

# The Evolution in Criminalization and Decriminalization of Addiction in Iran: Examination and Analysis

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## Abstract

Addiction, regarding which different opinions have been stated, is now considered the menace of society. Some scholars argue that addiction is a crime, while others consider it a disease requiring treatment and help from public and governmental institutions. Today, in the criminal and juridical law, the legislator has taken the basic norms and values of the society into account and has relied on his accepted theoretical foundations to prohibit an act or the same act's omission, thereby setting criminal sanction over that act. Therefore, there are different laws at the international and domestic scope regarding addiction and addicts. In Iran, addiction is among the social issues that has experienced various shifts in its social structure in the recent decades. This study seeks to examine the evolutionary frame of the criminalization and decriminalization of addiction in the country.

**Keywords:** addiction, criminalization, decriminalization

## Introduction:

Emile Durkheim, the renowned French sociologist, once argued that "crime is a natural and social phenomenon that ascends from the cultural settings plus civilization of any society and is defined as any action that hurts the public conscience" (Validi, 1995, 9-10).

Addiction is caused by repetitive consumption of substances that are incrementally increased in volume by the consumer to satisfy his/her pleasure during each instance, the ultimate result of which would be the dependency of the body on that substance. Physical dependence is manifested through the discomfort and anxiety caused by the deprivation of substance, while psychological dependence is manifested in the form of attachment and irresistible desire to use the substance. In popular belief, there is no difference between drug use and addiction, but the distinction between the two is undoubtedly of paramount significance to the legal and criminological spheres. In criminal law, drug addiction can be linked to addictive crimes that require repeated criminal behavior for realization. From a criminological point of view, addiction (as a description for the addicted criminals' behavior) indicates dangerous situations that can lead to other crimes, such as theft, assault, and sexual crimes, among others. Therefore, it is safe to assume that addiction is a disease characterized by repetitive behavior resulting in getting used to narcotics and intoxicants, leading in the long run to a plethora of physical and mental disorders (Rayejian Asli, 2001, p. 171).

## Addiction

As a complication with psychological, social and economic implications, addiction is examined in the disciplines of medical sciences, psychology and sociology, as well as philosophy, law, ethics and religion. Since 1964, the World Health Organization has recommended the use of the term "drug dependence" or "dependence on drug" instead of the term "addiction". Addiction has two types, namely, physical and mental. Physical addiction is the addiction in which the consumer, after a sustained period of consumption, suffers physical harm in case of drug inaccessibility or voluntary use stoppage. On the other hand, mental addiction is the psychological dependence

resulting from consumption pleasure, whose weaning is highly complicated and only achievable in the very long run (Sadeqi Moqaddam, 2018).

### **Crime in jurisprudential and legal perspective**

In the holy Qur'an and, consequently, in the Islamic jurisprudence, *Jorm*, literally meaning crime, is defined as committing an act or saying a word that is forbidden by the holy shari'ah. In other words, actions and sayings are considered crime that are deemed contrary to the commands and prohibitions of the Almighty. In the twelfth verse of Surah Al-Ma'ida, "*Yojremenkom*" is used to refer to ugly and disgusting deeds. In the forty-eighth verse of Surah Qamar, it also refers to the ugly deeds and behavior of those who are in the dark. The same meaning can be deduced from the verses that have been revealed about various crimes, such as *qisas* (lit. retributive justice), either life retaliation or limb retaliation, *diyah* (lit. blood money), *hadd* (lit. punishment) for adultery, *hadd* for (lit. false accusation of adultery or sodomy), and *hadd* for theft, which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (Validi, 1995, 13). Legally, crime is an act contrary to every case of the general punishment law in any country; what's more, criminal is the person whose act is contrary to the official law of the country in that certain period. Scholars of criminal law have defined each crime in a different way. Each of these definitions is often inspired by the theoretical inclinations of particular schools. The school of absolute justice, for example, has defined crime as "any act contrary to morality and justice." Garoufallou, one of the founders of criminology discipline, has defined crime as the invasion to human's moral sense, i.e., "damaging that part of the moral sense which includes humanity basic feelings, namely compassion and integrity" (Ardabili, 2014, 119). Some argue that "crime is, in fact, an error of public effect, because the general public is affected by its occurrence, and in fact, society is threatened or harassed by crime. For example, the crime of rape has a greater effect than simply inflicting trauma to the victim, as in rape, society as a whole is threatened and its security is reduced, and the rapist may repeat his heinous act, and therefore the society is not willing to relinquish the right of compensation wholly to the victim" (Clarkson, 1992, 17). Some academics consider crime to be acts contrary to social order for the perpetration of which punishments and sanctions are imposed (Nourbaha, 2004, 150). This definition is also expressed in Article 2 of Iran's Penal Code, stating: "any behavior, whether an act or omission for which punishment is prescribed by law, is considered a crime." Of course, according to this article, behaviors against social order are considered a crime only when corrective measures or sanctions have been provided for their perpetration, otherwise they are not considered a crime and are only called an act contrary to social order or anti-value. It must be borne in mind, however, that given the relative nature of the crime, it does not have a generally accepted definition, and determining what is a crime and what is not a crime (and who is guilty or who is not guilty) depends on temporal and spatial conditions (El Winfry, 2009, 45). Yet, it is safe to argue that "a criminal act or crime reflects any behavior that is on the one hand contrary to social order and on the other hand is subject to legal punishment in the penal code. As such, as long as the behavior of a person is unusual and harmful to society, yet no provision is offered therefor in the legal, the perpetrator of that behavior cannot be prosecuted" (Golduzian, 2006, 65).

