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Causes of Drug Use and Methods of Legal Treatment

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Abstract. Drug addiction or use dates back to ancient times, with its roots lying in the human use of certain plants containing substances that alter mental states, perception, and sensations for thousands of years. These substances were used either to experience pleasure, alleviate the pain of a particular patient, endure suffering, or forget a painful life and its burdens. Drugs play a significant role in encouraging individuals to commit various crimes due to their impact on the nervous and sensory systems. Furthermore, drug abuse has become one of the most pressing problems and challenges facing our society, posing severe threats to families and youth and warning of potential disintegration. Regardless of the form or type of drug, it remains one of the most dangerous social issues and plagues that harm our community due to its profoundly negative effects on individuals, families, and society at large.One of the causes behind the prevalence of drug use is the high unemployment rate and lack of job opportunities within Iraqi society, leading to idle individuals who, with excess free time, may turn to drug addiction. Additionally, poverty becomes a bias, with the influential factor being the creation of a strong and urgent desire that drives drug users to obtain substances by any means and gradually increase their dosage. Other significant causes of drug use or addiction include family environment, bad company, working conditions, general social influences, or the desire to escape from one's social or economic reality. In some cases, sudden wealth among certain families may also contribute to drug abuse. As a result, drug abuse has become a focal issue throughout Iraq due to its destructive impact on Iraqi society. It is a primary factor in numerous social, security, economic, and health problems, leading Iraqi society to invest considerable energy and financial resources in preventing its spread and mitigating its effects on individuals and the community. This has been addressed through various legal and other means. The significance of this study lies in understanding how drug users can reintegrate into society as normal individuals without suffering from physical or psychological disorders resulting from drug addiction. This can only be achieved through understanding and addressing treatment methods and attempts to eliminate the causes of drug use or addiction. Officials must exercise caution and consider this issue to ensure that drug users are free from drugs and their negative consequences.

Keywords: Drug, Legal Treatment.

SECTION ONE: PSYCHOLOGICAL CAUSES OF DRUG USE

It is undeniable that scientific advancements have provided humanity with numerous achievements and alleviated much of the suffering previously faced. However, scientific progress has also led to significant social, economic, and cultural transformations, resulting in increased pressures and psychological issues stemming from civilizational complexities and daily social changes. These conditions contribute to heightened levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. Consequently, many, particularly the youth, seek compensation and escape from this harsh reality, often resulting in their descent into drug abuse. This section will discuss the primary psychological causes of drug use within Iraqi society specifically, as follows:

First: Joy, Pleasure, and Escapism from Worries

Happiness and sadness are psychological phenomena inherent to human beings from birth to death. Human nature and the innate disposition drive individuals to seek happiness and pleasure while avoiding problems, worries, sadness, and misery. Modern urban life is marked by complexities, social stratification, ignorance, poverty, and backwardness, leading to many tragedies in human societies. Contemporary life is characterized by consumerism, and an individual's inability to meet essential needs for themselves and their families leads to stress, anxiety, insecurity, pessimism, and misery. This constant pursuit of unending desires and the frustration from being unable to satisfy them may be likened to giving charity to alleviate hunger for a day, only for the recipient to face poverty again tomorrow. The pursuit of desire without contentment creates a psychological conflict between one's wants, drives, and instincts, often leading individuals to resort to illegal means to fulfill their needs. This modern phenomenon results from consumerism, where escaping reality and attempting to forget it often involves turning to alcohol and drugs [1].

Individuals may feel deprived of everything, leading them to seek solace in the illusory world provided by drugs, which they are unable to attain in reality. The lack of psychological stability can result in feelings of fear, anxiety, and sometimes despair and depression, thus facilitating drug use and the abuse of substances with psychoactive effects [14].

Emotional disturbances contribute to deviant behavior, explaining why drug use often stems from psychological issues that individuals believe are necessary for achieving some degree of psychological stability and comfort. Additionally, feelings of frustration about an uncertain future can cause psychological pressure, compelling individuals to use drugs as a means of forgetting. [2]

Field research has shown that psychological pressures and tensions related to fear and anxiety from certain situations, along with the need to overcome insomnia and lack of sleep, lead individuals to use drugs and experiment with unfamiliar substances out of curiosity, disregarding their consequences. Additionally, the scarcity of recreational facilities results in deprivation and frustration, leading some groups to organize outings to gardens to promote their goods and use drugs. [3]

The portrayal of drugs in films or television series as a means of solving problems and relieving psychological pressure may inadvertently encourage youth to engage in drug use, as these portrayals often emphasize heroic escapes from the police. [4]

Psychological studies consider drug use through the lens of the traits or conditions defining individuals' perceptions of their surroundings and their interaction with them, whether through rejection or acceptance. Some psychological research has categorized psychological factors related to drug use into two groups: the first group includes personal dimensions and traits such as extraversion, neuroticism, mental states, emotional traits, craving for excitement, self-efficacy, and anxiety. The second group comprises external factors such as peer influence, family upbringing, and life stressors. [15].

