

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DRUG
PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS AND AWARENESS
TO REDUCE THE ADDICTION PHENOMENON
AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN UAE**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2023

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by

HELAL BADER OMAR ABDULLA ALKATHEERI

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

February 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, Alhamdulillah, I praise and thank Allah SWT for His greatness and for giving me the strength and courage to complete this thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor for his endless support and guidance throughout the period of my research.

I am grateful to all those who supported me in any way or form in the course of my research. I am most grateful to the respondents who participated in the study. Without them, the study could not have been completed successfully.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEO	Abu Dhabi Executive Office
AED	United Arab Emirates Dirham
CAA	Commission for Academic Accreditation
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
HCT	Higher Colleges of Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
NRC	National Rehabilitation Center
SEM	Structural Equational Modelling
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nation

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**HUBUNGKAIT DI ANTARA KEMPEN PENCEGAHAN DADAH DAN
KESEDARAN DALAM PENGURANGAN FENOMENA KETAGIHAN
DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR KOLEJ DI UAE**

ABSTRAK

Penagihan dadah dianggap sebagai salah satu masalah yang paling cepat berkembang di kalangan belia di negara membangun. Perdagangan dadah haram semakin meningkat dengan pesat dan dilaporkan mempunyai pasaran lebih 190 juta orang di seluruh dunia. Ketagihan dalam kalangan belia dianggap sebagai isu kesihatan global yang memerlukan perhatian segera. Campur tangan sosial telah berusaha untuk menukar ketagihan daripada penjenayah kepada cabaran sosial yang memerlukan rawatan dan bukannya hukuman yang keras. Di Emiriah Arab Bersatu (UAE), keadaannya tidak berbeza; kanak-kanak seawal 11 tahun terjerumus dalam penyalahgunaan dadah di negara ini. Pusat Pemulihan Kebangsaan (NRC) dan pihak berkepentingan lain dalam kempen kesedaran dadah negara terus berusaha dalam usaha untuk membalikkan fenomena ini yang membebankan kerajaan lebih 5.5 bilion AED setahun. Usaha ini adalah bagi melindungi masa depan golongan dewasa muda di UAE. Walau bagaimanapun, pandangan tentang keberkesanan kempen nasional menentang dadah tidak tersedia. Adalah penting untuk memahami sejauh mana kempen sedia ada mengurangkan fenomena ketagihan dengan berkesan. Akhirnya, pencegahan dan rawatan ketagihan mungkin dicabar jika sistem pengukuran kesedaran tidak boleh digunakan. Selain itu, keberkesanan kempen dalam mengurangkan fenomena ketagihan tidak dapat dipastikan jika kempen tidak dinilai dengan teliti. Membina jurang penyelidikan utama dalam kesusasteraan sekeliling, kajian ini berusaha untuk menyiasat kesan program pencegahan dadah UAE terhadap kesedaran

dan fenomena ketagihan dalam kalangan pelajar di UAE. Kajian ini memberi tumpuan kepada kempen anti penyalahgunaan dadah kebangsaan yang diperjuangkan oleh aktor utama seperti Pusat Pemulihan Negara (NRC), Jabatan Polis, pertubuhan kerajaan dan bukan kerajaan yang lain. Kajian ini mengambil kira falsafah penyelidikan positif dalam metodologi penyelidikan kuantitatif, pendekatan penyelidikan deduktif, dan strategi penyelidikan tinjauan. Populasi ditakrifkan sebagai semua pelajar di institusi pendidikan tinggi di UAE; kira-kira 159,553 pelajar terlibat terlibat. Soal selidik tinjauan telah dipasang pada platform pengumpulan data Survey Monkey dan disebarkan melalui laman web media sosial yang popular. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kempen NRC yang dijalankan di seluruh UAE berkesan dalam meningkatkan tahap kesedaran dalam kalangan pelajar dan dewasa muda di UAE. Selain itu, tahap kesedaran pelajar terhadap penyalahgunaan dadah amat ketara dalam mengurangkan tahap ketagihan mereka. Terkait objektif ketiga, kempen tidak mempunyai apa-apa kesan yang boleh dikenalpasti dalam mengurangkan fenomena ketagihan. Model ini hanya boleh disahkan oleh mereka yang pernah mendengar tentang kempen NRC dan tidak terpakai kepada aktor yang tidak pernah mendengar tentang kempen NRC. Di samping itu, bukti menunjukkan bahawa kesedaran dadah lelaki dan wanita dan fenomena pergantungan adalah berbeza antara satu sama lain. Adalah disyorkan agar praktiskerja sosial boleh disasarkan ke arah membantu pengurangan fenomena ketagihan dadah di kalangan orang dewasa muda dengan meningkatkan tahap kesedaran tentang ketagihan dadah.