### **Criminalization**

Criminalization is the decision of the competent authority to prohibit or oblige a behavior for the violation of which sanctions are provided. It is evident from this definition that the essence of criminalization is the restriction of human rights and freedoms, and hence inevitably requires to be justified by sound principles and criteria (Qomashi, 2010, 148). As such, criminalization is a process by which the legislator takes the fundamental norms and values of the society into account and hence relies on the accepted theoretical foundations to prohibit

an act or an omission, setting criminal sanctions therefor in the aftermath. Accordingly, criminalization is an *a posteriori* discipline based on basic sciences such as philosophy of law, political philosophy and social sciences (Aqababaei, 2005, 11-12). To this end, criminalization essentially revolves around recognizing the beliefs and principles (structural ideology and the basis of the legitimacy of power) of a given political system, based on which, behaviors are characterized as criminal. The principles of criminalization support conditions that state the ethical reasons for criminal protection of a particular subject matter and the basis for the legitimacy of criminal action. The valid principles derived from studying criminology are mere general guidelines for the criminal legislature, and hence not the criteria for the necessity or non-necessity of criminalizing a behavior. A simple glance at the notions on criminalization confirms that they are often obtained in the critique or development of another theory (even though these notions themselves are the drivers of criminalization), yet none of them have been immune to the opposing schools of thought invasion. The issue causing ambiguity and conciseness of these theories is resorting to theories that refrain from criminalization and its justification is that whether the right to punishment and criminalization is based solely on one principle or several theories are involved in criminalization of a behavior, that is, can a behavior be justified simultaneously and based on the two principles of harm and legal ethics, and that the principles of the two realm can be applied concurrently for criminalization? Scrutinization of these doctrines indicates that the justification for criminalizing a behavior is not based on one theory and principle, and relying on the combined theory of consequentialism and remuneration (with emphasis on entitlement) will yield more desirable outcomes. Therefore, in distinguishing criminal interference from otherwise, one principle should be determined as a basis, backed by several sub-principles and supplementary notions. Seemingly, the principle of harm has the most capacity in justifying the criminal interferences to individual liberties. Nevertheless, criminalization of many unacceptable behaviors in society is not pursuant to conflict with moral ideals, but rather to support the public order of society. Any attempt to criminalization must be commensurate with the ensuing temporal and spatial requirements, and whenever there is a will to punish a person, there must be some applicable criteria with the minimum level of restriction on the freedom of the individual. The influence of the Iranian legislature from the Islamic penal system, which is essentially of metaphysical and divine origin, indicates that the criminalization of behaviors in the Iranian penal system is not influenced by a particular doctrine. Accurate knowledge of theories related to criminalization and punishment, followed by their thorough review according to the experience of criminal legislation and achievements of the penal systems of other countries is of utmost importance to achieving a desirable criminal justice system that simultaneously maintains the maximum level of individual rights and freedoms on the one hand, and safeguards the observance of public order and the rights of society on the other hand (Darvishi, 2017).