Second: Weak Religious Motivation

Weak religious motivation significantly impacts an individual's character, leading to a disregard for issues of prohibition or permissibility. A believer's heart, if not filled with faith and the fear of punishment, tends to turn towards prohibited activities, which are often taken progressively. Drugs are considered among the most forbidden and harmful substances to humanity. Despite this, other factors may complement weak religious motivation in causing deviance, such as the belief that drugs are not forbidden, which interacts with this factor. [15]

In other words, a person's weak belief structure links deviant behavior closely to a diminished sense of religious motivation, which compels them to turn to drugs and addiction. Research findings have indicated that one of the primary causes of drug prevalence in Iraq is weak religious motivation, with a rate of 43.70%. [5]

Islam’s stance on the prohibition of alcohol and drugs is clear and explicit. It is fundamental in Islam to avoid anything harmful to human health. The use of drugs leads to psychological, physical, and social harms for the user. Allah says, "And do not throw yourselves into destruction." Therefore, a devout believer who adheres to God's law would not resort to substances that endanger their health and family. Adhering to Islamic values and traditions, and understanding Islam's position on drug use, are crucial aspects that can prevent youth from falling into this affliction. [6]

Religious motivation has a profound effect on refining souls, correcting them, purifying them from vice, and encouraging individuals to do good and help others. From this perspective, religion plays a vital role in maintaining security and stability in society. Consequently, places of worship play an important role in the moral upbringing of community members, especially youth and adolescents, by enhancing their self-restraint and preventing them from drifting into deviance and misconduct. Legal studies have shown that religion and high social values significantly reduce crime, and religiously committed youth are less prone to delinquency and

deviance. The American occupation of Iraq in 2003 exposed the country to the dominance of Western civilization, with its conflicting thinking and methods that diverge from religious and ethical values. [7]

When religious motivation weakens, it leads youth to engage in deviant behaviors such as drug use, viewing it as a means of self-indulgence and imitating Western societal habits and traditions. Weak religious motivation is a primary factor in falling into this affliction because those who adhere to their faith are distanced from moral failings and errors. All revealed religions have condemned self-harm, deeming it an unforgivable sin and a form of suicide deserving eternal damnation in Hell. Allah has created everything on Earth to test human beings, as stated in the Quran: "Indeed, We have made what is on the earth adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed." Hence, Islam emphasizes the protection of the five essential necessities: intellect, life, lineage, religion, and wealth. Given that drug use harms these necessities, Islamic teachings and scholars are dedicated to prohibiting such substances due to their detrimental impact on these fundamental needs. [7]

Third: Sexual Instinct

Sexual instinct is one of the most potent influences in many living organisms. Its significance in human life, including the pursuit of gratification and its discharge, profoundly impacts human behavior. Studies and statistics have established that sexual instinct is a major factor in drug use and psychoactive substances. Drugs affect perception, numb sensitive mental centers, and induce a state of euphoria and bodily pleasure. This has led to the erroneous belief that drug use and psychoactive substances enhance sexual activity and provide prolonged pleasure. This misconception has driven many users to commit both conventional and deviant sexual crimes, which are often latent in the user's subconscious, leading to a rise in crimes such as assault and sodomy with minors. This explains the prevalence of drugs and psychoactive substances among morally degraded social strata, particularly among prostitutes and in dubious places such as nightclubs and brothels. [1]

Since 2003, drug use has become widespread in Iraq, with drugs being sold on street corners. Statistics from Ibn Rushd Psychiatric Hospital in Baghdad indicate that three out of every ten individuals are drug addicts. Several psychological factors contribute to drug use in Iraq, including the desire to experiment, curiosity, enjoyment, and free time, which are major reasons for engaging in addiction and drug use. [24]

Individuals may feel inadequate and have a personal desire to experiment, curiosity, and risk-taking or believe that drug use signifies independence and strength of character. Additionally, general dissatisfaction with life and non-conformity to prevailing societal values due to life’s changes can also be contributing factors. [8]

Following the American occupation, Iraqis experienced various forms of deprivation due to the inability to satisfy many needs caused by social changes affecting all aspects of life in post-occupation Iraq. Continued institutional neglect of these deprivations increased feelings of alienation, negatively impacting individual attitudes, behaviors, and patterns. The deprivation of achieving personal ambitions and future aspirations had direct implications for deviant individuals in society. [7]

Curiosity and exploration among some youths, with disregard for consequences and the false belief that drugs aid in forgetting troubles, make them turn to drugs to escape their reality. [14]

Fourth: Creative Motivations

Certain individuals, such as adolescents, artists, novelists, actors, and composers, may resort to drug use and psychoactive substances, believing that these substances enhance their imagination, creativity, and expertise in their fields. Numerous examples exist of prominent individuals who used drugs and psychoactive substances, including the famous English writer Thomas De Quincey, who authored "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater" in 1821. Another notable figure, Charles Baudelaire, followed a similar path. It is said that Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote a book titled "Kubla Khan" under the influence of opium. Other notable figures include Jean Cocteau, the renowned musician Mr. Darwish, and Aldous Huxley, who contributed to the spread of LSD due to his writings in the mid-1950s. [1]

Section Two: Social Causes

The social causes of drug and psychoactive substance use begin with the family in which an individual is raised, extending to the social environment with which the individual interacts, such as friends, schoolmates, and colleagues. Additionally, the broader societal context, including the state’s policies on drug management and prevailing values, customs, and traditions, significantly influences drug use. Globalization has played a substantial role in increasing the prevalence of drugs. Thus, the primary social causes of drug use in Iraqi society can be summarized as follows:

