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Attachment patterns among Addicts and Non-Addicts; a comparative analysis

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to get assess and compare the Attachment patterns of Addicts and Non-addicts .The study was conducted in Chandigarh which was a purposive selection ,covering the Non addicts in three Educational Institutes –Punjab University, Sector 14, D.A.V. College, Sector –10 and Institute for Hotel Management Sector 42. Addicts were covered from three De-addiction centers; Govt. Medical College and Hospital, Sector-32, Lala Lajpat Rai Bhawan Sector-15 and Alcoholic and Narcotics Anonymous. The subjects were 100 in number, (50 Addicts, 50 Non-addicts) all males, in the age group 17-21 years. The tool used in the study was Inventory for Parental and Peer Attachment by Greenberg et.al. (1987). It was reported that Addicts were more attached to their peers and Non-addicts were more attached to their parents. Thus, it could be concluded that satisfying & meaningful relationships are necessary for the proper development of adolescents.

Keywords: Addicts-habituals of drugs, peer attachment- inclination towards friends, parental attachment- closer to parents, adolescence- from onset of puberty till attainment of adulthood.

1. Introduction

Attachment is an enduring and emotionally investing experience of relatedness and that the most important object of attachment are the parents and the peer group. Family and peer groups are the independent social worlds of the individuals. The individual is said to be more attached to one to whom he can express his feelings openly, and share a strong bond of affection. The results of this study might throw light on some predisposing factors to addiction, and this may prove helpful for the parents teachers and community to see how can they help adolescent to live a healthy life. This may also help guidance & counseling personnel to deal effectively with addicts and their parents will also be aware that at this crucial age, adolescents must get proper attention and emotional security in family. According to Mc Connell (1977), "A drug is any chemical that affects the rate of functions of biological system". There are a large number of determinants & variables of drug addiction The present study is designed to quantify the effect of drug addiction on Attachment patterns among Addicts and Non-Addicts Addicts experience more stress due to life change events as compared to non-addicts. This statement is supported by a study by (Mukhopadhyay & Bose 1995) which indicated that smokers experienced more stress due to life change events. The findings of the study by (Lodhi & Thakur 1993) revealed that addicts have high psychoticism and neuroticism & low extraversion. The introverted individuals in stress situations would adopt the behaviour pattern of their addict peers and would become addicts. The stressful life events combined with inadequate social support are also the predisposing cause of addiction. Newcomb and Harlow (1986) have pointed out that drugs have been used to provide relief from stress and frustrations. Stress in life by any source may be the predisposing cause of addiction. Increased stress and strains of life significantly contribute to the causation of inclination towards alcohol & other drug use and these inclinations predispose them to become addict in no time. Stressful life events or threatening events in life demands a definite shift on transition of some kind from the individual as well as proper familial & social support. The persons who are not able to transit or make a shift from these situations are more likely to be prone to addition as they try to find some easy measures to escape from those stressful and threatening events of life invariably also leading to depression.

2. Method

The present study aimed at comparing Attachment patterns of Addicts and Non-addicts.

2.1 Participants

The study was conducted in Chandigarh, which was a purposive selection. The study covered the non-addicts in three institutes of Chandigarh; Punjab University, Sector 14, D.A.V. College, Sector 10, and Institute for Hotel Management, Sector 42, Chandigarh. Addicts were covered from three de-addiction centres; Government Medical College and Hospital, Sector 32, Chandigarh; Lala Lajpat Rai Bhawan, Sector 15 and Alcoholic and Narcotics Anonymous Selection of sample The sample for addicts was selected from three de-addiction centres. The sample for Non-addicts was selected from three educational institutes. The first step included taking the permission from the Heads of the de-addiction centres, and the Principals of the Educational institutes selected for the study. Then, rapport was formed with the subjects.

