

# An Investigation into the Basics of and Reasons behind Criminalization or Decriminalization of Addiction

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## ABSTRACT

Drug-related crimes are complicated, diverse, and of different aspects or features. Accordingly, the phenomenon of drug, i.e., drug abuse, is nowadays raised as a branch of the criminal law, and in dealing with this issue, a technical, accurate, thought-out attitude based upon the latest definite scientific findings of the world seems necessary. Addiction is generally referred to as 'the human being's dependence to consuming any poisonous thing which can be a kind of drug plus natural or compound substances that are harmful to the body; while, it won't be easy to give them up'. Although social scientists and executives have considered addiction a disease for the past few years, it seems that a significant part of the population still considers addiction a crime rather than a disease. Since criminalization is usually a well-thought action arising from the collective wisdom, and its formation requires observance of some principles and rules, it seems that in some cases, criminalization of addiction has been administered without observance of these principles. The current study has dealt with investigating the principles and concepts of criminalization or decriminalization of addiction

*Key words: Criminalization, decriminalization, positive law, jurisprudence.*

## 1- INTRODUCTION:

Drugs refer to all types of stimulants, hallucinogens, and laxatives which have physical and mental prohibitions in the Shari'a due to leading in 'dependence after one or more uses. Opium along with its derivatives, cannabis, marijuana, cocaine plus its derivatives, as well as synthetic drugs are of the most famous examples of addictive drugs (Sergeevna et. al., 2020; Soboleva et al., 2020; Sergeevna et. al., 2020). These substances and their derivatives such as opium, juice, heroin, cannabis, and cocaine are either not used in today's pharmaceutical industries, or in case they are used medicinally, such as morphine, they are abused a lot. Therefore, it seems as if it cannot be assumed that they have rational benefits and useful effects - if available to the public; while, on the other hand, everybody knows that they have social and individual harms. In addition to physically and mentally harmful effects such as dementia and weakness of will, the drug consumer, can commit various crimes. However, there has always been a controversy between the field experts about whether addiction is a crime and the perpetrator (the addict) should be punished, or it is a disease, and its victim is a patient (Asaadi, Seyed Hussein, 2001).

On the other hand, the criminalization of addiction and dealing with it legally will increase the number of criminal cases and, as a result, increase the rate of criminal inflation in the society. In the current study, we seek to investigate the legal aspects of criminalization of addiction from a criminological point of view. Also, we want to answer questions such as 1- Is addiction a crime, and should the addict be treated like a criminal? 2- What are the reasons of those for whom addiction is a disease?

## 2- THE CRIMINALIZATION OF ADDICTION PRINCIPLES

The most important principle and basis the countries cite for justification of a behavior's criminalization is the 'harm principle, supported by scholars such as John Stuart Mill, Hart, and Parker. These scholars believe that regarding the importance of human freedom, criminalization and application of constraints should be fulfilled when certain harm or danger is inflicted on the individual or society. They argue that: "the person is not held accountable by the society for his/her actions unless these actions do not affect others, and the only thing that can justify use of force on people against their will in a civilized society is the necessity of preventing harm to others". However, there are victimless crimes which have got no victims. Therefore, criminalization of such crimes would not be justifiable based on the foregoing 'harm principle'. As a result, for criminalizing such crimes, the states have mentioned principles such as patriarchy or paternalism, legal moralism, and the defense of the public interest (Ramezani, Sakineh, 2011). Each of these principles have been explained in the following sections.

## **2-1- Patriarchy or Paternalism**

According to this principle or attitude, the government, seeing itself as a guardian, tries to protect the citizens' genuine rights or prevent them from harming themselves by prohibiting some behaviors, creating some tasks and responsibilities in addition to assigning some punishment for willful failure to execute or perform such duties in order to consequently oblige them to benefit themselves. Some examples of such laws are the legal obligation to wear a seat belt or to get literate as well as the ban on drugs or other psychotropic substances. Thus, in such conditions, the government, like a father, decides in favor of the citizens inevitably; although, it might be against their will. Here, resorting to the community's interests and benefits is among the most obvious instances of government's belief in patriarchal thinking and restricting individual freedoms (Ghomashi, Saeid, 2010, 154).