First: The Family

The family is one of the oldest and most important social institutions. It acts as a bridge between the individual and society, representing societal pressures through the process of socialization, shaping and adapting individuals to the social system. The family functions as a factory producing social individuals from the raw materials available in the community. Through the family, society influences individuals from childhood by instilling beliefs, values, and social norms, shaping their thoughts and behaviors into specific molds. People often believe they have adopted these beliefs and inclinations of their own free will, while in reality, they are products of their family and social environment. Research and studies have shown that the role of the family in either encouraging or deterring youth from drug use is significant. Studies by Hunt have found that if the relationship between parents and children is characterized by disintegration, the likelihood of children using drugs increases. If the relationship is authoritative, the probability of drug use is moderate. Conversely, if the relationship is balanced—characterized by love, understanding, guidance, and firmness—the likelihood of children using drugs is low. Family dysfunction, such as divorce, death, or migration, increases the probability of drug use among family members. Additionally, a parent's drug addiction has a noticeable impact on family disintegration due to conflicts and issues arising from the relationship between the addicted individual and other family members.

A healthy family enhances the well-being of its members, maintains their health and vital functions, instills necessary social habits, and contributes to forming behavior consistent with its standards and values. It fulfills biological and psychological needs, thereby reducing the risk of deviance and aberrant behavior. If the family fails to meet one or more of these needs, it can lead to dysfunction, potentially resulting in the deviance and drug use of its members. Studies have shown a close correlation between the fixed monthly, daily, or weekly allowance given to students by their families and the likelihood of high school students engaging in drug use. Family supervision, especially the role of the father, plays a crucial role in preventing youth from deviating towards drug use, as it reduces their exposure to deviant groups, provides guidance, and influences their behavior. Research indicates that drug use is more prevalent among youth whose parental supervision is weak or nonexistent. [1]

The family plays a crucial role in the socialization process of youth. It is the primary group with which individuals form the most intimate connections, and this influence extends to all aspects of their personal development. Most studies indicate that young people living in dysfunctional families experience greater emotional and social problems compared to those from stable families. Key factors contributing to family disintegration include divorce, the death of a parent, the mother's employment, or the father's continuous absence from the home. Additionally, parental drug addiction, as previously mentioned, has a significant impact on family disintegration due to the deteriorating relationships among family members. Psychological and social studies consistently find that the family is the most influential factor in an individual's susceptibility to drug and psychoactive substance use. [6]

The family is the fundamental support system in regulating behavior within the family unit, particularly through adopting internal policies towards its children, based on principles of reward and punishment. Children are expected to adhere to the principles established by their parents, which reflect their commitment to providing religious and social upbringing according to Islamic guidelines. Consequently, this process aims to produce individuals with balanced, normative behavior. Conversely, familial relationships between parents and children significantly impact adolescent behavior, both positively and negatively. Young children require love and affection to feel secure. In contrast, families that employ harsh methods and punishment often lead their children toward deviant behavior and psychological issues, including drug use. Research indicates that 45.4% of respondents reported varied answers concerning this issue. [4]

Social factors encompass the individual's social environment from birth until the moment of committing a crime, whether this environment is human or residential. A negative social environment does not allow for individual choice in accepting or rejecting it. For instance, individuals born into dysfunctional families may face challenges that differ from those raised in supportive, loving families. Strong, understanding families that foster affection and love typically produce children with healthy personalities who resist harmful influences and criminal behavior, thereby avoiding the pitfalls of drug and psychoactive substance use. [15]

The family is one of the most significant social systems impacting an individual's life and the development of their personality. Given the family's crucial role, various factors stemming from political and economic crises since 2003 have adversely affected the Iraqi family. These crises have led to a marginalization of the family institution's role and a neglect of its primary functions in raising and preparing individuals for proper behavior. The Iraqi family has become a casualty of occupation and political instability, bearing heavy burdens and responsibilities previously managed by state institutions, such as security, protection, and provision of services. Many Iraqi families have fallen victim to these severe conditions, resulting in a significant decline in their roles and functions. [7]

This situation has substantially contributed to deviance and drug addiction. The Iraqi family has faced numerous crises and social disasters due to repeated wars, arbitrary arrests by American occupation forces, and

sectarian violence. These recurring crises have led to the loss of many parents who were once responsible for their families, leading to a breakdown in family support and a decline in living standards. As a result, many children resorted to any means to meet their family's material needs, regardless of the negative outcomes. One such means has been joining drug trafficking gangs, which represents a concerning trend toward deviance and addiction. [7]

Issues related to the family attract considerable attention from researchers and those concerned with drug problems and their contributing factors due to their significant impact on child upbringing. Through the family, children learn behavioral patterns that shape their daily lives, including value orientations and moral judgment standards. These influences make children more inclined toward specific behavioral patterns and more eager to engage in chosen activities while avoiding various social behaviors and situations that could benefit them if they approached them. However, the values and attitudes they learn may deprive them of many advantages that they rightfully deserve and could lead them to adopt harmful behavioral patterns that they might have avoided had they pursued different life paths. [16]

When a family member engages in drug use or abuse of harmful substances, it can contribute to the likelihood that other family members, particularly young people, will also engage in such behaviors. For example, some addicted parents involve their children in the preparation of drugs, thereby encouraging them to use and become addicted themselves. Additionally, frequent family problems create a tumultuous home environment. It is observed that various parental treatment methods can lead children towards criminal behavior and diverse forms of deviant social conduct, including different forms of drug use. [5]