2.2 Actual administration of the test

To measure the attachment of the addicts as well as non addicts with their parents and peers, inventory for parent and peer attachment, developed by Greenberg *et al.* (1983) and revised by Armsden and Greenberg (1987) was used, given in appendix (III). The IPPA was developed in order to assess the subjects perceptions of the positive and negative affective /cognitive dimension of relationship with their parents and close friends – particularly how well these figures serve as a source of psychological security. The theoretical framework in attachment theory, originally formulated by Bowlby and recently expanded by others, three broad dimensions were assessed namely:-degree of mutual trust, quality of communication and extent of anger (alienation).

The IPPA is a self report questionnaire with a five point likert scale response format, the original version consisted of 25 parents items and 25 peer items; whereas the modified version consisted of 12 parent items and 12 peer items. Items consisted of such statement like:-“My parents respect my feelings”; “I like to get my friends point of view on things I’m concerned about”. The responded has to tick the response, which is applicable to him.

Items assessing anger toward an emotional detachment from attachments figures were also included, since frequent and intense anger or detachment were seem to be the response to actual or threatened disruption of an insecure attachment bond. Items tapping parent attachment were grouped separately from peer attachment items. Generally a parent item had a corresponding peer item worded similarly the reliability and validity of the test has been already tested. Coefficient alpha for the parent scale was 0.82 and for the

peer scale it was 0.80. With the exception of the alienation subscale (for parent & peer attachments), the majority of the coefficient of correlation was greater than 0.40.

2.3 Instructions

There were total 12 items in each of the sub-tests and the responses were to be marked on a 5 - point likert scale. Never seldom sometimes often – always for those statements which hold time in the subjects core, the subject has to tick mark (√) in the space provided in the answer sheet. Subjects were asked to answer all the questions honestly. They were insured that this information will be kept confidential and that there were no right or wrong answers. There was no time limit but they were asked to try to finish soon and tick only on options out of the five given.

2.4 Scoring

The IPPA consisted of two parents (one mother & one father, same questions) and a peer subscales, subscale scores were computed by summing the item responses. The two responses at the extreme are scored one to five depending upon whether an item is positively or negatively worded. Responses to negatively worded statement were reversed before calculations. Separate parent and peer attachment summary scores were obtained. However, when computing a total score, it is also necessary to reverse the scores of alienation subscale items

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Once the data was obtained, it was coded, tabulated and analysed, keeping in mind the objectives of the study. Appropriate statistical tools were used to draw meaningful inferences. The statistical tools used in the present study are given under:

3. Results and Discussion

The present study was undertaken to get an insight into the difference between addicts and non-addicts in terms of their parental and peer attachment. Means of the raw scores of the tests namely Inventory for parental and peer attachment was used to assess the respective differences between addicts and non-addicts. They were further subjected to statistical analysis. Tests of significance (t-test) of difference between the means was used to compare the respective means of the two groups of samples i.e. addicts and non-addicts.

Results were calculated and their discussion was carried out as under:

The difference between addicts and non-addicts in terms of their parental and peer attachment.

IPPA was used to find the difference in attachment patterns of addicts and non-addicts.

Table1: Statistical tools used for analysis of data

S.No.	Statistical tools	Formula	Purpose
1.	Mean (x)	$X = \sum X/N$ where, X = Variable N = No. of sample	To find out the average scores of variable used in the study.
2.	Percentage (%)	$\% = X/N \times 100$ where x = Derived score n = total score	To find the distribution of subjects with regard to various variables of the study.
3.	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	$\sigma = \sqrt{\sum x^2 / N}$ Where X = Deviation from actual mean X = mean. X = variable. N = number of samples.	To find out deviation from the man scores of the variables.
4.	Standard error of mean (S.E)	$S.E = \sigma/n$ Where $\sigma = S.D.$ n= number of observations	To find out the degree to which the mean is effected by the error of measurement and sampling.
5.	't' test	$t = (x1-x2) / S$ $\sqrt{n1n2/n1+n2}$ where x1 = mean of 1 st sample x2 = mean of second sample S = combine S.D. n1 = number of observations in 1 st sample. n2 = number of observations in 2 nd sample	To compare the average score of any two groups or to find out whether the mean of the two samples vary significantly from each other.

Table 2: Mean, Standard deviation, standard error and t-values for attachment to parents of addicts and non-addicts.