## **2-2- Legal Moralism**

The other reason at the back of criminalizing victimless crimes is legal moralism. During 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the classical belief was that criminal law should merely protect moral values. Based on this principle, a behavior was considered a crime and subject to punishment only in case it was immoral, even if no harm was inflicted on anybody. Based on legal moralism, an immoral act is generally subject to punishment, since it is against the fundamental and superior values necessary to human life. It can undoubtedly be said that the different value principles rooted in the ideology of any thinking consider different valences as superior and support them. In the legal moralism approach, the government does not only protect the individual or individuals' interest; but also, some values are considered so important that the government opts to protect them by violent treatments (and punishment) to the point of even criminalizing them (Rohami and Hiedari, 2006).

### **2-2-1- Kant's View on Moralism**

Kant has provided his view mainly in two books of "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals" and "Critique of Practical Reason." Kant's theory can be considered as one of realistic moral theories in which the element of duty plays the most important role (cited from Mesbah, Mohammad Taghi, 1997, 275). Although, moral law has no empirical basis, it derives from reason, which is called "practical reason" in its adaptation to practice and while being equal in everybody is also prioritized over any experience. On condition that human beings were intelligent creature only, they would have followed the moral law enshrined in their nature with the utmost diligence, but since they also enjoy emotions, i.e., they are affected by intentions, they sometimes deviate from following their own enshrined moral law. Henceforth, from this perspective, the need for legal deterrents in violation of moral valences can be justified (Sanepoor, Maryam, 2003, 44).

## **2-3- Protecting Public Interests**

In addition to the previously mentioned ones, the other principle based on which the legislator criminalizes is the provision of discipline, security, welfare, and public interest. It can even be said that this principle is the most important justifiable reason for criminalization to the extent that the criminal law's role has been considered to be ensuring the fundamental order in every society, i.e., the order fundamental to the society's survival, due to the social interests being also harmed by the crime beyond the private interests of the direct crime victims. Therefore, even while addressing the rights of a specific person directly, the criminal act is considered an anti-social act which harms the discipline established in the society. On the other hand, the most fundamental issue in criminal law is safeguarding social interests. Furthermore, individuals' private rights are protected as an aspect of public interest. In fact, according to this principle, the provision of individual freedom is not necessarily beneficial to the society because, in most cases, the collective interests require restriction in individual freedom (unlike what the advocates of individual rights claim). Thus, the individual's freedom, be it political, economic, or related to contracts, is respected unless it threatens or endangers public interests (Habibzadeh, Mohammad Jafar, and Zeinali, Amirhamzeh, 2005).

### **2-3-1- Provision of Public Order**

Public order is a famous concept in jurisprudence and law, as a basic part of the law in every country is about public order. However, it does not encompass all rules, also violating each rule does not necessarily equal violation of public order, showing the rules whose support will result in consistency and survival of the government as well as dignity and interests of the nation. Whether in domestic or international affairs, public order has a single nature with different effects depending on its being internal or external. Although the law has already defined the public order, scholars have provided various definitions for it. Collecting all these definitions, public order can be considered as the general concept adaptable to the 'public security plus protection of life as well as individual in addition to social freedom of the virtue and properties'. Nevertheless, what is common among all the different definitions of public order is the relation between the public order with convention and interests of the public, i.e., public order guarantees protection of public interests and dominant conventions of the society. Public interest is demanded by most people, and if an individual's will is against the majority's will, it cannot be acceptable. Accordingly, public order is related to public interest; moreover, public interest is related to public will and the societal customs (Noorbaha, Reza, 2004, 32).

## **2-3-2- Ensuring the Sense of Public Security**

Among the other prominent bases for criminalizing drug-related crimes is ensuring public security in the society. Citizens' sense of security and the real presence of security in a society are two totally different phenomena which do not usually match. Because although the individuals may feel secure in a society, the threatening factors might still be reducing the actual social security. The criminologists describe the sense of security to be even more important and necessary than the genuine existence of security. They also argue that many factors affect the lack or shortage of this sense in different societies. Some of the most important of such factors are: constant fear from criminals and violators, fettered information sharing environment, the way medias work, absence of police in the society, etc. As a not only psychological but also social phenomenon needed by the people to continue their social interactions, feeling secure is influenced by direct and indirect experiences of people in the society where they live. As a psychological matter, sense of security is affected by the news heard, behaviors or events observed, which might either directly or indirectly be against the citizens' belongings or material and spiritual interests, also touches their certainty, trust, safety, comfort, and peace, busying their mind, and finally resulting in feeling insecure. In other words, sense of security can be described as: 'relative liberation from danger which results in a pleasant feeling among the society's members and leads to their physical and mental peace' (Rajabipour, Mahmoud, 2005, 93).