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ABSTRACT

Drug addiction is considered one of the fastest-growing problems among youth in developing countries. The trade of illegal drugs is rapidly on the rise and is reported to have a market of over 190 million people around the globe. Addiction among the youth is considered a global health issue that requires urgent attention. Social interventions have sought to convert addiction from a criminal to a social challenge requiring treatment instead of stiff punishment, with no exception of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Therefore, it is important to understand the degree to which existing campaigns effectively reduce the addiction phenomenon. Ultimately, the prevention and the treatment of addiction may be challenged if awareness measurement systems are inoperable. Moreover, the effectiveness of the campaigns in reducing the addiction phenomenon cannot be established for certain if campaigns are not carefully evaluated. Building on key research gaps in the surrounding literature, the study sought to investigate the impact of UAE drug prevention programs on awareness and the addiction phenomenon among college students in the UAE. The present study focuses on the national anti-drug abuse campaign championed by key actors such as the National Rehabilitation Center (NRC), Police Departments, other governmental and non-government organisations. The study considers the positivist research philosophy in a quantitative research methodology, deductive research approach, and survey research strategy. The population is defined as all students in higher educational

institutions in the UAE; approximately 159,553 students are drawn into perspective. The survey questionnaire was mounted on the Survey Monkey data collection platform and disseminated through popular social media websites. Findings indicate that the NRC campaigns conducted across the UAE are effective in improving the level of awareness among students and young adults in the UAE. Moreover, the level of student awareness of drugs abuse is highly significant in reducing their level of addiction. Regarding the third objective, campaigns do not have any recognisable impact on reducing the addiction phenomena. The model was validated for those who have heard of the NRC campaign and did not apply to actors who had not heard about the NRC campaign. In addition, evidence shows that male and female drug awareness and dependence phenomena are different from each other. It is recommended that social work practice can be targeted towards the reduction of the drug addiction phenomena among young adults by increasing the levels of awareness on drug addiction.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Drug addiction is considered one of the fastest-growing problems among youth in developing countries (Lone & Mircha, 2013). Earlier drug policies have viewed drug addiction as a separate and distinct problem without interference with the socio-economic and socio-cultural factors of global communities. However, current developments have viewed it as a threatening issue that has penetrated various layers of societies (Ibrahim & Kumar, 2009; Kanagaveloo et al., 2015). In the words of Kanagaveloo et al. (2015), “*every individual has the potential to engage in drug abuse, regardless of age or gender*”.

Illegal drug trade around the world is rapidly on the rise and is reported to have a market of over 190 million people around the globe (Bhat et al., 2017). According to Evans-Whipp et al. (2004) on awareness in schools on the forms of drug policies and the effect they have on students, they mention that the youth, in particular, are highly involved in drug use. Thus, addiction among the youth is considered a global health issue that requires urgent attention (Bhat et al., 2017). Bhat et al. (2017) mentioned that the use of tobacco and alcohol, among others, have increased in recent times despite increases in expenditure on a wide range of prevention programs.

In highlighting the need for more effective awareness programs, Bhat et al. (2017) further report that if the current level of tobacco consumption is not reduced, about 250 million children alive are at risk of dying from tobacco-related health issues with severe implications in the near future. Bovin & Griffin (2007) argue that for addiction prevention programs to be effective, several factors need to be taken into

consideration. Among these factors are the need to cover several risks and protective factors, the provision of developmental information, the provision of material assistance, the provision of comprehensive training, and the development of interactive methods (Bovin & Griffin, 2007). Mainly, these factors need to be integrated into prevention programs and must be transmitted through crucial channels such as schools and support communities for them to be successful.

Virtually any substance that creates addiction as people lose their ability to choose not to take these substances after using them from the start has been considered an addictive agent or drug (Sidiq et al., 2016). Addictive drugs result in compulsive seeking and consumption of the drugs with consequences in various dysfunctional behaviours that interfere with the normal functioning of an individual, leading to problems within their families, workplace, or even the general community of the individual (Lone & Mircha, 2013). Over time, the range of drugs being abused has increased to cover everyday substances like brown sugar, morphine, chars, opiates, among others.

According to Mir (1997), drug abuse is a lifestyle disease that has escalated into a worldwide public health problem affecting communities around the world. Islam, Hossain, Ahmed & Ahsan (2002) point out that no country, including the UAE, is immune to drug addiction, and the problems it creates for families and its disruption of social values has reached alarming heights in many communities globally. In the early 90s, a strong association was established between the drug problems and socio-economic disadvantage; national drug strategies, therefore, sprung up to fight and recommend actions in these contexts (Loughran & McCann, 2006).

While addiction is treatable, experts indicate that its treatment requires time and dedication for it to be effective in reducing or eliminating the addiction problem. Lone

& Mircha (2013) point out that the treatment of addiction is more effective the longer it takes. However, while addiction treatment is a long-term process that requires several sessions of therapy, awareness plays a crucial role in the abstinence, prevention and treatment of drug addiction. Both Anand (2012) and Lone & Mircha (2013) assert that abstinence and prevention of addiction is a crucial element in the campaign against drug abuse through awareness. Nonetheless, many studies are busy assessing the prevalence level of drug abuse in the respective countries with no effort to investigate whether abstinence and prevention campaigns have been effective in the first place. The present study sheds light on this area to provide generic grounds for drug addiction campaign effectiveness around the globe. This study is novel in it's own way as drug addiction and abuse is more common among school students. The students of teen age group are most likely to get addicted to drugs and alcohol abuse. The campaigns associated with drug regulation among students of schools are main aspects that are to be observed in this study.