### **Decriminalization**

“Decriminalization denotes the processes by which the criminal system's competence to enforce a sanction is revoked as a reaction to a previously criminal conduct. This can be implemented either through legislation or the way the law is reinterpreted by the judicature” (a group of authors, 2005, 10). In the history of criminal law, decriminalization has occurred at different intervals, albeit to no systematic approach, as the rate of human behaviors deemed punishable has not been constant and has not increase or decreased consistently (a group of authors; 2005, 61). The issue of decriminalization has been raised since the beginning of the 1960s with the aim of criminal downsizing (White, et.al. 2002, 320).

An example of decriminalization in Iranian law can be witnessed in Article 3 of the Law on the Punishment of the People Who Perform Unauthorized Activities in Audio-Visual Affairs, approved in 1993, pursuant to which “everyone involved in production, distribution, reproduction and ownership of unauthorized audio-visual works

... will be sentenced to one of the following punishments as the case may be, in addition to having their license revoked.” With the approval of the book of deterrent punishments of the Islamic Penal Code in 1996, in accordance with Article 640 of the said law and the verdict on unity of procedure No. 645 in 1999 of the Supreme Court, preserving unauthorized audio-visual in limited numbers and without commercial and distribution purposes was decriminalized. However, with the approval of the “New Law on the Punishment of People Who Perform Unauthorized Activities in Audio-Visual Affairs” in 2008, in the Article 3 of the said law, the term “holders” have been mentioned, while Article 13 has discarded all conflicting laws, hence reinstituting having unauthorized audiovisual works, regardless of how infrequent in number and for non-commercial purposes they may be, as a crime.

### **Criminalization of addiction in Iran’s legal system**

The use of drugs and alcohol was criminalized by the General Penal Code of 1925 in Iran. The original laws on drugs were far more lenient and criminalized only the open use of these drugs, until the Law on the Prohibition of Poppy Cultivation and the 1955 Use of Opium banned use of drugs altogether. This trend has continued in the laws and amendments of 1980, 1988, 1997 and 2010 after the Islamic Revolution, the difference being that in the post-revolution regulations due to the specific criminal policy of punishable crimes and that the use of intoxicants requiring a *hadd* punishment, varying rules have been set regarding intoxicants and alcohol. Consequently, drug addiction is labeled crime in Article 15 of the Anti-Narcotics Law adopted in 1997 and the amendments made in 2010. Nevertheless, before the 2010 amendments, Articles 16 and 19 provided for fines and flogging for addicts who did not seek treatment, while in Article 15 of the amendments, addicts were required to refer to public and private centers or non-governmental organizations to receive a certificate of withdrawal from addiction and treatment with harm reduction (Aqababaei and Rezaei Zadfar, 2014, 7). According to this article, if an addict does not receive the said certificate or pretends to be addicted despite receiving it, he will be considered a criminal and will be subject to the punishment stipulated in Article 16. The law provides for one to three months of imprisonment in government-authorized detention centers to reduce harm and treat addicts. The mentioned period can be extended indefinitely according to the reports of the aforementioned centers and the order of the judicial authority. In Note 2 of this article, a 6-month probation is provided and if the regulations are not observed in that period, according to Note 3, the judicial authority is obliged to order imprisonment from ninety-one days to six months. Comparing the recent amendments to the law with the previous measures, it can be said that the legislator has shown more flexibility in its approach, and hence has sought minor decriminalization by gradually converting punishments into corrective measures.

### **Criminalization of addiction in the International legal system**

Since the early twentieth century, owing to the prevalence of complications arising from due, especially the increase in opium exports from east to west and the gradual realization of the opium by-products’ harms, especially heroin, the international legal system took its first measure of intervention. The Shanghai Conference in 1909 is the first case of international community involvement in this matter, namely the prohibition of drug use for any purpose other than medical purposes (Rahmdel, 2004, 205). Subsequently, several international conferences and conventions were ratified in different years, and in 1961, a single convention containing the provisions of previous conventions was ratified. Finally, in 1998, United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs was signed by 108 member states and relevant specialized agencies, calling on governments to ban the use of narcotics except for medical use. In almost all countries of the world, except in places such as the Netherlands, Spain and Italy, where the use of some light substances is free, drugs are under the

