
Comparison of ego strength between addicted and non addicted people from Karaj and Tehran cities of Iran

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Abstract: A healthy ego-strength is connected to a healthy self-concept, one that is flexible, thus can look at a situation and see outcome of it, understand the difference between wants and needs, and practices acceptance to distinguish between what can and cannot be changed, to respond accordingly. The aim of this research was to compare the ego strength of addicted and non addicted people. The sample size of 200 men (100 addicts+ 100 non addicts) living in Karaj and Tehran cities of Islamic Republic of Iran that was selected through the availability sampling. To collect data, a 52-item BESS (Barron's ego strength scale) questionnaire was used. The normal t-test was applied as statistics methods and for data analysis using SPSS software. Sig.-value of 0.0001 indicates that the difference between the addicted and healthy people is statistically significant. The high ego-strength scores of the healthy people indicate that they can defeat the difficulties. On the other hand, the low ego-strength scores of the addicted people indicate that they cannot overcome the problem correctly.

Keywords: Addiction, Ego Strength, Addicted and Normal People

1. Introduction

Ego strength represents the feeling about problems, the main reaction to disturbance and demonstrates the capacity of emotional flexibility. Strong ego strength provides high self-esteem. Ego strength can be defined as having a positive understanding about who you are and what are your capabilities. There are a number of people who suffer from low ego strength, which means that they are not confident about their personality, thinking and motive in life. If you are suffering from low ego strength, then here are some points that can help you build up a positive approach about yourself.

Challenges are not viewed as obstacles but opportunities; setbacks as being only temporary, not permanent. No matter what, a person's sense of self always remains intact. However, if their ego strength is too strong, it could also backfire on them. They could become rigid and inflexible in what they say and do. They could also pursue something beyond their talents due to overconfidence. There are no positives to the negatives of weak ego strength. Alcoholism and drug addiction can spring forth, along with other self-destructive behaviors. Challenges become insurmountable walls that defy climbing; setbacks permanently set in stone. In short, it

can be life-defining if not treated. Weak strength helps grow fears into massive proportions. This in turn plays into how challenges seem impossible to overcome. Strong strength by contrast helps keep fears in perspective. This in turn means mountains are not made out of molehills. When it is very strong, fear may not exist at all within a person. Strong strength is a fount of self-confidence. In turn this means one is less sensitive to criticism or contradictory opinions. It also helps a person stand out during social interaction because they are comfortable with who they are. Those with weak strength cut both ways socially. They could either go about unnoticed because they feel inadequate or always talk loud insisting they are right about everything under the sun to compensate for that feeling [1-6]. The ego strength can also be defined as disappointment acceptance, resolution under stress, lack of irrelevant responses; the ego strength can be defined as frustration tolerance, including persistence under stress, absence of irrelevant responses, and increase capability against dissatisfactions. High scores generally signify the tolerance of environmental difficulties.

Barron' (1963) points out that the strength of a person's

ego is not the difficulties, quarrels and crises that he/she come across, but the confidence with which he/she meets them with little ego-strength may feel to in between these opposing difficulty, while these with too much ego-strength can become too tough against the external stress.

A person with high ego strength is able to cope within the cultural, social and personal restrictions of his/her society. The person with a medium score is constantly in more stress than the person with a high Es scored. The low scores may occur when the person is feeling he/she needs help for rehabilitation [6-8]. The extremely low scores indicate the incapability to deal with every-day occurrences.

Some personal behaviors increase the risk of drug addiction; low self-esteem, lack of social and adaptive proficiency and basic methods to deal with the stresses of life [9-13]. The ego strength is the skill to distinguish the logical and emotional potential in a person, in such a way that the person can recognize his/her abilities and cope with the stresses of the routine life and be productive and efficient in terms of his/her job. In this research the ego strength scores of the addicted and normal people were compared. The sample size of 200 people includes 100 addicted men and 100 normal men living in Karaj and Tehran cities of Islamic Republic of Iran that was selected through the available sampling. Comparison between Tehran and Karaj ego strength in healthy and addicted people, aims to raise awareness of the harms of drug addiction, leading to a better human life.

2. Result and Discussion

The ego-strength scores obtained from Karaj and Tehran considered as control variables for addicted and non addicted people separately. The big sig. values (0.54 and 0.72 for non addicted and addicted people, respectively) show that the differences between the scores from Tehran or Karaj are not statistically significant then we removed the effect of cities from our model. Despite the refusal of many people, especially addicts in filling the questionnaires, we have hardly managed to prepare 100 filled questionnaires with high accuracy from the each of two groups of the addicted and non addicted people from Karaj and Tehran of Iran. The means and standard deviations of the ego strength in addicted and healthy men from Tehran and Karaj cities were reported in table 1. As it is clear in table 1, the mean of the ego strength of non addicted people is higher than the addicted ones (31.51 versus 24.25), so addicts scores were lower than non addict ones.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (KS-test) have done on ego strength data to distinguish normal distribution and the results are shown graphically in figures 1 and 2. Note that the KS-test shows that the both ego strength scores for healthy and addicted people are normally distributed with means of 31.51 and 24.25 for healthy and addicts, respectively. Thus the normal t-test can be used to distinguish the significance different between the scores.