1.2 Background of the Study

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the situation is not different from other parts of the globe. According to Ramahi (2018), children as little as 11 years are falling into drug abuse in the country. According to reports, many who abuse drugs in the region resort to crystal methamphetamine, a powerful and deadly drug that mainly stimulates the central nervous system of the abuser. National Rehabilitation Centre in Abu Dhabi - UAE have emphasised the need to teach children about the dangers of these drugs and the need for more leaders of the country to make it a point of raising this issue for deliberation.

Drug addiction costs the UAE over 5.5 billion AED per annum, according to a public health report published by the National Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) in Abu Dhabi in collaboration with the United Nations (UN) Office for Drugs and Crime. This study also witnessed the collaboration of over 20 departments and higher educational institutions in the region (Rasheed, 2016). Other reports indicate that drug addiction remains a serious problem among the youth of the UAE and that more efforts are required to prevent the youth from falling into the drug trap (Ramahi, 2017). As complementary measures, the government recently converted drug addiction into a misdemeanour offence rather than a felony as it used to be previously; addicted persons can seek help and be placed on rehabilitation without any prosecution (McFarlane, 2017). A current rate of recovery of 60% exists, and the need for urgent attention is real.

Ultimately, the prevention and treatment of addiction may not be possible or useful if there is a lack of awareness regarding the causative factors, symptoms, risks, support systems and treatments facilities available. The role of awareness in the fight against addiction cannot be overemphasised (Anand, 2012; Lone & Mircha, 2013; Javadian et al., 2010). The proposed study seeks to follow in the path of Kanagaveloo et al. (2015), Sidiq et al. (2016), Javadian et al. (2010), Bhat, Rahi & Sidiq (2017), Lone & Mircha (2013) and many other insights in this area to unearth the effectiveness of drug awareness campaign in the fight against drug addiction. This study seeks to investigate the influence of awareness on increased students' awareness of drug addiction and the reduced burden of addiction phenomenon in the UAE.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The subject of drug addiction has mainly focused on the healthcare sector workers within the context of healthcare provision (Sharif et al., 2008; Leschziner et al.,

2006; Brouwers et al., 2011; Qassim et al., 2014). Little to no attention has been paid to the modelling of how campaigns actually help reduce the drug addiction phenomenon, with implications within the context of social work practice. Moreover, the effectiveness of the NRC's drug addiction campaign is unknown as to whether or not it is effective. On the contrary, Al Shouk (2017), Rasheed (2016) and many others have emphasised that severe economic damage resulting from drug addiction. As cited in the context of the UAE, for instance, this rakes up to the tune of 5.5 billion AED per annum. Over 2400 cases were recorded per annum in the UAE, triggering the need for stringent and urgent measures in this area. Further, the survey found that nearly 10% of students in the UAE have used illegal drugs at least once in their lifetime (Ministry of Education, 2020). This figure is higher among male students, with 15% reporting having used drugs compared to 5% of female students.

According to Oetting et al. (1997), especially among the youth, addiction is influenced by numerous factors such as demographic factors, social factors, personality traits, and the features of the environment in which they find themselves. Oetting et al. (1997) strongly assert the lack of education and awareness as one of the significant causes of addiction and substance abuse itself; thus, leading to the inference that awareness through campaign efforts can help prevent substance abuse and addiction if a proactive approach is used (Kanagaveloo et al., 2015). This association has drawn into context a heap of investigations on the level of awareness and drug addiction in various global communities as observed by Sidiq et al. (2016), Javadian et al. (2010), Bhat et al. (2017), Lone & Mircha, (2013) and Kanagaveloo et al., (2015).

The focus of prior researchers has been on the identification of risk factors associated with substance abuse and drug addiction among the youth in Asia (Kanagaveloo et al., 2015) and the Americas (Oetting et al., 1997) making the majority

of drug abuse cases in the UAE by young people, with 70% of drug abuse cases involving individuals under the age of 30 (Dubai Police, 2019). Others, like Sekhavat (2004), have focused on the structural factors of addiction in the Middle East. Generally, investigations into awareness and influence on addiction-related outcomes have remained contextual to global societies without generic elements that can be widely implemented across regions. Regardless of the importance of the context, it deserves that the effectiveness of the ongoing addiction campaign in the UAE is explored to recommend possible strategies to tackle the drug phenomenon in the region. Even though the context cannot be separated from this observation, the generalisation of findings with regards to how awareness campaigns can best lead to the desired behaviour of drug abstinence is a significant gap worth insight.

On the unique context of the UAE, there is an evident lack of attention to the contribution of an existing awareness campaign to the phenomenon of drug addiction in the region. Current studies that have considered UAE in full or partially have predominantly focused on the role of service providers in the campaign against drug addiction; these include Sharif et al. (2008), Leschziner et al. (2006), Brouwers et al. (2011), and Qassim et al., (2014). These studies have focused on the prevalence of drug addiction, attitude and knowledge, usually from the perspective of the health service community members. Studies that have come close to observing the drug usage patterns and behaviours of addicts in the UAE include Amir (2001) and Alblooshi et al. (2016). These studies sought to report and observe patterns of substance use in the region to develop targeted prevention programs to reduce the burden of drug addiction.

