

Self-Efficacy in Drug Abstinence Among Addicted Inmates in Correction and Rehabilitation Centers

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aims to explore self-efficacy in drug abstinence among addicted inmates in correctional and rehabilitation centers.

Methodology: The descriptive method was employed, focusing on a sample of 70 inmates from Beitunia Correctional Center. The Drug Abstinence Self-Efficacy Scale, consisting of 20 items, was used to assess the inmates' confidence in abstaining from drug use.

Results: The results indicated significant differences in self-efficacy based on the duration of drug use, ease of obtaining drugs, type of drug, and duration of incarceration. Inmates with a shorter duration of drug use (1-3 years) exhibited higher self-efficacy compared to those with more extended drug use (>3 years). Similarly, those who found it easy to obtain drugs showed lower self-efficacy in abstaining. Cocaine users demonstrated higher self-efficacy compared to cannabis users. Additionally, inmates with longer incarceration periods (>5 years) reported greater self-efficacy than those with shorter sentences.

Conclusions: The results suggest the need for targeted interventions focusing on inmates with a long history of drug use, those who find it easy to obtain drugs, and those with shorter sentences to enhance their self-efficacy and support successful rehabilitation.

Keywords: Drug abstinence, self-efficacy, inmates, correctional centers, rehabilitation.

Introduction:

The problem of drug addiction is a serious phenomenon due to its devastating effects on individuals, families, and society. International statistics and data indicate an increase in drug use, necessitating combined efforts to reduce or eliminate this phenomenon scientifically within a national plan (Al-Asfar, 2004). Drug issues no longer threaten only a specific age group; drug use and addiction have become problems faced by all segments of society, especially the youth. Adolescents and young adults are the most vulnerable groups to fall into this predicament due to their lack of life experience and susceptibility to manipulation (Cosden, 2001). Therefore, countries and international organizations have called for combating this disease using various methods such as prohibiting drugs, criminalizing their sale or promotion, imposing severe penalties on offenders, and raising awareness about the dangers of this scourge (Al-Mahandi, 2013).

Drug use among prisoners in correctional and rehabilitation centers is a common problem, as studies show that a significant number of individuals report drug use before and during incarceration (Montanari et al., 2023; Mazzilli et al., 2022). Factors associated with drug use in prison include a previous history of high-risk drug use before incarceration, such as daily drug use in the months preceding imprisonment. While initiating drug use during incarceration is less common, the availability of drugs in prison remains a concern (Bukten et al., 2020). Implementing harm reduction interventions in prisons is crucial, as well as providing comprehensive drug treatment programs, pre-incarceration drug use screening, and ensuring continuity of care post-release (Stöver et al., 2021).

Efforts to reduce drug use among prison inmates are critical due to the high prevalence of substance use disorders in correctional environments (Donnir et al., 2023). Studies highlight that the methods of smuggling drugs into prisons vary, necessitating effective security measures to reduce drug availability (Norman, 2022). Coordination between drug use and mental health services is vital to ensure continuity of care for incarcerated individuals with addictions (Eck et al., 2022).

Previous studies on self-efficacy in drug abstinence among addicted inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers indicate several important aspects. According to the study by Sheihan and Maki (2021), the level of motivation to abstain from drugs was moderate among a sample of drug users. The study showed a relationship between the level of motivation and abstaining from drug use, attributable to variables such as the type of drug, the number of years of use, motives for drug use, motives for seeking treatment, and the number of treatment episodes. The study by Yang et al. (2015) indicated that most drug users successfully abstained but faced significant challenges. Most participants felt the urge to use but did not consider it a primary motivator for relapse. Similarly, Peters and Kearns (1992) emphasized the need for long, organized, and intensive treatment approaches for drug-dependent inmates due to their chronic drug use history, few successful abstinence periods, and severe disruption in occupational, social, and psychological functioning. This study highlighted the necessity for mandatory treatment post-release and community supervision to ensure compliance and for developing links between prison treatment programs, courts, and community treatment providers.