Excessive harshness towards children is also widely recognized by educators as a factor influencing a child's behavior. When children are subjected to severe treatment from their parents, such as physical abuse and harsh reprimands, it can negatively impact their behavior, leading to disobedience, running away from home, and seeking refuge among unsavory elements who may lead them towards immoral paths and drug abuse. [8]

Second: Peers and Friends

Humans are naturally inclined towards others who are similar in age, habits, traditions, preferences, and desires. Research indicates the significant role that peers and friends play in either encouraging or discouraging adolescents from using drugs. Peer groups and friendships serve as primary sources of information about drugs, their effects, how to use them, and the symptoms associated with their use. Friends can play a substantial role in promoting drug use by encouraging experimentation and exploration, and individuals who associate with drug users are often driven by curiosity, the desire to discover the unknown, or the need to conform to their peers. [1]

Field studies show that the influence of drug-using peers on adolescents is stronger than the influence of drug-using parents. This is based on the notion that "a bad company will drag you down." The disintegration of family structures, weakened spiritual values, and a shift towards materialism contribute to feelings of insecurity and alienation among adolescents, leading to anxiety, aggressive behavior, and delinquency. This often results in the formation of groups characterized by drug use. The communal aspect of drug-using groups involves sessions filled with joy, euphoria, and humor, which can be reinforced by the presence of criminal associates in prison, strengthening their bonds even after release and potentially leading to further drug use or involvement in drug trafficking. [3]

Drug use can spread among peers if their mindset lacks faith and moral integrity, with the influence of bad company often being a major factor in drug use due to the desire to emulate. Friends reflect their own morals; thus, if friends exhibit virtuous behavior, it generally signifies that the individual also upholds commendable ethics, and vice versa. The importance of this factor lies in its impact on deviant behavior and drug use because collective behavior among individuals leaves a notable imprint on personal conduct. [2]

Peer groups, along with the family, are key factors in drug use as they form the environment surrounding the youth and influence their behavior, emotions, and feelings. Peer groups may either reinforce or contradict the values and attitudes instilled by the family. In cases of conflict between the family's values and those of peer groups, the latter can compete with the family for the youth's allegiance. The effect of peer groups intensifies with weaker family connections and diminishes with stronger family ties. Consequently, peer influence grows more significant in shaping adolescent attitudes, feelings, and behaviors, including various forms of deviant conduct. The impact of peer groups often surpasses that of media in many areas. The risk posed by bad company increases during adolescence when the desire for peer approval is strong, and if this coincides with weak family bonds, it can lead to a higher likelihood of drug use. Some argue that the influence of bad peers involves the individual's drug use driven by a desire to fit in with their peers' addiction behaviors. [16]

Third: Environment

The surrounding environment is a fundamental factor influencing an individual's propensity to use drugs, particularly when it is characterized by poverty, high crime rates, or a low general standard of taste and ease of access to drugs. This has led to the phenomenon of widespread drug use among community members. [9]

The environment of the school and the type of students with whom a student interacts can significantly impact behavior, as well as the nature of the living area. Individuals in rural environments tend to be less prone to drug use due to the presence of social cohesion and the prevailing value system in those areas, which considers such actions disgraceful. In contrast, urban residents, who interact with diverse social strata, may be more susceptible to criminal behavior, especially those living in informal settlements formed by families from various backgrounds. Additionally, the work environment also affects an individual's criminal behavior due to the relationships formed with others and the availability of drugs in certain areas, which may encourage criminal activity. [10]

Fourth: Imitation

Imitation involves an individual emulating a particular person who has influenced their behavior, often due to a lack of guidance and the presence of a negative role model. This process is facilitated when opportunities arise to adopt such a model. Adolescents may imitate their parents, or, alternatively, they might emulate other role models such as older siblings, friends, celebrities, or athletes, especially if these figures have engaged in similar behaviors. This inclination is particularly pronounced if the behaviors being imitated are visible or suggested by the role models.[8]

Fifth: Globalization

Since the 1990s, the world has experienced a surge of transformations that reflect a global shift encompassing political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions. Although globalization did not represent a complete break from the past, it is characterized by several distinct features. Globalization implies the generalization of concepts and the expansion of their scope to encompass all aspects. Through globalization, economic, social, and cultural institutions operate within a global framework dominated by economically and media-strong entities. This has led some thinkers to equate globalization with Americanization, or the dissemination and generalization of American characteristics. While colonialism in the previous century was seen as the peak of traditional capitalism, some scholars argue that contemporary globalization is akin to what colonialism represented in the past—essentially, globalization as a form of post-colonialism. Although drug proliferation predated the emergence of globalization as a concept and practice, globalization has created a conducive environment for the spread of drug trade and use. Its focus on profit and money, combined with a disregard for human and spiritual values, has driven many to drug use. [1]

Previously, drug use was geographically limited; however, the advances brought about by globalization, particularly in communications and information technology, have opened new geographic areas to drug distribution. This has diminished the significance of political borders and led to the compression of time and the homogenization of social aspirations. Additionally, globalization has transmitted certain customs that contribute to complex problems and fatal diseases such as drug addiction. Globalization has facilitated the emergence of societies characterized by what is termed as the "drug economy," where moral and social corruption is rampant, and money is illicitly acquired through organized drug trafficking networks. These networks exert control over society through bribery or terrorism, resulting in the disintegration of societal values and ethics, thereby creating an ideal environment for drug proliferation.

