

**COLLECTIVE SELF-ESTEEM AND HOPELESSNESS
AMONG PEOPLE WITH SUBSTANCE USE**

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to find out the differences on Collective Self-esteem and Hopelessness among people with substance use and people with non-use. Moreover, the association between collective self-esteem and hopelessness among people with substance use was also explored. The sample consisted of sixty men (N=60) out of which thirty were people with substance use (n=30), and thirty were people with non-use (n=30). The Beck's Hopelessness Scale (Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974) and Collective Self-esteem Scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) were used to collect data. Data was analyzed with the help of t-test and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation. The results demonstrated higher level of hopelessness ($t=10.770$, $p<.05$) and lower level of collective self-esteem ($t=29.00$, $p<.05$) in people with substance use as compared to people with non-use. Further, the results showed a negative correlation between collective self-esteem and hopelessness among people with substance use ($r= -0.371$, $p<.05$).

Keywords: Substance abusers, Hopelessness, Low Collective self-esteem, High Collective self-esteem, Non-abusers

INTRODUCTION

According to Robins, Richard and Trzesniewski, (2001) the term self-esteem is a concept related with the opinion of individuals about their own self. It

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is the attitude of one towards his/her own doings, how they work, and about their own identity. There are two levels of self-esteem, low and high. The low self-esteem refers to poor image one has about oneself and has doubt related to his abilities whereas high self-esteem is totally opposite to low self-esteem as in it people have positive picture of themselves and can't tolerate their insult.

The concept of collective self-esteem is related with self-acceptance and social involvement, positive self-esteem and membership of an individual in a group. Collective self-esteem is the combination of two aspects namely personal and social. Collective Self-esteem Theory was presented by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) which is the expanded form of Tajfel's Social Identity theory (1986) based on personal, social and collective self-esteem. In personal self-esteem individual gives value to one's ideas and self. Social self-esteem is associated with the perception of self in social context, relation with others, attractiveness and mannerism practiced in social settings. Collective identity or self-esteem is the combination of personal and social identity in which individual places his/her value while doing a membership with social groups and also give value to that social group. The social group is created with different social categories; age, race, gender, socioeconomic status, being member of any organization or club, and professional groups.

Hopelessness refers to the belief one has that nothing good is going to happen in the life and life is full of pain and problems. One believes that there is no way to get relief from such pain. People with hopelessness are not satisfied from their lives. They are always sad and unhappy. They don't have good expectations from their future. Scioli and Biller (2009) discussed some of the types of hopelessness are alienation (feeling of being different from others), forsakenness (feeling of being alone when someone is needed badly in the great time), uninspired (lack of attachment or undervalued), powerlessness (difficulty in achieving goals), subjugation (suppression), limitedness (feelings of failing to do mastery), doom (feeling of despair that one's life is over), captivity (other's or self-imprisonment related to emotions), and helplessness (feelings of being vulnerable).

Low self-esteem and hopelessness are often avoided or tried to control by using substances like alcohol, narcotics, tranquilizers etc. Researchers have distinguished following variables that may play very important role in making a person vulnerable to use substance and then to increase the amount of drug to the level where a person becomes the regular user of the drug which then becomes

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essential part of their lives. Yin et al. (1993) found following variables as cause of substance abuse (now referred to as substance use):

- I. Socio-cultural variables such as poor parenting, family disputes, and failure in love or academics, effect of media, psychiatric, legal and marital problems, unemployment, and peer pressure are some of the factors that make one hopeless and to be drug addict.
- II. Psychological variables focus on mood alteration as using alcohol may bring change in the level of anxiety and may produce relaxation are the thoughts that help one to use drugs. Some personality traits may also become the cause of drug addiction such as anti-social personalities, hyperactive and risk taking individuals are at high risk to be addictive of such hazardous drugs.
- III. Biological variables: A genetic component is also suggested: relatives and children of drinkers are at greater risk to be alcohol dependent.

Studies were conducted in Western culture to explore collective self-esteem in people with substance use. For instance, Rhodes and colleagues (2007) worked on one of the sub factor of collective self-esteem among substance abusers who use drugs through injections. They studied the issue related to risk, shame and public injectors in which substance abusers had to inject drug in public place due to urgency but they had experienced sense of risk, fear of interruption, sense of shame (sub factor of collective self-esteem) or low level of importance related to self-identity because in public places use of drugs may make them to feel degrading sense of self. The findings demonstrated that the substance abusers have low collective self-esteem related to importance of identity, poor membership self-esteem, public and private collective self-esteem. In another earlier study by Weisz (1996) it is found out that there is low level of social membership self-esteem among substance abusers but those who overcome their level of collective self-esteem increases.