The study by McKeganey et al. (2006) showed a significant variation in the percentage of drug users who became dependent on available services, with much lower abstinence levels than those achieved in the National Treatment Outcome Research Study in England. The study by Wakeman and Rich (2015) indicated that increasing access to maintenance therapy and revisiting drug policy is crucial for addressing this costly and pathological epidemic in prisons. The study by Beaton and Gerber (2023) explored the effectiveness of prison-based drug treatment programs and how these results appear contradictory. The study by Seid et al. (2024) indicated that only 34.6% of prisoners with a history of substance use disorders received therapeutic care during incarceration, with no significant differences observed in the type of treatment among different substance categories. Finally, the study by Favril (2023) showed a strong correlation between drug use before and during incarceration, with half of those who used drugs recently in the community continuing their use during imprisonment. Factors associated with continued use include younger age, treatment history, poly-drug use, and poor mental health, while initiating drug use during incarceration was linked to imprisonment history and low education.

The research highlights the importance of enhancing inmates' self-efficacy in abstaining from drugs to reduce relapse and increase recovery chances. The challenges lie in designing treatment programs tailored to inmates' needs, providing ongoing post-release support, addressing social stigma, and fostering cooperation between correctional institutions and local communities.

Methodology and Procedures

Study Method:

To achieve the study's objectives, the descriptive method was used because it suits the nature and goals of the study. This method is defined as an approach that studies a current phenomenon or event, allowing for the collection of information to answer research questions without researcher intervention. The descriptive method aims to describe the phenomenon under study and analyze its data, and it is a form of systematic scientific analysis that focuses on accurately describing, classifying, and analyzing the problem.

Study Population and Sample:

The study population consisted of inmates in correctional and rehabilitation centers, specifically at the Beitunia center. The study sample included 70 participants selected through a convenience sampling method. Table 1 shows the distribution of the study sample:

Table 1: Distribution of the Study Sample According to Study Variables

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Duration of use	1 to 3 years	39	55.7 %
	More than 3 years	31	44.3 %
Ease of access	Easy	32	45.7 %
	Somewhat difficult	38	54.3 %
Type of drug	Cocaine	9	12.9 %
	Cannabis	61	87.1 %
Duration of incarceration	Less than a year	28	40.0 %
	to 5 years	27	38.6 %
	More than 5 years	15	21.4 %

Study Tool:

After reviewing educational literature and previous studies related to the study's topic and the scales used in them, the Drug Abstinence Self-Efficacy Scale was employed. This scale has been used in studies related to the research topic (Hanken 2023; Navid et al., 2016; Hiller et al., 2000) and was developed by Martin et al. (1995). The scale consists of 20 items. Responses in the study were recorded using a five-point Likert scale, with response levels classified as low (1 to <2.33), moderate (2.34 to <3.67), and high (3.68 to 5).

Reliability and Validity of the Study:

The validity of the tool was verified by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficient for the questionnaire items with the total score of the tool. Statistical significance was found in all items, indicating internal consistency. The reliability of the tool was also verified using the Cronbach's alpha stability equation, with an overall score of 0.91, indicating suitable reliability for the study's purposes.

Statistical Processing:

After collecting the questionnaires and ensuring their suitability for analysis, the data was coded for entry into a computer for appropriate statistical analyses using the SPSS program. Statistical analyses included extracting arithmetic means and standard deviations for each item, as well as using the t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient.

Results:

The analysis of the study results regarding the topic "Self-Efficacy in Drug Abstinence Among Addicted Inmates in Correction and Rehabilitation Centers" will be presented, highlighting the impact of each variable through the responses of the sample on the study tool and analyzing the obtained statistical data.

Table 2: Results of the T-test for Responses on Self-Efficacy in Drug Abstinence Based on the Duration of Use

Domains	Duration of Use	N	M	S D	T Value	Sig
Negative Impact	1 to 3 years	39	3.56	.72	3.503	.001
	More than 3 years	31	2.77	1.15	3.330	.002
Social Pressure	1 to 3 years	39	3.46	.76	4.387	.000
	More than 3 years	31	2.54	.97	4.271	.000
Physical Concerns	1 to 3 years	39	3.41	.75	4.545	.000
	More than 3 years	31	2.49	.94	4.427	.000
Desires	and1 to 3 years	39	3.52	.68	4.277	.000
Motivations	More than 3 years	31	2.63	1.04	4.082	.000
Total Score	1 to 3 years	39	3.49	.60	4.750	.000
	More than 3 years	31	2.61	.93	4.533	.000

The T-test results indicate statistically significant differences in the overall self-efficacy score in drug abstinence among addicted inmates in Palestinian prisons based on the duration of drug use. The mean overall score for inmates who used drugs for 1 to 3 years was 3.49 with a standard deviation of 0.60, while the mean overall score for inmates who used drugs for more than 3 years was 2.61 with a standard deviation of 0.93. These differences were statistically significant (Sig = 0.000), indicating that inmates with a shorter duration of drug use have higher self-efficacy in abstaining from drug use compared to inmates with longer drug use periods.