Other Social Factors:

1. Availability of Drugs: The ease of obtaining drugs is a critical factor. The more accessible drugs are, the higher the number of users. Anti-drug policies and their effectiveness in producing and transit countries play a significant role in curbing drug spread. Increased drug use in one region often leads to increased illicit production and smuggling, as these substances, like any other commodities, follow the law of supply and demand.
2. Lack of Regulation: Some countries have not included all internationally recognized drugs in their controlled substances lists, making drug trafficking and use legal or unregulated. For instance, in Yemen, qat is not listed as a banned drug, and in some European countries like Portugal and the Netherlands, cannabis use is not considered a criminal offense. In Iraq, there was no law criminalizing the misuse of psychoactive substances until the recent enactment of new legislation.

3. Wars and Instability: Wars and lack of security hinder a state's ability to control illicit activities, including drug trafficking and use. For example, after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, the instability led to drug cultivation, trafficking, and use, introducing drug problems to the Iraqi society that had not previously existed. Wars also exacerbate drug use, particularly among those experiencing fear and danger. Studies indicate that 10% of U.S. military personnel use cocaine, and drug use was prevalent among American troops in Vietnam and Iraq. [1]

Section Three: Economic Reasons for Drug Use

Economic factors have played a significant role in the proliferation of drug use and continue to do so. The trade in these substances has been viewed as an economic venture aimed at profit, and economic reasons remain central to this phenomenon. The primary economic factors contributing to drug use are as follows:

First: The Substantial Profits Generated by Drug Traffickers and Psychotropic Substances:

The local and international crackdown on drug trade has fueled the growth of a black market that yields substantial profits. This has led to the emergence of a wealthy class of drug dealers, commonly referred to as drug lords. These drug lords use their vast financial resources to further develop the drug trade, corrupt officials involved in combating drugs and psychotropic substances, including politicians, judges, security personnel, and bankers. This corruption facilitates the establishment of criminal gangs involved in the cultivation of drug plants, illegal production of synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances, smuggling, and money laundering associated with the illicit drug trade. Additionally, the high prices of drugs are influenced by market laws where supply and demand dictate prices. However, in the case of drugs, the flexibility of supply and the inelasticity of demand are notable due to the addictive nature of these substances. The market dictates drug prices as they are globally prohibited. If demand decreases due to enforcement and security measures, the costs to secure the trade—such as bribes or increased risks—are added to the cost of the prohibited substance. Thus, the drug trade does not operate according to standard supply and demand principles. [1]

Second: The Emergence of the Drug Economy

In some countries, drugs have become the backbone of the national economy, with entire communities dependent on drug production. This drug economy emerged during the Cold War in countries characterized by weak central authority and relative independence of local groups. Drug lords transformed their regions into drug farms, funding their armed gangs and bolstering their influence. Often, these local leaders form alliances with central authorities to solidify their control.

Third: Unemployment and Poverty

Unemployment, combined with poverty in primitive and remote communities in mountains, plateaus, and deserts—where legitimate governments have failed to guide them towards modernization and development—has made them vulnerable to drug traffickers who exploit them for the cultivation, storage, and smuggling of narcotic plants. These individuals often welcome such exploitation as it brings significant profits that can improve their living standards, a concept recently referred to as "alternative development." [1]

Any disruption in the basic livelihood can hinder individual satisfaction and have negative repercussions on respect for laws and social norms. When expectations rise without being met with adequate fulfillment, it leads to dissatisfaction, which exacerbates the gap between expectations and actual fulfillment capabilities. Consequently, the decline in living standards among the majority of society, including poor and inadequate housing conditions, obstructs the family’s positive role in shaping the children's personalities. This drives some individuals to escape their harsh economic realities, with drug use often serving as a means of seeking illusory happiness and evading difficult economic problems. Unemployment rates have surged by 50%, especially among the youth, due to the scarcity of job opportunities and the absence of effective employment policies to absorb the unemployed workforce. These challenging economic conditions have encouraged many young people to engage in drug-related crimes and trafficking due to the financial incentives these crimes offer, particularly to marginalized and unemployed groups.

Fourth: Weak Government Support for the Agricultural Sector

The lack of government support for the agricultural sector in Iraq has led some farmers to resort to growing narcotic plants such as opium poppy and cannabis, aiming to improve their deteriorating living conditions. This shift has caused a gradual abandonment of economically beneficial crops that support food security for Iraqi citizens. Consequently, some farmers have become economically dependent on these illegal crops and have joined deviant groups in trading them at the expense of others who use drugs. The substantial profits from drug trafficking, coupled with the absence of religious and ethical guidance, can lead to indulgence in corrupt desires and spending on narcotic substances. As the Quran states, "No! Indeed, man transgresses because he sees himself self-sufficient" [7].

The decline in living standards places significant burdens on individuals, making them vulnerable to economic pressures and driving them towards drug use as an escape from their harsh realities. Unemployment creates substantial psychological stress due to the pressures of life and increasing general life demands, where what were once considered luxuries have become necessities. This is particularly evident when individual incomes do not rise in proportion to market prices. [8]

Fifthly: Limited Opportunities for Suitable Employment

One of the direct factors contributing to deviant behavior is the lack of appropriate job opportunities, which drives unemployed individuals to use drugs as a means of escaping their reality and coping with feelings of frustration. [3].