As opposed to all the other studies conducted on the UAE, the present study differs from Sharif et al. (2008), Leschziner et al. (2006), Brouwers et al. (2011), and Qassim et al. (2014) that sought to observe professional knowledge on drug addiction,

and Amir (2001) and Alblooshi et al., (2016) that sought to observe drug addiction patterns. The present study goes a step further to investigate whether campaigns in place have been effective. Building on Amir (2001) and Alblooshi et al. (2016), the drug addiction campaign programs may be known, but their effectiveness in connection with the worsening drug addiction phenomenon is far from known. Ultimately, no known study on the UAE attempts to observe the drug addiction awareness levels of the new and upcoming generation as well as the extent to which addiction prevention programs have remained active.

1.3.1 Theoretical Research Gap

Following Sidiq et al. (2016) and Lone & Mircha (2013) on awareness and drug addiction in India, Sekhavat (2004) and Javadian et al. (2010) in Iran, Oetting et al., (1997) on American youth, among others including Ahmadi, Maharlooy & Alishahi (2004) and Ahmadi & Hasani (2003) also on Iran, the present study seeks to fill this gap in the UAE, with dedicated attention to college students. Aside from the repetition of these studies across different global regions, none of these studies squarely answers the question of the extent to which campaigns have helped reduce the addiction phenomena. These studies have focused on the connection between awareness and the drug reduction phenomena without reverence to the campaign as part of the conceptual frameworks. This represents a major step regarding drug addiction research in UAE not only directed at observing the level of drug addiction awareness and the reduced drug addiction burden. Instead, it goes a step further to associate and define the effectiveness of the drug addiction campaigns in spreading awareness among students and reducing addiction in the UAE.

Focus on college students to close this research gap in the context of the UAE is justified by the surrounding pool of literature. According to Arriaet al. (2018),

students and the young population between the ages of 14 and 21 are increasingly getting addicted to the use of marijuana and other illegal drug substances. Other studies such as Jalilian et al. (2015), O'Malley & Johnston (2002), and McCabe et al. (2007) have highlighted the increasing trend of drug addiction among college students. Ultimately, the impact of drug addiction on the immediate academic performance and the overall socio-economic standing of global economies have been severest when associated with the youth and college students (Arria et al., 2018; Jalilian et al., 2015).

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following specific research questions:

1.4.1 Research Question 1

What is the impact of UAE anti-drug addiction campaign on increasing the level of awareness of students in the UAE?

1.4.2 Research Question 2

What is the relationship between drug addiction awareness and decreasing the burden of addiction phenomenon among students in the UAE?

1.4.3 Research Question 3

To what extent are the UAE anti-drug addiction campaigns effective in contributing to decreasing the burden of addiction phenomenon among students in the UAE?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 Main Research Objective

The primary research aim of the study is to investigate the impact of UAE drug prevention programs on the addiction phenomenon among students in the UAE. The present study focuses on the national anti-drug abuse campaigns run across the UAE, and mainly championed by various organisations such as the National Rehabilitation Center (NRC), Police Departments, other governmental organisations such as the Erada Treatment and Rehabilitation Center, and other non-government institutions. In equal consideration of the assertion that the anti-drug abuse campaign involves multiple stakeholders whose roles are highly inseparable, the present study does not aspire to attribute a level of awareness to any unique institution or a specific anti-drug awareness event. The study, therefore, avoids the case where the results would represent a performance evaluation of an institution or drug-abuse campaign team.

1.5.2 Specific Research Objectives

The study seeks to answer the following specific research questions:

1.5.2(a) Research Objective 1

To investigate the impact of the national anti-drug addiction campaign on the level of awareness among students in the UAE.

1.5.2(b) Research Objective 2

To investigate the extent to which the level of awareness contributes to the reduced burden of addiction phenomenon among students in the UAE.

1.5.2(c) Research Objective 3

To assess the extent to which the national anti-drug addiction campaign contributes to the reduced burden of addiction phenomenon among students in the UAE.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study may be established in the two main areas of academic and practice. These two areas mark the two main groups or categories of stakeholders to whom the recommendations and the findings of the study are most useful.

1.6.1 Significance of the Study to Academic Stakeholders

In the area of academia, the effect of adverse drug reactions on the people of the UAE has been critically observed (Sathvik et al., 2014). Sathvik et al. (2014) noted that there is an urgent need for awareness among health practitioners and the general population at large. The reliance on newsletters, pharmaceuticals and information brochures have been considered as inadequate, and the need for overall improvement highlighted in the UAE (Gharibyar et al., 2013). It was also understood from the research gap that a number of studies have attempted to investigate the drug problem in the UAE by investigating and reporting patterns of drug usage (Amir, 2001; Alblooshi et al., 2016). This study builds on this existing evidence to reach further insight into the effectiveness of drug addiction campaigns.

In the field of academia, the study is critical to help close an even more extensive research gap not only in the context of the UAE. Considering little or no attention has been paid to the prevalence of drug addiction awareness in the region, a significant

knowledge gap exists on the contribution of drug addiction awareness programs to overall awareness, particularly among the vulnerable population. The present study, therefore, provides good grounds based on future studies that may further explore the area of drug addiction campaigns and how to improve overall effectiveness.