## **3- TYPES OF CRIMINALIZATION OF ADDICTION**

### **3-1- Criminalization in Filtering Method**

If we accept that the principle is human freedom, and restricting through criminalization is an exception, the necessity of approving the existence of restrictions is upon those who intend to restrict the individual's freedoms by criminalization. Jonathon Schonsheek, introducing the filtering method into the decision-making process, states that inclusion of behavior in the criminal law list requires passing the following three steps or filters (Habibzadeh, Mohammad Jafar & Zeinali, Amirhamzeh, 2005, 4):

1- The Principles Filter: Based on this filter, first, it should be validated that a specific behavior about criminalization (for example, the principle of injury) enters the domain of crimes based on a series of theoretical principles.

2- The Presumptions Filter: This filter states that the least annoying and authoritative methods are preferable to irritative methods. As a result, the government should resort to criminalizing a behavior only when it can validate, with definitive and absolute reasons, that there are no other ways to prevent that behavior except punishment.

3- The Pragmatist Filter: Since the enactment and execution of the positive criminal law has practical consequences, this filter investigates the practical consequences of criminalizing a behavior. Therefore, social benefit and loss plus execution or failure in execution of the proposed criminal law should be evaluated and weighed based on this filter. Henceforth, in case benefits are superior, the behavior should be considered a crime. Otherwise, the criminal intervention would be more harmful than beneficial, and as Feinberg states: "regarding the intrinsic costs of criminalization, when the legal restrictions lead to violation of moral legitimacy, the criminalization itself will be a moral crime" (Mahmoudi Janaki, Firouz, 2007, 91).

### **3-2- Criminalization in the Criminal Law of Islam**

Given that the political systems' existence is secondary, if subject of criminalization, is included in the domain of basic values of religion whose sentence is stated in the jurisprudence sources, it would be an "announcement" (opposite to the concept of establishment). On the other hand, on condition the criminal act is included in the Mostahadesah (novel) issues, by criminalization and enactment of the Islamic state, its violation would be a sin, a transgression and a subject to the broad definition of crime (Ahmadi Abhari, Mohammad Ali, 1998, 418). However, in the domain of legislation, since the scope of Sharia prohibitions does not correspond to the scope of the positive crimes, the question arises that "if the legislator intends to criminalize an act which Sharia prohibits, and determine a criminal execution for it, what scale and criterion would direct it?", and has it so far observed the conventional law criteria or other criteria to criminalize some religiously prohibited acts while dropping some other? (Haji Deh Abadi, 2004, 332).

## **4- CRIMINALIZATION**

Criminalization is a process according to which the legislator, based on the basic values and norms of the society and relying on its theoretical frameworks, prohibits an act or nonfeasance and imposes a criminal execution for it. In this regard, criminalization is a prospective task based on basic sciences such as philosophy, law, political philosophy, and social sciences (Aghababaei, Hossein, 2005, 11-12).

## **5- CRIMINALIZATION OF ADDICTION IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM OF IRAN**

There are various perceptions in human communities in terms of drug consumption phenomenon and getting addicted. Generally, various approaches (criminal oppression and zero tolerance to total freedom, or middle measures) have been experimented to confront addiction in different countries. Overall, the legalization and decriminalization (Netherland, Germany, Austria, Finland, and Greece) or criminalization (Iran, France, Turkey, and Belgium) can be referred to as the dominant approaches. In Iran, especially in the years after the Islamic Revolution, despite approaches such as considering the addict a patient and the necessity of curing him/her, the dominant approach has been a criminal encounter, and the dominant presumption, based on the enacted rules,

has been the use of force to confront the issue of addiction. The legalization theory in law in the domain of drugs in Iran is precedent, and although the legislator has not mentioned it in the enacted rules, the provisions of some articles and laws have a definite implication for legislation of it in the Iranian law. For example, in Article 41 of the Anti-Narcotics Law amendment, it is asserted that: "Manufacturing, producing, buying, selling, sending, storing, importing, exporting, consuming and carrying narcotics is prohibited, except for the medical, research and industrial purposes with the permission of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, which is excluded from this law." This article implies the legalization of medical purposes and other acts related to trading narcotics. In addition, since the conditions and limitations of prescription as well as the prescribable drugs are not specified, it is indicative of this truth that diagnosis of all these cases is left to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education because the prescription of consumption cases, as a rule, should be left to the relevant physicians. In addition, planning, in this regard, can prevent many problems related to the use of dangerous drugs without medical supervision (Rahmdel, Mansour, 2004, 203).