Table 1. The value of *t* suggests that there is a strong difference between addicted and non addicted people from Tehran and Karaj of Iran. The very small sig.-value (0.0001) indicates that this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant.

| Mean(addicts) | Mean(healthy) | <i>t</i> |
|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 24.250±5.116 | 31.510±5.613 | 8.864 |

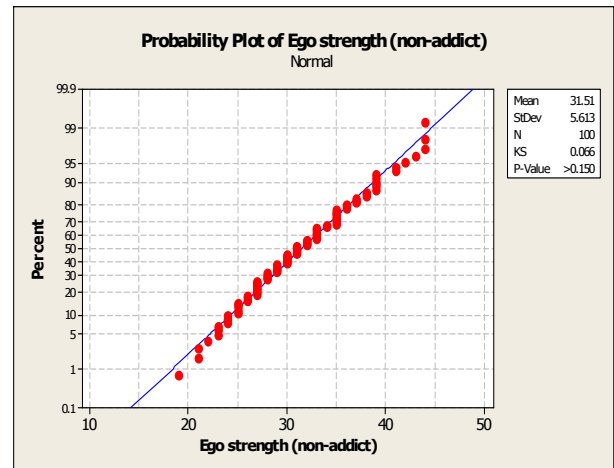


Figure 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normal distribution of ego strength scores of healthy people of Karaj and Tehran. *p*-value >0.15, is indicative of normal distribution of the scores.

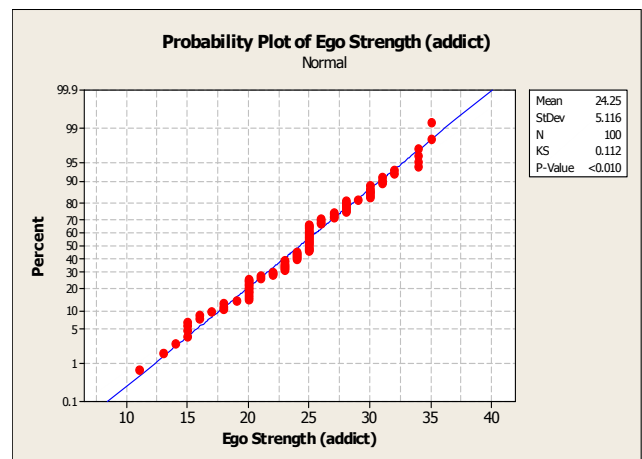


Figure 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normal distribution of ego strength scores of addicted people of Karaj and Tehran. *p*-value < 0.01, is indicative of normal distribution of the scores.

To compare these means and also determine the significant differences between them, independent t-test was used and the results between addicts and non addicts have been compared in figure 1 as scatter plots. The small sig.-value (0.0001) indicates that this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. Considering figure 1, addicts have lower scores than non addicts in terms of ego strengths. So, there is a significant difference between means of the ego strength scores in addicted and non addicted group.

Results of the t-test for two independent variables are presented in Table 1. $t=8.86$ indicates that there is a significant difference between the means of ego strength scores of the addicts and non addicts too.

High ego strength scores in healthy people of Tehran and Karaj indicate the ability of them to defeat the difficulties, while the low scores of addicted group indicate an inability to cope with every-day occurrences (figure 3).

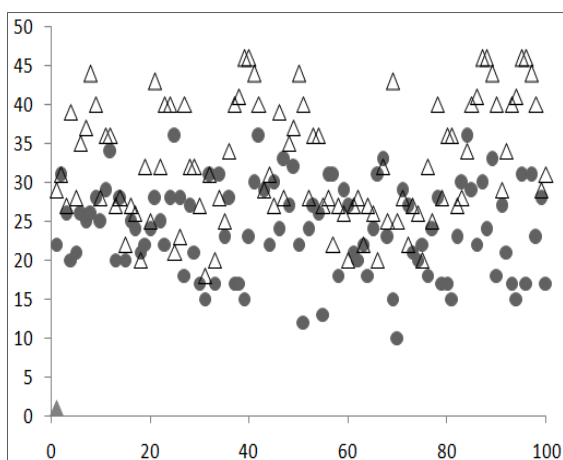


Figure 3. comparison of the ego strength between addicted (●) and non addicts (△) living in Tehran and Karaj, Iran. The strong ego-strength of the healthy people indicates that they can defeat the difficulties. On the other hand, ego weakness of the addicted people cannot overcome the problem properly.

3. Conclusion

With an ashore good judgment of the own personal power, people are more likely to stay determined, confident, believe and empathically engaged to your compassion for yourself and key other. In contrast to an unhealthy one (low ego-strength), a well-developed ego-strength allows you to relate to self and others in ways that promote reciprocal cooperation and positive regard. The *t* value (table 1) indicates that there is a strong difference between addicted and non addicted people from Tehran and Karaj of Iran. The very small *sig.*-value (0.0001) indicates that this difference is considered to be tremendously significant. Focusing attention to ego strength on the addicted and non addicts, a lower ego strength scores in addicted people is indicative of poor compliance, worsening of the psychiatric symptoms evolution toward to discouragement, anxiety and depression, with consequent costs for public health. The strong ego strength score of the healthy group indicates that they are able to handle whatever comes.

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