Aside from building on existing literature and closing the research gap to provide grounds for future research, this thesis contributes significantly to the synthesis of the literature on the subject area. And thereby reveal and bring together the substantial body of knowledge that support an inquiry into drug addiction and the drug addiction campaign effectiveness. The model of reference provides good grounds for future research into a similar area of study, spurring insight on how campaign effectiveness across the globe can be measured methodologically for pertaining gaps.

1.6.2 Significance of the Study to the UAE and the National Rehabilitation Centre (NRC)

The present study helps document awareness levels to inform public policy on this area, mainly in the UAE. This informs government policies on drug addiction programs in efforts to ensure that such programs are effective in reducing the burden of addiction on the UAE economy and society. Already existing drug addiction campaign programs may require specific adjustment to better lead to the desired outcomes. A close eye is kept on the construct of awareness levels to check whether the level of awareness strengthens the effectiveness of the campaign programs or contributes no effect in this regard. Ultimately, this is vital to inform government policies of drug addiction phenomena.

Ultimately, the identification of a knowledge gap in the drug awareness campaign is essential to help step up efforts to increase overall awareness and ensure

the effectiveness of the UAE drug awareness program. The present study acknowledges the degree of sensitivity by attempting to establish insight from the perspective of young adults aged 16 years and above. However, this group of adults remain vital to the future social and economic prosperity of the UAE as a country (Al Shouk, 2017). The need to protect their future through effective national programs, therefore, cannot be ignored.

1.6.3 Significance of the Study to the Younger Population as the Future Nation

The results of the study are most relevant to the upbringing and nurturing of the young adults who represent the future of UAE society. In a careful look at the background, children are one of the most vulnerable people within the UAE society (Ramahi, 2018). Knowledge and insight on how to reduce this burden are most useful to protect the future of the generation and ensure that fewer children become addicts in the future, or better still, this trend is wholly eradicated. Focusing on young adults is not new, as most of the earlier studies have considered young adults at the centre of the drug awareness investigation (Kanagaveloo et al., 2015; Sidiq et al., 2016; Javadian et al., 2010; Bhat et al., 2017; Lone & Mircha, 2013).

As discussed, the focus on young adults is due to a mixture of factors such as their indecisiveness, peer pressure, and generally at the crossroad of maturity and unable to define clearly, what is right from wrong. Most of the National Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) campaign, therefore, focus on this group to help protect the socio-economic interests of the UAE by protecting the most valuable future resources fundamental to the continuity of the country.

1.6.4 Significance of the Study to Social Work

It is essential to add that the area of study lies in the larger pool of social work practice. Social work practice and the drug addiction phenomena are nearly inseparable in the surrounding literature, and this has been acknowledged in both literature and the UAE community (Loughran & McCann, 2006; Rasheed, 2016; Ramahi, 2017; McFarlane, 2017). The area of social work has remained ungagged with the provision of various services and assistance to help reduce drug addiction phenomena (Loughran & McCann, 2006; Barber, 1995).

For social work education or campaigns to be effective, it is important to ensure and validate that the efforts invested are creating the necessary awareness and that the awareness is also leading to the successful reduction of the drug addiction burden. More importantly, there is a need to improve social work education by providing insight on how to make their work more effective in diverse scopes of social work activities. An instance is that the success of these relationships in the present study affirms the assertion that social work education is being effective; this provides the needed insight for social work practice as argued by Loughran & McCann (2006) and Barber (1995), Chie et al. (2015) and Getz (2012), in the case of awareness against drug addiction. According to Howard et al. (2003), it is vital that social work education is supported by evidence-based practice, and the present study is one of such attempts to add to this new paradigm for social work education.

1.7 Scope of the Study

Due to the vulnerability of the young population to the use of drugs, the present study focuses on college and university students across the UAE. The Commission

for Academic Accreditation (CAA) records a total of 75 institutions as of August 2020 (CAA, 2020), whilst the Ministry of Education (MoE) reports 76 institutions, with one institution currently on probation (MoE, 2020). The University of Modern Sciences has been on probation, with no new admissions since 2016. The Ministry of Education renews the suspension of this university on an annual basis due to its inability to meet licensing and accreditation standards (Ahmad & Swan, 2016; MoE, 2020). The students enrolled are, however, not affected and are eligible to participate in the present study.

Considering the total of 75-76 higher education students, Kamal & Trines (2018) reports that the number of higher education students in the UAE doubled from 80,296 in 2007 to 159,553 in 2016. Key players include the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), with over 17 campuses spread across the UAE and a student population of close to 24,000 (HCT, 2019). For the present study, the focus is on all higher education students across the UAE.