Table 3: Results of the T-test for Responses on Self-Efficacy in Drug Abstinence Based on the Ease of Obtaining Drugs

Domains	Ease of Access	N	M	S D	T Value	Sig
Negative Impact	Easy	32	3.77	.68	4.92	.000
	Somewhat Difficult	38	2.74	1.00	5.08	.000
Social Pressure	Easy	32	3.63	.66	5.36	.000
	Somewhat Difficult	38	2.57	.933	5.52	.000
Physical Concerns	Easy	32	3.57	.72	5.41	.000
	Somewhat Difficult	38	2.52	.87	5.49	.000
Desires and Motivations	Easy	32	3.65	.69	4.75	.000
	Somewhat Difficult	38	2.69	.94	4.87	.000
Total Score	Easy	32	3.65	.57	5.92	.000
	Somewhat Difficult	38	2.63	.82	6.11	.000

The T-test results indicate statistically significant differences in the overall self-efficacy score in drug abstinence among addicted inmates in Palestinian prisons based on the ease of obtaining drugs. The mean overall score for inmates who found it easy to obtain drugs was 3.65 with a standard deviation of 0.57, while the mean overall score for inmates who found it somewhat difficult to obtain drugs was 2.63 with a standard deviation of 0.82. These differences were statistically significant (Sig = 0.000), indicating that inmates who found it easy to obtain drugs have higher self-efficacy in abstaining from drugs compared to inmates who found it somewhat difficult to obtain them.

Table 4: Results of the T-test for Responses on Self-Efficacy in Drug Abstinence Based on the Type of Drug Used

Domains	Type of Drug	N	M	S D	T Value	sig
Negative Impact	Cocaine	9	3.55	.85	1.08	.28
	Cannabis	61	3.16	1.02	1.24	.23
Social Pressure	Cocaine	9	3.51	.59	1.51	.13
	Cannabis	61	2.99	1.00	2.21	.04
Physical Concerns	Cocaine	9	3.68	.40	2.36	.02
	Cannabis	61	2.90	.977	4.27	.00
Desires and Motivations	Cocaine	9	3.48	.566	1.18	.24
	Cannabis	61	3.08	1.00	1.78	.09
Total Score	Cocaine	9	3.56	.35	1.69	.09
	Cannabis	61	3.03	.91	3.17	.00

The T-test results indicate statistically significant differences in the overall self-efficacy score in drug abstinence between cocaine and cannabis addicts. The mean overall score for cocaine addicts was 3.56 with a standard deviation of 0.35, while the mean overall score for cannabis addicts was 3.03 with a standard deviation of 0.91. These differences were statistically significant (Sig = 0.004), indicating that cocaine addicts have higher self-efficacy in abstaining from drugs compared to cannabis addicts.

Table 5: Results of One-Way ANOVA for Responses on Self-Efficacy in Abstaining Based on the Duration of Incarceration

Domains	Duration of Incarceration	N	M	S D	F Value	Sig.
Negative Impact	Less than a year	28	2.86	.95	4.53	.014
	to 5 years	27	3.25	1.04		
	More than 5 years	15	3.78	.80		
Social Pressure	Less than a year	28	2.77	.98	4.97	.010
	to 5 years	27	3.00	.90		
	More than 5 years	15	3.69	.81		
Physical Concerns	Less than a year	28	2.64	.89	5.56	.006
	to 5 years	27	3.05	.95		
	More than 5 years	15	3.60	.80		
Desires and Motivations	Less than a year	28	2.70	.91	10.92	.000
	to 5 years	27	3.11	.92		
	More than 5 years	15	3.97	.53		
Total Score	Less than a year	28	2.74	.80	7.81	.001
	to 5 years	27	3.10	.865		
	More than 5 years	15	3.76	.69		

The one-way ANOVA results indicate statistically significant differences in self-efficacy in drug abstinence among addicted inmates in Palestinian prisons based on the duration of incarceration. The mean overall score was 2.74 for inmates with less than a year of incarceration, 3.10 for those incarcerated for 1 to 5 years, and 3.76 for those with more than 5 years of incarceration. These differences were statistically significant at the 0.001 level, indicating that self-efficacy in drug abstinence significantly increases with the length of incarceration.