governments' thorough control and their use of any kind is prohibited and considered a crime (Aqababaei and Rezaei Zafar, 2014,). Yet, the dual criminal policy of the great and powerful Western countries regarding alcohol and drug use is of academic interest. According to one author, although alcohol was the first drug to become a major social problem for Western countries, the first drug to be banned at the initiative and pressure of the West in international law was opium. In international documents on the criminalization of drug trafficking, opium is the headline of the drugs list (Toqranegar, 2013). Alcohol, meanwhile, is a neglected drug. However, those Western writers of the late 1990s and early twentieth century who studied and compared the effects of alcohol and opium pointed to the harmful effects of the two and even assessed alcohol more negatively. A Western writer affirms that "in all eras of humanity, regardless of whether the drug is cola, cannabis, opium, alcohol, ether or morphine, people have resorted to some substances that are more effective on the body and mind to increase the feeling of happiness and immediate pleasure. The motivation drawing people to these substances and their complications are similar though." Some other authors, referring to alcohol and opium users as "volunteers of poisoned contentment", have divided these toxins into Western and Eastern ones. By Western poisons, they meant alcohol and cocaine, which were mainly produced by the West itself, and called opium and cannabis, which were not produced in the West, the Eastern poisons. These authors pointed to the different properties of alcohol and opium in terms of sedation and incitement to violence, and acknowledged that alcohol in particular being a physical stimulant and opium a mental stimulant; so, from this perspective, opium is not only less harmful for the individual but also for the community. All in all, the important and interesting question remains as to why Westerners preferred Western drugs to their eastern counterparts, and why alcohol was removed from the list of illicit substances, and to what extent the economic and geopolitical interests of Western countries, especially the United States, has been particularly effective in this matter? On the other hand, despite international drug criminalization and very strict national enforcement sanctions for drug production and trafficking, the question that remains at large is why in Iran, drug use is much higher than that of alcohol according to the reports of judicial authorities? The answer to this question can be understood and justified in the production and trafficking of these substances, and given that Iran is placed at the very heart of production and transit of narcotics, the high consumption of narcotics compared to alcohol is a matter that requires careful social, political, cultural and judicial scrutinization (Haqpanah, 1998).

### **The criminal policy towards addiction**

The evolution of Iran's criminal policy towards the criminalization of addiction can be examined in four epochs as follows:

1. Parallel performance
2. Confrontational developments
3. Corrective measures
4. Fundamental developments

### **Parallel performance**

Prior to the revolution, the Anti-Drug and Addiction Control Program introduced regulations that included opium quota for opium patients who were unable to quit swiftly, hence they received opium coupons. After the revolution, the opium quota policy of addicts was influenced by legal measures. In 1979, the Cabinet of Ministers, following pressure from 170,000 addicts with official card surviving the pre-revolutionary years for lack of access to opium, approved the "Regulations on the Sale of Opium to Addicts," according to which, Opium Trading Organization affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development was allowed to sell opium from

poppy juices in different parts of the country from 22 august 1979 for 30 rials per gram to addicted patients who were allowed to receive opium quotas and had received cards and coupons on opium quota issued by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in accordance with the relevant regulations. Five months later, the Revolutionary Council approved a bill to permit the purchase of the opium needed by the country's licensed addicts, according to which one hundred tons of opium would be purchased from India to provide the opium quota for licensed addicts. The bill also emphasized that the implementation of this bill depended on the fact that imported opium would not be provided to the consumer in a pure form, and the implementation of the policy of gradually increasing the opium impurity started from this very same recommendation. The Islamic Revolutionary Council ended the government's opium trade in July 1980, banning poppy cultivation throughout Iran, criminalizing drug use as a result. Following this ruling, 33,000 hectares of land under poppy cultivation were destroyed (213 Journal, August 2017).

### **Confrontational developments**

Among the confrontational developments of the government for addiction and drug use, the most noticeable ones are: Anti-Addiction Headquarters' establishment, the ban on poppy cultivation and the addition of a note to Article 1 of the law intensifying the punishment of drug traffickers and users (Baqeri Tavani et al., 2016).

### **The Anti-Addiction Headquarters' Establishment**

After the 1979 revolution, pursuant to the approval of the Council of Ministers, a headquarters was established in the Ministry of Health and Welfare as the "Central Headquarters for Coordination of Combating Addiction", which was tasked with establishing general policy and guidelines, and planning and preparing standards and criteria related to drugs. The formation of a central headquarters for the coordination of the fight against addiction in a civilian organization, especially in the socio-political context of the post-revolution era, should be considered one of the rather decisive decisions of this period. Anti-narcotics headquarters found a legal and military nature and was headed by top-level military officials (Najafi Abrandabadi and Hashemibeigi, 2018).