The campaign mentioned in the present study is in the focus of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) National Campaign directed at creating awareness and reducing the drug addiction phenomena in the UAE. Management of the single national campaign is handled by NRC, with other stakeholders collaborating to help manage specific projects. At the lower aspect of the campaign program, specific projects are undertaken with particular objectives in mind. An overview of the organisational structure of the NRC is presented in Figure 1.1 (NRC, 2019). Furthermore, the strategy for the NRC campaign is presented in Figure 1.2. In figure 1.1 it can clearly be seen that, board of directors and other organizations are running and planning different awareness compaigns that can be beneficial for bringing the attention of the government to the issue of drug abuse among UAE students. The organisational structure and the campaign model indicate that the NRC spearheads the

national drug addiction campaign and works under the direct supervision of the General Secretariat of the Executive Council, now known as the Abu Dhabi Executive Office (ADEO). The present study focuses on the main campaign model as presented in Figure 1.2.

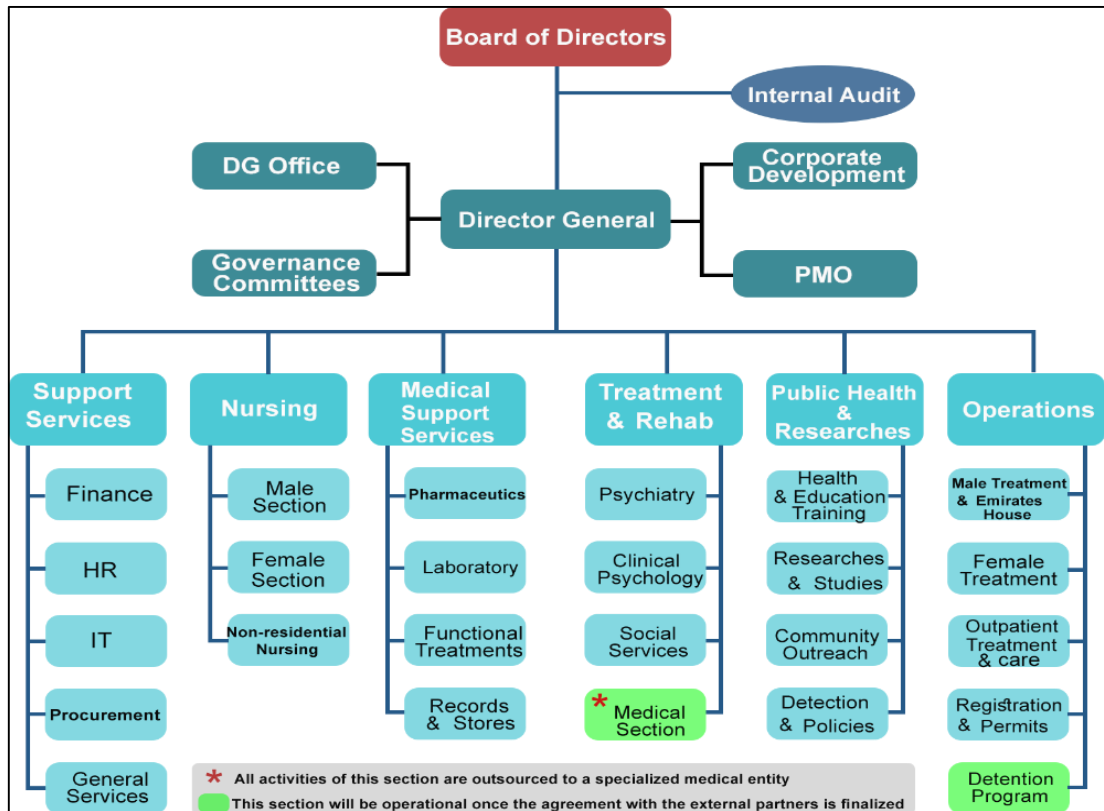


Figure 1.1 National Campaign against Drug Abuse in the UAE (NRC, 2019)

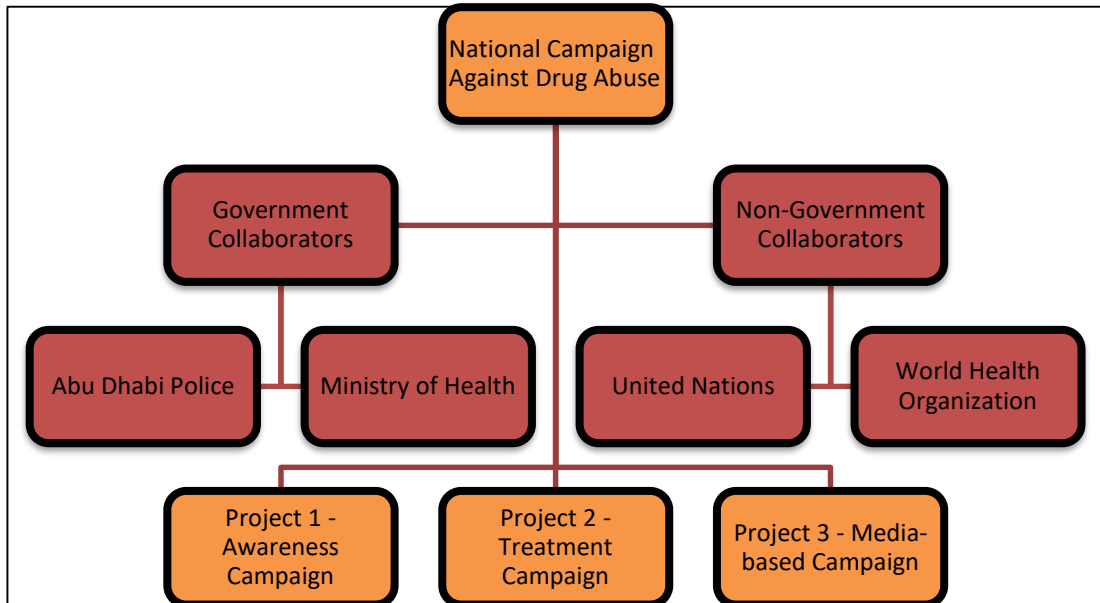


Figure 1.2 The National Campaign Model or Framework
(Author's knowledge about inside processes)