Likewise, hopelessness is also investigated in people with substance use in host of past and recent Western studies. For instance, one past study by Emery, Steer, and Beck (1981) worked on the issue of depression, hopelessness, and suicidal intentions among those who are addicted to heroin abuse. It was found that people with heroin addiction have suicidal thoughts and it is due to high level of hopelessness which leads them towards depression which results in suicidal behavior. Another study by Weissman, Beck, and Kovacs (1979) demonstrated that people with drug abuse have significant level of hopelessness

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which makes them to have suicidal thoughts. McGovern (1986) also worked to assess level of hopelessness among alcohol use patients. He concluded that alcoholics are unable to have positive meanings for future which in turn lead them towards hopelessness and restoration of meaningful future decreases the level of hopelessness among them. A recent study by Pompili et al. (2009) demonstrated significant differences among people with substance use and non-use on depression, hopelessness, suicidal ideations, suicidal behaviors and other variables. The people with substance use have high level on all of these variables.

In addition, studies have demonstrated an association of collective self-esteem with hopelessness in people with substance use. For instance, Miller, Mahler, and Gold (1991) have argued that feelings of hopelessness are influenced by drugs and alcohol because of their toxic effects which manipulates the activities of neurotransmitters that control mood and judgment that in turn involve in the interpersonal relationships and social support. Hence, it can be said that due to hopelessness and drug addiction personal and social aspects of feelings of an individual become disturbed and he or she have low level of collective self-esteem as well. Patterson and Capaldi (1999) also found in their study that low self-esteem has relationship with depressive moods where hopelessness is one of the factors of depressed mood.

In the light of these studies it can be said that hopelessness and low level of collective self-esteem (which is the combination of different factors like private collective self-esteem, public collective self-esteem, membership self-esteem, and importance of identity) are those factors which become the part of personality of people with substance use. However, most of these studies are carried out in Western literature and there is real dearth of such studies in Pakistan specially to find out the relationship between hopelessness and collective self-esteem among people with substance use as this phenomenon is given little importance. As rate of drug use is increasing day by day in Pakistan and is really having negative physical and psychological effects not only on the individual who misuses drugs but also his/her family and other psychosocial aspects of his/her life. Hence, there was a need to conduct such study. This study will help researchers to know the key role of self-esteem and hopelessness in people with substance use. It will also help psychologists working on the prevention of substance use to design intervention focused on improving self-image and building hope in people with substance use. Hence, the first objective of the present research is to assess the level of hopelessness and collective self-esteem among people with substance use and people with non-use. Second

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objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between collective self-esteem and hopelessness among people with substance use.

Contemplating the existing literature, following hypothesis are outlined:

1. People with Substance use will score high on the variable of hopelessness than people with non-use.
2. People with Substance use will score low on the variable of collective self-esteem than people with non-use.
3. There will be a negative correlation between collective self-esteem and hopelessness among People with Substance use.

METHOD

Participants

A sample of thirty male with substance use (n=30) and thirty male with non-use (n=30) was selected for the current study. The age of the participants was between 19-55 years with mean age of 37 years. A homogenous sample was selected as people with substance use and non-use were having same age range, their professions were same as they all were taxi drivers, auto drivers, masons, laborers who sell fruits and vegetables, and local hotel waiters. Both the sample had same type of works so their financial status was same too. Selection of the participants was done using purposive sampling technique. The people with Substance use were accessed from DOST Welfare Foundation, Peshawar and they were residents of Faqirabad, Gulbahar, Doran Pur, Wadpaga village, Hashtnagri. These people were going through the process of drug detoxification for any kind of drug use as heroin, opium, marijuana, cannabis and alcohol. The people with Non-use were accessed from different areas of Peshawar city as Faqirabad, Gulbahar, Doran Pur, Wadpaga village, Hushtnagri, bazaars, rakshaw and taxi stands etc.

Inclusion criteria

Sample included only those people with substance use who were residents of Peshawar and were in DOST Welfare Foundation for drug detoxification and all of them were admitted in the Foundation for the second and third time. Whereas all people with non use were also residents of Peshawar and

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have never taken any drug and were having same work/jobs like substance abusers.

Exclusion Criteria

The people with Substance use who were not admitted in DOST Welfare Foundation, who got admission once or more than three times, only take tobacco and were not residents of Peshawar were excluded. The people with Non-use who didn't belong to same city, same profession, and use any kind of substance or take tobacco were all excluded.

Measures

Demographic Sheet

It obtained information regarding the participants' age, sex, educational level, profession, marital status, type of drug use, and residential area.

Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES)

The CSES was developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) consisting of 16 items with seven point Likert scale (*'strongly disagree'* to *'strongly agree'*) which are scored from 1 to 7. Eight items (2, 4, 5, 7,10,12,13, & 15) are with reverse scoring such that (1=7), (2=6), (3=5), (4=4), (5=3), (6=2), (7=1). The test consists of both positive and negative items. This scale measures overall self-esteem including public collective self-esteem, membership self-esteem, private collective self-esteem, and importance to identity. The minimum score is 16 showing lower level of collective self-esteem and maximum score can be 112. The cut off score is 64. The Alpha reliability of the scale is found to be greater than .83.

Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS)

Beck Hopelessness Scale (1974) was used to collect information about level of hopelessness in people with substance use and people with no use. This test is based on both positive and negative items. This scale consists of 20 items on *"true"* and *"false"* format. The scores are categorized as such: 0-3 show minimal hopelessness, 4-8 mild, 9-14 moderate 15 and over show high level of hopelessness. The Alpha reliability of the scale is found to be .82.

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Procedure

The formal consent was obtained from the administration of the Drug Rehabilitation departments of DOST Welfare Foundation for data collection. Followed by, the participants were approached and they were briefed about the research and verbally their consent was taken. Instructions were given to the participants before the administration of the tests and information was collected. The people with Non-use were also requested about their willingness to provide some specific information required for the existing study. As all of the participants whether people with substance use or non-use were illiterate or educated till primary so they verbally responded to the questionnaires and researcher solely recorded the responses on each questionnaire. The collection of information on demographic sheet and the administration of Beck Hopelessness Scale and Collective Self-esteem Scale took about 40 minutes. All the participants' precious time paid for this research was acknowledged after the collection of information.

Statistical Analysis

The *t*-test was employed to assess the differences on the variable of collective self-esteem and hopelessness among people with substance use and non-use. Further, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to examine the relationship between collective self-esteem and hopelessness.

RESULTS

Table 1
Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of People with Substance Use and People with Non-use on Beck Hopelessness Scale (N=60)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	p
People with Substance use	30	1.80	0.407	10.770	0.000
People with Non-use	30	1.00	0.000		

p<.05

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Table 2
Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of People with Substance Use and People with Non-use on Collective Self-Esteem (N=60)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	p
People with Substance use	30	1.03	0.182	29.00	0.000
People with Non-use	30	2.00	0.000		

$p < .05$

Table 3
Correlation between variables of Collective Self-Esteem and Hopelessness among People with Substance Use (N=30)

Variables	Collective Self-Esteem
Hopelessness	-.371

$df = 58, p < .05$

DISCUSSION

The life of a person becomes miserable when he/she loses hope, feels that he/she is not good, always thinks about the failure in life and then starts taking drugs. Substance use is a complex psychosocial problem to deal with, while treating this issue one must know about the basic reasons behind this behavior. It can be said that when people fail to achieve their goals or consider life problems as challenge they become stressed and they need miracles to happen in their lives to bring some good changes. This unrealistic approach of thinking about success leads them to take drugs to release their level of stress but problems remain unresolved and cleave many negative impacts on them that's

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why the present study is centered on finding out the differences on collective self-esteem and hopelessness among people with substance use and people with non-use.

The findings of the present study demonstrated a significant difference on collective self-esteem among people with substance use and people with non-use (Table 1). These findings are consistent with the Hypothesis 1 and are also supported by the previous studies in which Khajehdaluee, Zavar, Alidoust, and Pourandi (2013) concluded that if people lack good self-image of themselves they then fail to improve their emotional health and get indulged in unhealthy activities especially drug addiction and most commonly smoking. Abuse of such drugs like heroin and alcohol make their bodies dependent on them and cause cognitive distortion too as a result they fail to accomplish small and simple tasks in their lives and start facing low self-esteem. Pedersen, Hsu, Neighbors, Paves, and Larimer (2013) also explored the association between self-esteem and drinking behavior among different ethnic groups (White, Korean and Chinese/Taiwanese) of young adults. They found that regardless of ethnicity such relationship exists among these two factors of all young adult drinkers and also suggested that in order to prevent drinking behavior one should work on different aspects of collective self-esteem of them.

Further, the findings also demonstrated a significant difference on hopelessness among people with substance use and people with non-use (Table 2). These findings are consistent with the Hypothesis 2. Dimeff and Linehan (2008) while applying Dialectical behavior therapy as treatment of people suffering from Substance use disorders found that they were hopeless and suicidal too. So they were helped to have evidence based approach to decrease their substance abuse, and hopelessness.

Moreover, results have also shown a negative association between collective self-esteem and hopelessness (Table 3). These findings are in line with Hypothesis 3 and previous studies conducted by Fanaj, Melonashi and Shkemi (2015) on adolescents also found that there is association between the key factors hopelessness and self-esteem which lead to other emotional difficulties to perceive situation properly. They have concluded that low self-esteem really causes hopelessness among people. Karatas and Cakar (2011) worked out the relationship between self-esteem and hopelessness among adolescents while studying resilience and they found that self-esteem is positively correlated and hopelessness negatively with resilience. The study of Dori and Overholser (1999)

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also support the current study that depression, hopelessness and self-esteem are interrelated and cause self-harming behavior and results in suicide too. This can be explained in such a way as when people fail to get what they want and what they have set as their life goal eventually their self-esteem is lowered which causes hopelessness among them. They start to avoid people, want to live alone and indulge themselves in self-harming activities especially they start to take drugs or become substance abusers.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that low level of collective self-esteem and hopelessness are key factors with regard to substance use. If one wants to prevent substance use problems one has to work on the enhancement of self-esteem and to lower the hopelessness. This eventually will lead to a healthy life with good self-image and realistic approach to perceive and handle different problems in life in people with substance use.

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