## **6- PRINCIPLES OF DECRIMINALIZATION OF ADDICTION**

### **6-1- Social Principle**

The social principles of decriminalization of addiction can be investigated from the two philosophical and expedient points of view, whose outcome is explained as follows:

#### **6-1-1- Philosophical Point of View**

The philosophical reasoning, in the opposite direction of addiction's criminalization, is based on the axis of freedom and its related issues. As we already know, from the viewpoint of Enlightenment philosophers in Europe, the human being is created as a free creature who should live freely, and the only red line of his freedom is harming others, i.e., human's freedom of action is supported unless it harms others' rights. Based on such an attitude, a human should be allowed to consume alcohol and drugs and commit adultery, pederasty, lesbianism, suicide, and self-harm because he is not inflicting any economic or physical harm on others. Human is free to throw his property into the sea in this regard. He is allowed not to use a helmet while riding a motor or bike, because in all these conditions, basically there are either no physical or economic harms, or in case there are such harms, it is inflicted on the person himself, and fundamentally, others, either the government or a third party is not allowed to prevent him from such acts, and oblige him to maintain and protect his life and property (Rohami, Mohsen, & Heidari, Alimorad, 2006, 7).

#### **6-1-2- The Approach based on the Social Expediency**

In this approach, the reason behind many people's opposing criminalization of addiction and their efforts to decriminalize it is the issue of prisons' population and the staggering costs of the criminal justice system. Every day, a large number of people are sent to prison on charges such as sexual intercourse, alcohol/drug use, gambling, and other crimes in which there is no victim, and exorbitant costs are imposed on the community with the administrative costs of prisons being only a portion of it. Indeed, the costs imposed on the community, family, and relatives of such defendants, police, prosecutors, courts, etc., should also be added to the above costs. Therefore, the utilitarians not only find no benefits in criminalization, prosecution, trial, and imprisonment of defendants for victimless behaviors but also believe that the social expediency and benefit requires to avoid the imposition of such costs on the community and the government (Goudarzi, Mohammad Reza, 2003, 136).

### **6-2- Legal Principles**

The legal principles of addiction's decriminalization are investigated in this section under the two categories of juridical approach and human rights approach.

#### **6-2-1- Juridical Approach**

The advocates of decriminalization of addiction from juridical viewpoint rely on two elements of 'victim and loss'. This group of jurists believe that criminal law is created to prevent people from harming others. These experts believe that human behavior should be considered a crime and a punishment must be assigned for it only when it includes harm to others, and in case no harms are inflicted on the body, property, or freedom of others, it should not be considered a crime and the perpetrator should not be punished. The 'if no victim, no crime' principle has been raised and accepted by these scholars. They argue: 'if no victim, no harm, and if no harm, no compensation, and finally, if no compensation, there is nothing to issue a sentence about. In such condition, there is nothing to form the crime'. Since this group believe that only the actions that harm the rights of others might be considered a crime, they propose repeal of laws on drugs, alcohol, sexual intercourse, gambling, trafficking, suicide, etc. (Rohami, Mohsen, and Heidari, Alimorad, 2006).

#### **6-2-2- Human Rights Approach**

The issue, in terms of social considerations, justifying decriminalization of addiction is that the laws related to these crimes are a serious threat to people's privacy. To explain, it can be said that when criminalizing a behavior, the community judges if there is no private benefit and expediency in that behaviour, but the drug-related laws threaten innocent people's privacy because enforcing

these laws requires supervision and research. Since no addiction supervisor reports it to the competent authorities, the officers and staff should be involved in extensive surveillance, eavesdropping, and intelligence control of suspects and the public to execute such rules. In addition, addiction is mostly done with the consent of the parties involved in the crime, or at least, the consent of those harmed by the crime, the supervisors of this crime are not only reluctant to report these crimes to security officials and the police, but also they benefit from hiding it, and in this regard, they will undoubtedly commit any beneficial act. On the other hand, if the police or security authorities want to detect such crimes, they have no way but to have surveillance on people, and even intervene with people's privacy, violating it by controlling their relations, eavesdropping, etc. In such a situation, the right to have privacy is neglected, while a fully security-oriented atmosphere will be created in the society, and even the issue itself can be an excuse for governments to constantly monitor their opponents (Erfani, Ebrahim, & Mostafaei, Nader, 2018).