A report from the Iraqi Community Working Group meeting held on April 26, 2017, attended by several doctors, researchers, representatives from the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, the Supreme Judicial Council, various security and health agencies, as well as representatives from numerous ministries and civil society organizations, addressed the issue of drug abuse and trafficking. This report highlighted a significant increase in drug use and trafficking in areas with high numbers of beggars and unemployed individuals, particularly among displaced persons who are susceptible to drug use and exploitation in drug trafficking. The report noted that the lack of suitable job opportunities, a consequence of the wars in Iraq, has fostered anxiety about an uncertain future. This scarcity of job opportunities adversely affects individuals' mental health, pushing them towards drug use as an escape from their challenging reality. Consequently, this makes individuals vulnerable to drug trafficking and cultivation, offering substantial profits. Thus, this factor significantly encourages individuals to use drugs as a means of improving their economic situation and escaping poverty and deprivation.

Sixthly: Good Financial Status

A favorable financial situation may serve as a factor that encourages some individuals to use drugs, given their ability to purchase narcotic substances, especially if their environment supports such criminal behavior. [10]

Studies have revealed that among the surveyed individuals, three had a good financial status, representing 8% of the total sample of 35; fourteen had an average financial status, constituting 40%; and eighteen were considered poor, making up 52% of the sample. [18]

Seventhly: Economic Prosperity of the Country

The economic prosperity of a country directly contributes to the well-being and affluence of its citizens, which can lead many to turn towards alcohol and drugs due to the availability of financial resources for purchasing and promoting these substances. This phenomenon results from inadequate and improper economic management by the country's residents. Consequently, drug-related crimes are observed in some communities with robust economies, often accompanied by a lack of thoughtful and correct planning in economic management. [17]

Section Forth: Legal Measures for Addressing the Causes of Drug Abuse

In medical terms, treatment refers to the attempt to control and eliminate a disease, and it is the stage that follows the diagnosis of the disease. The primary goal of treatment is to remove all symptoms and causes of the disease and achieve a state of balance and functional stability. From a legal perspective, particularly concerning drug-related issues, therapeutic measures are those legal and administrative strategies that can be employed to combat drug abuse. This includes regulating users of various types of drugs and collaborating with the National Committee for Drug Control to develop, monitor, and implement a comprehensive, scientifically-based, and

intensive program that encompasses educational, religious, cultural, and health aspects to raise public awareness about the dangers of drugs.

It appears that combating drug-related crimes cannot rely solely on traditional methods such as criminal penalties, which represent society's means of addressing criminal phenomena through deterrence and punishment. Instead, it requires coordinating efforts to reduce drug abuse and educate the public about drug problems at both the individual and community levels. This approach suggests that crime prevention and control derive their strength from the community and its various institutions. Legislative measures may also be necessary to eradicate crime, which can be executed by different entities, including administrative authorities or regulatory bodies.

Additionally, the media can play a significant role in drug control, alongside religious institutions through counseling and guidance. Legal frameworks may also include the enactment and enforcement of various penalties for offenders.

First: Administration

The administration may employ various methods in combating drug abuse, particularly through regulatory measures. The law grants the Minister of Health the authority to organize procedures related to the licensing of controlled substances and ensure their compliance with regulations. According to the law, the importation of controlled substances is prohibited unless they are registered in the Ministry of Health's records upon issuance of an import license. The substances must be verified for their suitability for use, and their compliance with the specifications and details outlined in the import license must be ensured. They are intended for therapeutic, medical, or scientific purposes. To achieve this, it is necessary to verify that the imported substance is suitable for its intended use.

The law also grants the Minister of Health the authority to issue regulations specifying the conditions that must be met by establishments authorized to trade in controlled substances, psychotropic substances, and precursor chemicals. These establishments must meet the criteria set forth in a ministerial decision and must not share a common entrance with residences, clinics, commercial, or industrial premises. Additionally, the law empowers the Minister of Health to issue a statement outlining the requirements for obtaining licensing cards, including the necessary information and the responsible issuing authority.

Furthermore, the administration has another method of combating drug abuse through oversight, such as monitoring imports. The law requires pharmacy managers and authorized establishments to import controlled substances or use them to send a detailed report of the dispensed and remaining substances to the authority designated by the Ministry of Health within ninety days of the import or transfer permit. Regulatory bodies, including the Inspector General's Office and its associated departments within health institutions, play a crucial role in monitoring compliance with the laws and regulations concerning the handling of controlled substances. This role is shared with the Pharmacy Department and the Pharmacy Association to prevent the leakage of medications containing controlled substances. They also ensure adherence to regulations regarding the handling of controlled drugs, including proper storage in designated areas, maintenance of specific records, documenting quantities, dates, patient names, and prescription images, and prohibiting the dispensing of drugs more than once, while retaining prescriptions as mandated by law. [10]

Second: Administrative Regulatory Bodies

Administrative regulatory bodies have several methods for combating drug abuse, including administrative decisions to impose bans or prohibitions. These bodies can prohibit activities entirely by restricting certain actions that disrupt public order. This is reflected in Article 2 of the now-repealed Narcotic Drugs Law No. 68 of 1965, which banned the cultivation of cannabis, opium poppy, coca, and qat in Iraq. The law also allowed for relative prohibition, where restrictions could be lifted if conditions and regulations established by laws and directives were met. This was reiterated in Article 9 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017, which stipulates that the importation, exportation, transfer, cultivation, production, manufacture, possession, seizure, sale, or purchase of controlled substances is only permitted for medical or scientific purposes and under the conditions specified by the law.

