external factors which cause narcotics addiction in Nangarhar province, such as the negative effects of parents' addiction on their children, the death and illness of parents, the disputed family environment, no or lack of control of parents over their children, no awareness and implementation of the Islamic rules, the low level of education, the cultivation of narcotics, and the existence of an international drug market. Furthermore, for the above-mentioned factors of narcotics addiction, there are many ways to prevent narcotics addiction in Nangarhar province. Also, I have told the Afghan government that they need to take some strong steps to fix the bad situation there.

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