Discussion:

These results suggest that long-term drug use has negative effects on mentality and behavior, reducing addicts' confidence in their ability to abstain. Continuous exposure to drugs may result in changes in brain function, increasing psychological and physical dependence, complicating efforts to break the addiction cycle. Long-term addicts may have social environments filled with factors encouraging drug use, making abstinence more challenging. Previous unsuccessful attempts may also decrease addicts' confidence in their ability to succeed in the future, whereas short-term addicts may exhibit higher self-efficacy in drug abstinence. These results align with the study by McKeganey et al. (2006), which indicated that some addicts might succeed in abstaining despite long-term use.

Addicts who find it easy to obtain drugs may feel more relaxed and less anxious about their ability to return to drug use, which can increase their confidence in their ability to abstain. In contrast, addicts who find it difficult to obtain drugs may experience more stress and anxiety, reducing their confidence in their ability to abstain. The social environment and available support play an influential role, as addicts who find drugs easy to obtain may have stronger social support networks. These results align with the significant challenges addicts face in abstaining from drug use, despite some successes. Participants' desire to use drugs reflects the psychological and behavioral effects of long-term use. This also aligns with McKeganey et al. (2006), which showed significant variability in abstinence levels based on the availability of services and support. Johnson and Lee (2020) also emphasize the importance of social support in enhancing self-efficacy, aligning with our results that show inmates who find it easy to obtain drugs have greater confidence in their ability to abstain.

These results can also be interpreted by recognizing that cocaine and cannabis affect the central nervous system differently. Cocaine, as a strong stimulant, causes rapid and intense effects, making addicts more aware of its negative effects and increasing their self-efficacy in trying to abstain from it. In contrast, cannabis has calming and less noticeable effects, making addicts less aware of the need to abstain. Cocaine addicts may be more aware of the health and social risks associated with its use, prompting them to make greater efforts to quit. Cocaine is more expensive and less available, imposing greater financial and legal pressures, whereas cannabis is more available and less costly, making continued use easier. These results align with studies like Elkashef et al. (2008) and Copeland et al. (2013), which indicated differences in risk awareness and motivations for abstaining between cocaine and cannabis addicts.

Long incarceration periods can enhance self-efficacy in drug abstinence in several ways, including participation in rehabilitation and psychological treatment programs, which increase their ability to abstain. The organized prison environment, where drug availability is reduced, can enhance self-efficacy, along with social and psychological support from prison staff and peers. Inmates serving longer sentences may develop more effective coping strategies and become more determined to change their behavior to avoid returning to prison. Regarding incarceration length, Williams et al. (2018) emphasized that longer incarceration periods offer greater opportunities for participation in treatment and rehabilitation programs, enhancing inmates' self-efficacy. This result aligns with our data, which shows increased self-efficacy with longer incarceration periods, where inmates receive ongoing support that enhances their ability to abstain from drugs. These results align with studies

like Peters and Kearns (1992) and Wexler et al. (1999), which suggest that longer incarceration periods enhance self-efficacy by providing opportunities for participation in rehabilitation and psychological treatment programs.

Conclusions:

The results indicate that long-term drug use negatively affects mentality and behavior, reducing addicts' confidence in their ability to abstain due to the effects of drugs on the brain and psychological and physical dependence. The social environment and ease of obtaining drugs play a role in influencing use or abstinence, as facilitating factors for drug use increase the difficulty of abstaining. In contrast, cocaine addicts show greater awareness of its risks compared to cannabis, prompting them to make greater efforts to quit. Long incarceration periods contribute to enhancing self-efficacy through rehabilitation and support programs, increasing inmates' ability to abstain from drugs, as demonstrated by multiple studies.

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