N = 100 ↙ 50 Addicts
↘ 50 Non-addicts

S. No.	Attachment area	Drug addicts			Non -addicts			t - value	Lev. of sig.
		MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M		
1.	Communication	11.64	2.882	0.407	16.08	2.66	0.37	6.966	0.001
2.	Trust	12.42	3.66	0.51	17.22	2.54	0.118	6.06	0.001
3.	Alienation	11.96	3.20	0.45	7.36	2.91	0.411	6.010	0.001
	Total	35.5	7.41	1.048	50.14	6.343	0.897	8.49	0.001

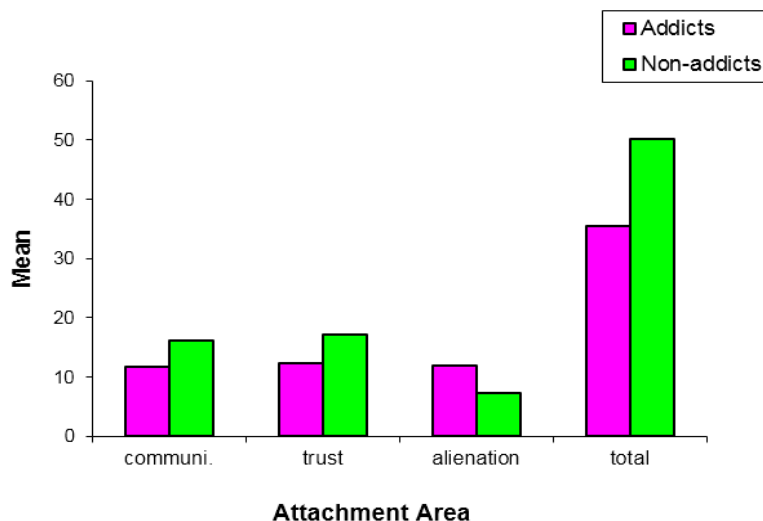


Fig 1: Difference in the means of parental attachment of addicts and non-addicts

The results revealed that there is highly significant difference in the means of all the areas of parental attachment of addicts and non-addicts. A significantly high mean value was reported among non-addicts in all areas except Alienation. The reason could be that addicts have poor communication and high alienation with their parents than non-addicts. The results have been supported by the study of Corp (1999) which revealed significant negative relationship between parental attachment and drug use. Similar other studies by Streit & Olivever (1992), Shaver (1988) Lurich et.al (1986)

and Reilly (1984) which conclude the addicts perceive their parents as less affectionate, there is lack of closeness, communication and encouragement by parents as compared to non addicts. The results are also supported by a study conducted by Ranfman and Borders (1984) which stated that a healthy family system prevents adolescent drug abuse even in the face of heavy peer pressure and that non-addicts share significantly healthy relationship with their parents as compared to addicts.

Table 3: Mean, Standard deviation, standard error and t-values for attachment to peers of addicts and non-addicts.

N = 100 }
50 Addicts
50 Non-addicts

S.No.	Attachment area	Addicts			Non-addicts			t - value	Lev. of sig.
		MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M		
1.	Communication	13.74	3.463	0.48	13.08	3.491	0.493	0.994	NS
2.	Trust	13.88	3.147	0.445	15.02	2.73	0.38	1.9	0.05*
3.	Alienation	8.76	3.24	0.458	9.38	2.56	0.36	1.058	NS
	Total	43.64	6.629	0.937	42.7	7.43	1.05	0.666	NS