## **7- DECRIMINALIZATION TYPES AND CONDITIONS**

Decriminalization might occur in practical and legal forms as follows:

a) Legal (official) decriminalization: It might occur by legislation or any other method based on which the Judiciary interprets its law. Legal decriminalization is sometimes also referred to as "official" decriminalization, which is used to compare 'restrictive decriminalization' with 'the practical or de facto decriminalization' (Mahmoudi, Javad, 2006, 115).

b) Practical decriminalization: practical decriminalization, equals gradual decrease in the criminal justice system activities concerning certain behaviors or certain situations. However, there would be no formal or legal change in the competence of that system. Practical decriminalization occurs in various forms, and the process is usually as follows: first, the behavior of the direct beneficiaries is changed in a way that they refuse to report the criminal act to the police, and second, due to caution (expediency), the police do not prosecute some cases or refer them to other social systems. Therefore, the concept of practical decriminalization includes extensive deviation from the criminal justice system (Mehrad, Nasrin, 1998, 301).

## **8- DECRIMINALIZATION IN JURISPRUDENCE AND POSITIVE LAW**

A) Decriminalization and religious crimes: in Islam, behaviors are known as crimes in two manners. In some cases, such as theft, the act is criminal, and its punishment is also mentioned in religious sources. In some other cases, the determination of a behavior as a crime and its punishment is left to the ruler, and he should criminalize with the observance of the legal rules of religion and within its principles. The first type of crimes is fixed and continuous, and they are not changed with social, evolutionary, or political system changes and will not be included by decriminalization. However, the second type crimes that include crimes other than Hodud (religious punishments) and Qisas (retaliatory), 'in case decriminalization factors are realized, elimination of their criminal characteristic is possible, and Islam does not oppose their decriminalization' (Owdeh, Abdulghader, N.D., 72).

b) Decriminalization and the Constitution: the general approach of decriminalization is the increase in public rights and freedom, and it opens a relatively broader political, social, economic, and cultural space for the citizens. Also, since criminalization occurs merely based on the law (Article 38 of the Constitutional Law), the legislator can decriminalize the criminal titles proportionate to the requirements of the society. However, this procedure is relative in terms of both the conventional crimes that cannot be decriminalized based on the community order and the legislator's limitations in decriminalizing the acts and nonfeasance with the origin of criminalization are religious requirements and orders. In other words, the legislator in Iran basically cannot clear the criminal description from the religious crimes unless it is done temporarily and exceptionally based on the change in the conditions or the expediency of the community. In the current legal system of the country, ensuring the expediency is left to the Expediency Discernment Council (Article 112 of the Constitutional Law). However, due to the axial role of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in determining the rights and duties (Article 71 of the Constitution), including the criminalization process, it cannot be delegated to the Expediency Discernment Council to decriminalize criminal titles (Mahmoudi, Javad, 2006).

c) The Relation between Decriminalization and Dejudicialization: the process of decriminalization does not necessarily lead to dejudicialization, since despite the role of administrative institutions and, ultimately, the Court of Administrative Justice in dealing with violations that have replaced crimes as a result of decriminalization, it is still possible that the judicial jurisdiction of the courts deal with these violations or appeal against them, and this negates the practical realization of dejudicialization cause (Moradi, Mohammad Reza, 2020).

## **9- THE ADVOCATES OF ADDICTION'S DECRIMINALIZATION REASONS**

Decriminalization of addiction's advocates provide reasons for justifying their ideas:

a) Failure of the Policies Confronting Addiction:

The advocates of decriminalization of addiction believe that the current policies to confront narcotics have failed, and they are no more useful since they are not well-founded on a right basis. Because, as long as the demand for consumption exists, those people involved in addiction would not be motivated to cooperate with the police.

b) Moving towards Corruption Decrease:

According to the advocates, decriminalization of addiction leads to prohibition of corruption. Because, as long as drug dealing is illegal and invalid, there would be no victims who complain about the violation of the law, and in this sense, drug crimes have no

victims. Enforcement of strict drug laws will result in agents' conducting underground operations, to gain the criminals' trust, and in doing so, they may even commit further crimes.

c) Economization of Government's Budget:

This group believes that if drugs smuggling and consumption are decriminalized or legalized, some current economic sources allocated to executing confrontation of narcotics would be saved for other consumptions. Moreover, with the assumption that selling drugs to minors remains illegal, there will be some administrative costs that are still necessary, but a major economization in the police sector, customs departments, in addition to criminal and legal systems would occur. The mentioned resources can be expanded to prevent drug abuse and its associated harms. In such conditions, the market is controlled by the government, while illegal market control is in the hands of traffickers. The advantage of government control over the market is that the government can tax these substances and regulate their trade.

d) Reduction in Organized Crimes:

According to advocates of addiction's decriminalization, production, distribution, and sale of narcotics would be excluded from the criminal law domain, and the discussion of organized crime in this regard would be ruled out. As a result, transnational criminal organizations would bear a huge capital loss and would be obsolete.

e) Reduction in Prison Population Density:

Among the other reasons provided by the advocates of addiction and its related crime's decriminalization is the reduction in the prison population. According to them, due to the prohibition of drugs, the prisons are also filled as a result of harsh punishments for the smugglers. What's more, enough prisons cannot be built, easily and quickly. Consequently, the effects of drug-related crimes have made some scholars to state that 'the criminal law system era is over' (Rahmdel, Mansour, 2004, 229).

### **10- OPPONENTS OF DECRIMINALIZATION REASONS:**

Their main reasons can be summarized as: increase in drugs consumption due to ease of access and low price, increase in health problems due to more drug abuse, increase in social costs due to higher treatment expenses for drug addicts, increase in crimes due to drug use and public opposition to this. It should be noted that the reasons the opponents of decriminalization and legalization provide are the same provided by advocates of criminalization (Mehrad, Nasrin, 1998).

### **11- CRIMINOLOGICAL APPROACH:**

The official authorities and politicians consider legalization a surrender to drug traffickers and a kind of appeasement. They believe that legalization of drug consumption confirms the anti-human actions of drug traffickers. On the contrary, some others do not believe in its being an appeasement. The opponents believe that it is only a myth and state that, for example, the American experience has shown that it is not possible to keep the drugs away from the minors, but they consider legalization as a tool to exclude the traffickers from drug trade (Lang, Sophie, 2021).

### **CONCLUSION:**

Today, among the unpredicted outcomes of industrial and technological advancements, the rate of crimes has significantly increased. Air travel and more extensive movement of people and goods worldwide have provided more opportunities for criminals and illegal substances such as drugs to move or be moved around. Technology has produced devices such as computers, mobile phones, etc., which are valuable targets for theft. Moreover, crime has found a global nature both geographically in terms of crimes such as human trafficking, money laundering, drug-related crimes, etc., and in terms of the extent to which varied crimes affect different classes, such as the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, are all potential victims of crime. In many people's view, technological advancements and increased individual freedoms have increased the sense of insecurity. They mainly consider freedom and advancement to be related with the crimes in a way that: first, the technological developments have expanded the domain of victims and included the middle and upper classes of the society in a domain that did not previously exist, and then, the lack of control of families over the teenagers and the youth has given freedom to them on the streets, and in this way, many people consider them a threat not necessarily for their entrance to the criminal acts, but due to lack of control (Paknahad, Amir, 2009, 70).

Therefore, we should admit that (opposed to presumption and estimation of most officials) execution of punishment has had no effects on prevention from addiction and rehabilitation or treatment of addicts, and it is very unlikely that a person who intends to use and is inclined to addiction refrains from using drugs because his action leads to punishment. Alternatively, for a person sentenced to punishment due to addiction, the execution of this punishment will not prevent and deter its recurrence. Overemphasis on criminalization of addiction has led to ignorance of the very important issue of addiction and treatment of addicts resulting in this issue's not gaining the position it deserves in the research communities of the country. The truth is that the deterrence programs' axis should be based on the decrease in demand, notification, and cultural activities, while most activities in this regard have been so far focused on confronting the demand plus mandatory and punitive treatment of addicts.

Finally, based on the results obtained, the following suggestions are provided:

1- More culturalization by mass media, schools, universities, etc., in addition to notifying the various endangered classes, which paves the way for protecting all individuals in the community against dangers of addiction.

2- Higher efforts for decriminalization, stopping to blame the addict, paying more attention to the medical care during treatment and post-treatment period so that the addicts can return to the society.

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