### **Ban on poppy cultivation**

After the 1979 Revolution, farmers were initially advised to reduce or refrain from growing poppies. Following these remarks, the Ministry of Agriculture, at the suggestion of the Ministry of Health, banned the cultivation of poppies in all parts of the country. The insistence on stopping poppy cultivation, the indefinite criminalization of the purchase, sale and abuse of opium, and the consequent increase in the price of opium, caused some addicts to change their consumption and use heroin to circumvent the challenges of gaining access to opium. In a thought-provoking interview based on detailed expert information, a sociologist argued that "during the administration of Sadeq Khalkhali (Former member of the Iranian parliament), there was a shift from opium to heroin, while studying heroin addicts, I noticed that many of them were addicted to heroin due to the opium punishment severity. When they went to the opium sellers, they were told to take heroin, as it had no smell, required no space, had no complications, and could be consumed anytime, anywhere, and in any amount, while it was easier to hide. The perception of the administration was that with this approach, the issue of opium use will be mitigated (231 Journal, 2017).

### **Appending note to Article 1 of the Law on Intensifying Drug Criminals' Punishment**

The next phase in the fight against addiction was passage of a bill to increase the punishment for perpetrators of drug crimes. The bill did not determine drug offenses. This led to the confusion of some courts regarding

cannabis and similar substances. Although the Legal Department, in its advisory opinion, considered cannabis and similar substances in the category of opiates pursuant to the Article 25 of the Bill, which still considered the enactment of August 1959 Law on the Drug List to be enforceable, it could not create a single procedure in the court and prevent the dispersal of votes in this regard owing to the fact that this comment was not binding. Accordingly, in 1981, the Islamic Consultative Assembly enacted the amendment on appending note to Article 1 of the Law on Intensifying Drug Criminals' Punishment, the purpose of which would be to treat and employ addicts. According to this note, cannabis and similar substances were classified as opium, stating that "cannabis and its by-products, such as hashish, are considered opioids according to the provisions of this law."

### **Corrective measures**

Among the corrective measures, exiling addicts to inaccessible islands along with reinforcement of complication reduction activities were standouts (Rahmdel, 2004).

1. Exiling addicts to the island: According to the Supreme Judicial Council's decision in 1984, addicts were, after their arrest, sent to an island. Delinquent, wandering, notorious, bad-recorded addicts were collected from all cities and exiled to the south. The length of addicts' stay in exile was unknown and was subject to complete addiction cessation. This was the case until there were protests against the way addicts were treated, accordingly, a delegation from the judiciary became responsible for reviewing and preparing a report from the center.

2. Reinforcement of complication reduction activities: The critical situation and the swift increase in the prevalence of substance abuse in addition to addiction in the final years of addiction management's second phase, obliged the relevant administrators to intensify their proceedings. Therefore, while maintaining their old approach, they again made further efforts to organize more supply reduction activities. Rapid increase in drug-related suspects arrested in the final years of addiction management second phase indicated the seriousness of supply prevention programs on the one hand, and the probable growing prevalence of addiction on the other.

### **Fundamental Developments**

During the fundamental changes period, the Anti-Narcotics Law and the Anti-Narcotics Law amendment were passed, which were as follows.

#### **Anti-Narcotics Law**

The Anti-Narcotics Law of 1988 was passed by the Expediency Discernment Council, regardless of any concerns about the representatives' protests or the Guardian Council's approval. The law declared use or exchange of any drugs (including methadone) illegal, criminal, and prosecutable; effectively further limiting intervention of experienced and clear-sighted physicians in treating addicts. In this law, the punishment for most drug-related offenses was death penalty. In terms of criminology, the Expediency Council did not pay enough attention to criminal policy and preventive aspects of crime, hence exhibiting utter indifference to the correction of criminals and crime prevention. Scholars have consistently argued that the legislature should focus on reducing and eliminating the causes of crime in legislation, not drafting and passing legislation to combat the effects. Immediately after the approval of the above law, the Expediency Council, at the suggestion of the Anti-Narcotics Headquarters, amended some articles of the said law. For example, Article 35, which limited the implementation of this law to two years, was removed; thus, the law became permanent. Furthermore, the arrangements provided for in Article 33-34 was adapted to the changes made in the constitution (removal of Prime Minister post). The law passed by the Council in 1988 was enacted in such a way that it was not only in complete

contradiction with the country's rules of general courts procedure, but also did not bear much resemblance to the rules of special courts procedure. It can be argued that "in this law, certain repressive measures were taken against drug offenders, which, along with the special nature of the court hearing these crimes, further ignored the rights of the accused" (Pourreza and Ismaili, 2016).