1.8 Impact of Anti Drug Campaign

The effectiveness of drug abuse prevention programs in schools especially in UAE will be beneficial and meaningful to the students, parents, community as well as to the literature itself. The history of drug abuse showed that it is contrary to the purposes of Islamic Sharia in the preservation of their five essentials (religion, life, honour, mind and money), and this is apparent for the lowest pensive. With respect to study population, there is a lack of national strategy to address the drug problem, whether this strategy. Officials and specialists in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) declared that despite the limited number of cases of addiction among school students in the country, there is a need to tighten the supervision of drug traffickers and to tighten the legal penalties imposed on them effectiveness of drug and substance abuse prevention programs among schools in UAE. Thus, the main objective of this study is analysing the anti-drug awareness strategy from the perspective of Islamic Sharia in schools, and evaluates this strategy in light of the challenges posed by the problem of

drug abuse. The use of illegal drugs or the use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs or alcohol for purposes other than those for which they are meant to be used, or in excessive amounts. Substance abuse may lead to social, physical, emotional, and job-related problems.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five (5) main chapters. This chapter disposition presents key areas of the thesis sequentially and systematically. They are labelled introduction, literature review, research methodology, results, and conclusions. A summary of what each chapter entails is presented in the following sections.

1.9.1 Chapter One: Introduction

The first chapter contains the introduction to the study, the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives, the research questions, the significance of the study, the scope of the study and its organisation. The introduction sets the scene for the research by highlighting global and theoretical developments on the subject at hand. The background, however, pays close attention to the context of the UAE and highlights national events also related to the topic at hand. The purpose of the study is also hinted at in this chapter. This leads to the problem statement, which identifies a clear research gap to be closed and how this gap is necessary to the context of the UAE.

The research questions of the study and the research objectives set the grounds for a purpose for the entire study. The aim of the study is achieved as part of efforts in addressing the research gap. In addition, while offering fundamental significance to academic and practical stakeholders in the fight against drug addiction. The salience of

the present study goes beyond the borders of the UAE. Other countries may implement the research model to ensure that addiction campaigns are more effective. The research scopes also give more attention to the context of the UAE and the specific area within which the study is being conducted.

1.9.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

The second chapter contains the literature review of the study and the hypotheses of the study as well as the conceptual framework. Literature is discussed in this chapter based on the main theories related to drug abuse. Some of these theories include the social learning theory, social control theory, Strain Theory, Cognitive Transformation Theory, Rational Choice Theory, among several others (Brownstein, 2015). These theories offer a critical understanding of the root of the subject. Essential themes present in the research model, such as the area of the drug awareness campaign and general drug addiction awareness of the youthful population, are reviewed. Attention is also paid to the burden of the addiction phenomenon in the literature review.

The second aspect of the chapter talks about the context of the UAE regarding the applicability of earlier discussions. These include activities and roles of awareness teams in the country and records of impacts made, if any, over the years of campaign. The research gaps in the study are highlighted in more detail, and the conceptual framework is presented. For this study, an empirical review of relevant papers is presented.

1.9.3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The third chapter is the methodology of the study. The chapter contains in much detail the research philosophy, research method and approach, the population and

sampling technique, the sources of data and data collection instrument, the data analysis methods, and the ethics and limitations, among other vital sections. The research methodology represents objective and structural grounds based on which data is collected and analysed. All methods under consideration are justified in the context of the research objectives and the need for empirical evidence. The questionnaire is pilot tested to ensure that the data collection instrument and other areas of the study are reliable and valid. Finally, the limitations and ethical considerations are presented.

1.9.4 Chapter Four: Result and Analysis

The fourth chapter presents and analyses the collected primary data according to the hypotheses and research questions. The findings are presented in line with the research questions presented in this chapter. A quantitative analysis of findings is presented to help test the research hypotheses of the study. The fourth chapter also discusses the results of the research and draw critical academic and practical implications. The discussions relate findings to literature to conclusions, whereas the implications observe the meaning of findings to theory and practice surrounding the addiction phenomenon among young adults.

1.9.5 Chapter Five: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The last chapter presents the conclusions of the study and offers recommendations for practice and future research. A summary of the results was first introduced. The conclusions and recommendations of the study then followed. Conclusions take into consideration the research objectives by elaborating on the extent to which the research questions have been answered, any alignment with discussed literature and associated implications. Recommendations, on the other hand, build on

the findings to present to future researchers and other stakeholders' clear path to arrive at improvements in their respective fields.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a literature review of the study. The literature review is presented in selected themes that help cover or provide insight into all areas of the adopted research model. The chapter commences with the discussion of the concept of drug addiction, campaign awareness and underlying themes of the drug addiction phenomena.