Iraq acceded to drug control treaties in 1991, including the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Iraq's accession to these treaties represents a significant step in enhancing international cooperation in drug control. The international obligations from these treaties should be reflected in Iraqi legislation to achieve their intended goals, as drug abuse poses a severe challenge to Iraq by undermining societal values and threatening public health and safety. Government reports have highlighted a recent increase in drug use in Iraq, particularly in provinces suffering from unemployment and poverty, where the prevalence of drug abuse is linked to higher crime rates. It is believed that drug abuse significantly contributes to the spread of terrorism, as a drug-affected society becomes a more attractive environment for criminal activities.

In response, the Republic of Iraq, through its legislative authority represented by the Iraqi Council of Representatives, enacted the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017. This law aims to enhance the capabilities of state agencies involved in combating the illicit trade of narcotics, psychotropic substances, and precursor chemicals, as well as preventing their misuse. It also seeks to intensify measures against the illegal trade of these substances and ensure the effective implementation of international treaties related to drugs and psychotropic substances to which Iraq is a signatory. The law aims to secure the safe handling of these substances for medical, scientific, and industrial purposes, prevent drug addiction, and provide treatment for addicts in accredited facilities. [12]

Additionally, the Narcotic Drugs Law No. 68 of 1965, as amended, was enacted to fulfill Iraq's international commitments as a signatory to the 1961 Narcotic Drugs Convention. Article 2 of this law prohibited the cultivation of cannabis except for industrial purposes, subject to obtaining a license from the relevant authorities. Article 14 of the law outlined penalties for violating its provisions, with Article 14(a) imposing a fine of up to 200 dinars or imprisonment for up to one year, or both, for violations of Articles 9 and 10. Article 14(b) prescribed the death penalty or life imprisonment and confiscation of movable and immovable property for unauthorized importation, manufacture, sale, possession, or cultivation of narcotics, with the death penalty applying in the case of repeat offenders. The 2017 Law No. 50 represents an advanced legislative measure in the field of drug and psychotropic substance control. [25]

Third: Legal Provisions

Annual celebrations of the International Day Against Drug Abuse can be organized as stipulated in Article 5, Section VI of the law, which calls for a national annual event to raise public awareness about the dangers of drug abuse, illegal trafficking, and misuse of narcotics, psychotropic substances, and precursor chemicals. The law also encourages studies and research in various fields related to combating illegal drug trade and misuse, and includes provisions for holding a competition with financial and motivational awards, as outlined in Section V of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017. Additionally, Section VIII of the law emphasizes the proposal and development of Iraqi health institutions specialized in treating drug and psychotropic substance addicts, ensuring they have the necessary qualified personnel, equipment, and resources. Section IX encourages support for civil society organizations involved in combating illegal drug trafficking or misuse, both materially and morally. Section X of the law allows for contracting with qualified Iraqi experts to contribute to achieving the law's objectives. Section XI calls for the formation of specialized committees on drug and psychotropic substances issues, while Section XII promotes the engagement of medical and social personnel in institutions addressing drug abuse and addiction treatment. [23]

The Iraqi legislator has not overlooked the prohibition of any form of dealing with narcotics and psychotropic substances. Several Iraqi legislations include stringent penalties for involvement with these substances, including:

1. Article 61 of the Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, as amended, states that if the loss of consciousness or will is caused by intoxicating or narcotic substances consumed by the offender voluntarily and with knowledge, the offender is punished for the crime committed, even if it was with specific intent. The provision considers intentional use of narcotics or intoxicants as an aggravating factor for the offense. [19]
2. Article 40, Section 1 of the Iraqi Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959, as amended, allows either spouse to request divorce if one spouse causes harm to the other or their children, making marital life untenable. Addiction to intoxicants or narcotics is considered a form of harm, provided that addiction is confirmed by a report from an official medical committee. [20]

Article 5, Section 12 of the State and Public Sector Employees Disciplinary Law No. 14 of 1991, as amended, prohibits employees from reporting to work while drunk or appearing in public under the influence of alcohol. [21]

Article 42, Section 2 of the Labor Law No. 37 of 2015 stipulates that employee must not report to work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. [22]

Fourth: Drug Control Agencies

Drug control agencies should be strengthened by establishing specialized units for monitoring and tracking internet-related crimes involving the production, promotion, and trafficking of narcotic substances. Additionally, creating an online platform to provide information on the dangers of drug use is essential. There should be a focus on managing drug-dependent criminals within the criminal justice system and prisons, including their treatment, rehabilitation, and subsequent care. Penal measures should be employed to isolate these individuals from other inmates, and training programs should be implemented for personnel in drug control departments. This training should also extend to customs officers, border guards, public prosecutors, judges, and those involved in drug

awareness and prevention. Incorporating drug-related topics into the curricula of colleges, schools, institutes, and police academies, as well as emphasizing scientific research on narcotic substances, their detection, and the methods used in trafficking, is crucial. [13]

In addition to legal means for addressing drug use, there are other significant measures for tackling drug addiction and abuse, including:

1. Media: The media can play a prominent role in drug control by establishing awareness committees to educate the public about the illegal use of drugs and psychotropic substances and their adverse effects on individuals and society. Specialized drug control units should be created in all provinces, and efforts should be made to increase public awareness of drug prevalence and improve methods for treating and rehabilitating users and addicts. Establishing voluntary community associations for drug awareness and creating specialized rehabilitation centers for treating drug addicts are also essential. Plans should include training programs to enhance the skills of health professionals in drug control and improve the performance of drug control personnel. Support for civil society organizations in combating drug trafficking and money laundering related to drug trade, as well as tightening border controls to prevent smuggling, is vital, considering that Arab countries often serve as transit points for drugs and psychotropic substances. [9]
2. Religious Authorities: High religious authorities should instruct religious leaders, especially representatives, to play an active role in spreading religious awareness and adherence to Islamic values through sermons. Conferences or satellite channels should be established to emphasize the importance of awareness and provide comprehensive information on religious principles of permissibility and prohibition, including the avoidance of all forbidden actions such as drug use. This approach aims to serve the community's best interests by addressing the dangerous scourge of drug addiction and its severe consequences, thereby fostering a safe, loving, and harmonious society. [2]

CONCLUSION

This research elucidates the psychological, social, and economic causes of drug proliferation within Iraqi society. The study concludes with a series of findings, recommendations, and suggestions that can be summarized as follows:

Findings:

1. Drug-related crimes arise from a range of factors that drive individuals to commit such offenses, including social factors such as family disintegration, psychological factors, and economic factors such as poverty and unemployment.
2. The weakness of familial supervision, the proliferation of family problems, and the lack of monitoring of children's behavior and peer relationships have led many individuals to drug use.
3. The prevalence of social issues such as unemployment, wars, and corruption has driven many individuals toward drug use and addiction.
4. The occupation of Iraq in 2003 significantly contributed to the spread of drug trafficking and the use of psychotropic substances.
5. Drug addiction depletes the national economy and wastes the potential of youth, and it is also a significant cause of various crimes, including theft, murder, and rape.
6. The family is the fundamental building block in establishing awareness, providing youth with social culture necessary for their social maturity.
7. Psychological factors are the primary motivators for drug use, accounting for 34% of the cases.
8. The study revealed that the initiation of drug use is predominantly influenced by friends and relatives, accounting for 67% of the cases.

Recommendations:

1. Intensify monitoring of pharmacies, drugstores, and pharmacists to curb the spread of drugs.
2. Establish more institutions and research centers to study phenomena threatening economic security, such as violence, addiction, divorce, and mental illnesses.
3. State ministries and institutions should find effective means to restore social, psychological, and cultural balance within Iraqi society through a comprehensive developmental plan that includes increasing public awareness of societal dynamics and focusing attention on critical and impoverished social segments, particularly unemployed youth and families that have lost their breadwinners due to wars and unstable political conditions. Additionally, efforts should be made to create suitable job

opportunities for youth to address unemployment and encourage social welfare institutions to provide material and social support to poor and marginalized families.

4. Support drug control agencies both financially and humanly to enable them to implement necessary measures to limit drug proliferation and counter the advanced methods employed by drug trafficking gangs across Iraq's international borders.
5. Establish a Drug Control Council including the Ministers of Health, Justice, Interior, and Social Affairs to address drug issues and develop strategies to protect society from drug abuse.
6. Emphasize the importance of regulating import and export, thoroughly reviewing all previously granted licenses, and enforcing Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017.
7. Activate the role of civil society organizations in educating youth by organizing seminars and conferences that warn against drug-related crimes and addiction.
8. Advocate for ongoing economic support from countries that have ratified relevant drug control treaties, as Iraq faces regional and international challenges in drug control.
9. Coordinate with Iraqi universities, particularly in sociology, psychology, and counseling, to conduct survey research to determine the extent of drug addiction.
10. Recommend amending Article 3 of Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law No. 50 of 2017 to assign the head of the National Committee on Drugs to the Prime Minister or the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers to ensure the decisions of the committee are more effective and swiftly implemented by all ministries, as well as to guarantee the provision of necessary resources to achieve the committee's objectives in reducing this dangerous issue.

Suggestions:

1. Encourage government entities to provide positive recreational activities, such as sports clubs and artistic activities, to attract as many young people as possible.
2. Include a course on criminal policy for combating drugs and psychotropic substances in all law faculties, as the academic community is crucial in addressing the issue of drug proliferation.
3. Enforce strict laws against drug dealers and traffickers and consider reinstating the death penalty for drug trafficking offenses.
4. Treat drug users as patients who need treatment in specialized addiction clinics rather than as criminals, as the danger is limited to the individual user.
5. Engage with neighboring countries and other nations in agreements for the extradition of criminals to pursue drug traffickers and bring them to justice.
6. Monitor drug offenders, particularly in financial aspects, to prevent them from laundering money.
7. Enhance the role of religious institutions in combating drugs through sermons, preaching, and guidance.
8. Urge local media, both visual and auditory, as well as print media, to give this issue the attention it deserves due to its complex nature and its potential to destroy societal structure.
9. Introduce new legislation suitable for the current phase and evolving trends or reconsider the Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law to prevent improper medical use of controlled substances.
10. Establish international or regional law enforcement agencies similar to Interpol to ensure effective security or police cooperation

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