### **Amendments to the Anti-Narcotics Law**

In 1998, the Anti-Narcotics Reform Law was approved and implemented. Pursuant to this law, which includes 38 articles and 23 notes, the addict was still a criminal. Under the new law, the punishment of drug addicts under treatment was suspended though. Holders of 500 grams to 5 kilograms of opium were fined, while holders of more than 5 kilograms were sentenced to death. Also, holders of 15 to 30 grams of heroin had to pay fines; while, those found to hold more than 30 grams were sentenced to death. In the amendment to the law, all fines had been increased tenfold, and if a convict could not pay the fine, he would have to spend one day in prison for every ten thousand rials.

### **Conclusion**

Addiction is one of the most important public deviations resulting in various harms and problems in society. Rather than being a psychology and personality related phenomenon, addiction is more of a social one (Sediq Sarvestani, 2004). Accordingly, considering the social, cultural and economic complication resulting from addiction in societies, legislators in most countries have criminalized addiction resulting in categorization of addicts as criminals. Criminalization is a process through which governments prohibit behaviors, thereby seeking to suppress such behaviors by imposing penalties. Such punishment is in fact a guarantee of criminal execution for the perpetrator against his/her criminal act, and is a kind of official and severe response of the governments to the criminal act (Najafi Abrandabadi, 2000).

The Iranian legislature has exhibited differing reactions to addiction from about a century ago to present. From taxation for each ounce of grown opium in the "Opium Restriction Law" (approved on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1911) to dismissal of addicted employees according to the "Law on Prohibition of Cultivation and Use of Opium" (approved in September 1955) and approval of "the Anti-Narcotics Law, approved by Expediency Discernment Council" (approved in November 1988).

By having an eye on the routine scheme and experience in the developed countries, the Iranian legislator has recently considered the rationality and applicability of the law, specifically in the anti-narcotic realm. This consideration has even loomed in some indications of legal and legislative texts as: 'addicts are patients'. Nevertheless, all the following obstacles have consequented in the actual irate and furious treatment of addict, seeing him/her as a convict resulting in factual criminalization of addiction:

1. technical, accurate and fundamental tenets of criminalization in anti-narcotic law (approved in 1988) and its afterward reforms in the years 2010 and 2017 having not been considered or having even been fully disregarded.
2. the usual trend and the reactionary viewpoint of the Iranian traditional society toward addiction as an obscene matter.
3. the general policies of the Iranian government and their looking at addiction as the tool for exploitation, colonization and stupefaction of the active young generation by the imperial superpowers having not affected their actual conflict with the addict, still seeing him as a wrongdoer, treating him wrathfully and criminalizing his actions.

Testifying these claims is the echo of this view and scheme in clause 1 (article 5) of Anti-Narcotic law (approved by Expediency Discernment Council in 1988) and its reforms in the following years. Even in clause 15 of the



aforementioned law, it initially shows some tendency toward subtilization of the matter and struggles to deviate the viewpoint toward addiction; yet, restraining the stoppage of drug abuse to a guarantee of criminal execution which resembles the absolute criminalization of addiction.

To better recognize the social structure of addiction in Iran, the new pitfalls of this scope must be closely scrutinized among which are: reduced age of addiction, shifts in the pattern of drug abuse, increased volume of drug use, the prevalence of addiction among specific groups (such as women and students), the emergence of new industrial and chemical drugs and changes in the pattern of drug distribution.

In the long run, evidence indicates that the most optimal solution to addiction complications is paying special attention to rehabilitation and relative decriminalization of addiction. Therefore, to cure such damage as addiction in Iran, focusing on its prevention rather than control, in the form of judicial or disciplinary force, yield more efficient yet cost-effective results, as the recent increase in the expenditures on addiction control has not resulted in less consumption.

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