2.2 The Concept of Drug Addiction and the Need for Drug Prevention Campaign

The use of drugs to alleviate physical pain or change one's state of consciousness has been in practice since prehistoric times. While drugs were used for these purposes, the use of drugs was only limited to people who were of age or people who were in situations where drug use was unavoidable. In the present day, people continue to use and abuse drugs that are otherwise meant for positive effects and healing purposes. This results in a widespread public health concern and problem for society. The rise of drug use and abuse to the status of a public health concern and social problem is due to the widespread nature of drug use and abuse among people within various age groups within the population. This widespread use has partly been the outcome of the gradual elimination of the age barrier for taking or using drugs. The consequences of drug abuse on both the individual and the community have been explained in various areas of physical, social, and psychological effects.

The mention of drug problems not so long ago was usually thought to be the use of illegal drugs such as cocaine. However, presently, there has been a significant shift from the focus on hard illegal drugs to an unhealthy increase in the consumption of legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco. Both alcohol and tobacco are considered highly dangerous as they often set the foundation for the use of other hard illegal substances. Cocaine and Cannabis are considered among the drugs, which often result from the consumption of alcohol and tobacco.

Over the last twenty years, while the problem of drug abuse has continued to heighten, there has also been significant progress in terms of programs that are aimed at preventing drug abuse. With this progress, there have also been significant improvements in the pharmacological and psychological treatments concerning drug abuse. Regardless of this, drug abuse continues to be a major problem that seems out of control, even though advancements are being made in awareness campaigns (Kowal-Bourgonjon & Jacobs, 2019). Nonetheless, Kowal-Bourgonjon & Jacobs (2019) emphasised that addiction is often seen as a social problem in drug awareness campaigns. The perspective of awareness campaigns is often discursive and socially constructed and has evolved within different contexts over the years (Bator & Ciadini, 2000).

Key concepts surrounding and related to drug addiction are covered in this literature review. The sections that follow in this chapter cover topics including the drugs often abused, and addictive behaviour, patterns of drug consumption, the current status of the drug abuse problem in society, among others. The chapter also carefully covers what it means for the consumption of drugs to be considered abuse. The main risk factors of substance abuse are also identified and used in the framework for the present study.

2.2.1 Risk Factors of Drug Addiction

According to Lone & Mircha (2013), no single factor can be used as a predictor for drug addiction. This is because addiction is collectively influenced by several factors ranging from the biological and social environment to the age or stage of development. Risk factors are, however, directly proportional to addiction. This means that people are at a higher risk of becoming addicts when they are exposed to more risk factors. Prevalent risk factors of drug addiction include lack of confidence, inability to deal with reality, peer pressure, broken homes, lack of supervision of teenagers, easy access to both prescription drugs and illicit drugs, the urge to try drugs for the experience, irresponsible parenting, and abuse of the individual during his or her childhood (rough childhood) (Lone & Mircha, 2013).

Drug addiction can start with experimental use of a recreational drug in social situations, and, for some people, the drug use becomes more frequent. For others, particularly with opioids, drug addiction begins when they take prescribed medicines or receive them from others who have prescriptions.

The risk of addiction and how fast you become addicted varies by drug. Some drugs, such as opioid painkillers, have a higher risk and cause addiction more quickly than others.

As time passes, you may need larger doses of the drug to get high. Soon you may need the drug just to feel good. As your drug use increases, you may find that it's increasingly difficult to go without the drug. Attempts to stop drug use may cause intense cravings and make you feel physically ill. These are called withdrawal symptoms.

Further Al-Hamarneh & Tamim (2013) in the Journal of Substance Use and Misuse found that the prevalence of drug use among high school students in the UAE was relatively high, with 12.5% of students reporting having used drugs at least once in their lifetime. This figure is higher than the global average of 9.4% reported in a study by the World Health Organization. Another study by Al-Bawardi & Al-Hamarneh (2017) found that the most common substances used by young people in the UAE were cannabis and prescription drugs, followed by stimulants and opioids. The study also found that the main reasons for drug use among young people in the UAE were curiosity, peer pressure, and a desire to cope with stress and emotional problems.

2.2.2 Diagnosing Drug Addiction

Many signs are indicative of drug addiction. In both chronic and regular cases of addiction, severe weight loss is often observed (Lone & Mircha, 2013). However, some drug addicts become obese in some cases. According to the World Health Organisation, there are several approaches to diagnosing drug addiction, including clinical assessments, self-report measures, and urine or blood tests. It is important for healthcare professionals to use a combination of these approaches in order to accurately diagnose and treat drug addiction (Alisali & Thomas, 2015). Drug addiction is accompanied by signs such as widened pupils, irritability, red and watery eyes, running nose, nausea, unclear vision, lack of motor coordination, excessive sleep and unusual changes in daily routine, among others (Lone & Mircha, 2013). Other signs may be observed as the inability or failure of the addict to participate in social gatherings. Drug addicts often enjoy being alone as they experience sudden changes in the friends and company they keep. One last common observation is that drug addicts begin to lose interest in things