NS= Non significant

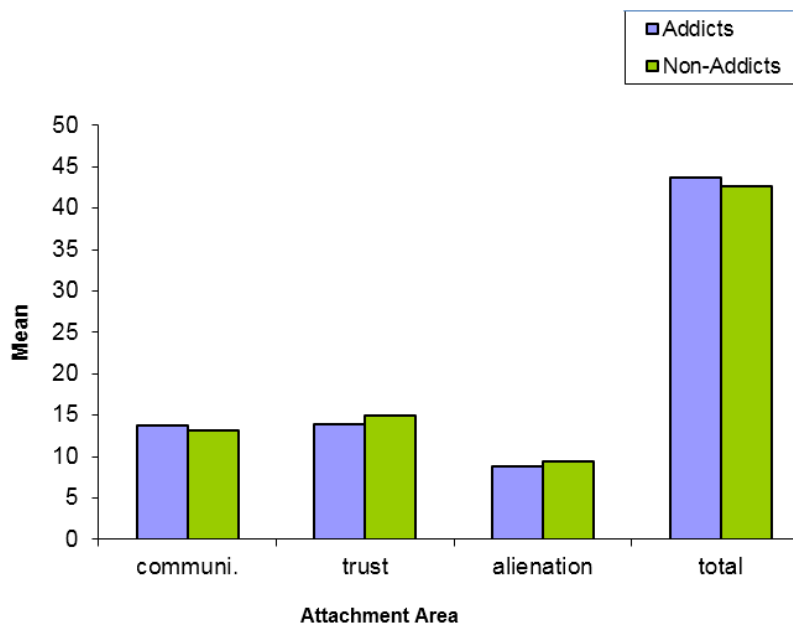


Fig 2: Difference in the means of Peer attachment of addicts and non-addicts

Results indicate that there is non-significant difference in peer attachment in all the areas except trust with peers of addicts and non addicts which is significantly higher in non addicts. The results has been shown graphically in Fig. 2, though the difference in mean values in communication with peers is non significant, but the trend indicates that addicts have better communication with peers as compared to non addicts. It might be due to the fact that non addicts have no negative and guilt feelings, so they can share their feelings with others, and can trust them, but addicts may not be able

to share their feelings with peers and may not be able to trust them.

The results are supported by the study of Sarvela and Mc dedon (1983) which reported that adolescents turn to addiction because of peer pressure and this is especially true of males who start it as a social mechanism. The study is also supported by the study of Reilly (1984) who concluded that in case of addicts, peers compensate for the parental affection and communication, so they get more attached to their peers.

Table 4: Mean, Standard deviation, standard error and t-values for overall attachment to parents and peers of addicts and non-addicts.

Variable	Addicts			Non-addicts			t - value	Lev. of sig.
	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M	MEAN	S.D.	S.E.M		
Attachment	79.14	14.039	1.985	92.84	13.773	1.948	4.418	0.001

N = 100
 — 50 Addicts
 — 50 Non-addicts

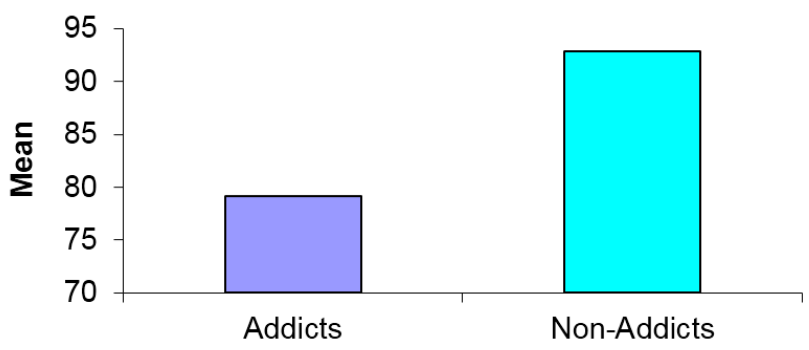


Fig 3: Difference in the means of overall attachment with parents and peers of addicts and non-addicts

The results show that non-addicts have significantly high overall attachment with parents and peers than addicts. It might be due to the fact that non addicts have better communication, high trust and low alienation to parents and peers, they can talk to their parents and friends openly about their feelings and expectations from them, whereas addicts have low trust and more negative feelings towards them. The results have been supported by the study of Hundlerg and Merch (1987) who found that non-addicts have healthy relationships with parents and peers as compared to addicts. Another study supporting the present result is by Kandel et al (1978), which revealed that addicts lack closeness to their parents as well as peers whereas non-addicts have more closeness and are more attached to their parents and peers

4. Conclusion

In the end it can be concluded that non-addicts are attached more to their parents and addicts are more inclined towards their peers.

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