

# Impulsive Traits of In-Jail Female with Selling Substance Crime

**Elham Foroozandeh\***

*Department of Psychology, Naein Branch, Islamic Azad University, Naein, Iran*

**\*Corresponding author:** Elham Foroozandeh, Department of Psychology, Naein Branch, Islamic Azad University, Naein, Iran

**Submission:** 📅 September 30, 2017; **Published:** 📅 November 14, 2017

## Abstract

Substance and drug sale becomes an important social, political and health problem in Iran. In this report, the impulsive behavior of Iranian female prisoners associated with the crime of selling substance and drugs was investigated. For this aim a sample of 55 women was selected by simple random sampling method and they were asked to complete Bart's impulsivity questionnaire. The findings showed that incarcerated women are more impulsive than the average rate. It can be stated that impulsive non-planning behaviors in women lead to using weaker strategies in problem solving and produce a defective cycle for women with components of behavioral disabilities and selling substance and drugs.

**Keywords:** Women crime; Impulsivity; Substance sale

## Introduction

Substance and drug sale becomes an important social, political and health problem in Iran. One of the most frequent crimes in Iran is crimes related to substance and according to reports the rate of these kinds of crimes increases every day [1-4]. Drug and substance sale is the source of a lot of physical, psychological and social problems such as suicide, violence, and mental diseases and also the spread of substance use in Iran. In recent decades substance sale was done by men and it was considered as a masculine crime, whereas now it has been changed as a crime in both men and women. In some studies it is revealed that criminal behaviors in women can be seen as a kind of personality traits or personality core with some correlations with IQ, parenting style, childhood events etc. [5,6]. Impulsivity is one of the traits that are supposed to be related to crimes. Impulsivity is related with some of the psychological distresses in human community, including anti-social behaviors, violence and crime. Recent surveys have shown that impulsivity is one of the main risk factors in personality structure for crime. Impulse behavior is defined as urges and cravings to perform an action in response to a real external or subjective stimulus. Impulsivity is a wide range of behaviors that are less thinking about them, are immature with seeking a reward or pleasure goal, have high risks and in the core of them can be seen the significant social unintended consequences [7]. Here the impulsive behaviors of female prisoners associated with the crime of selling substance and drugs in Iran were investigated.

## Methods

This research was a descriptive study and the statistical population of this study was all women who were imprisoned in Isfahan, Iran from November to December 2016 and their crime was selling substance and drugs. A sample of 55 females was selected by simple random sampling method and they were asked to complete Bart's impulsivity questionnaire. Self-reported Bart's impulsivity questionnaire was developed by Bart et al. (1995) and includes 30 questions grade four Likert scores that were never=1 to always=4. The content of this questionnaire is based on three factors of impulsivity including non-planning behaviors (questions 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19, 25), motor impulse (with questions 2, 3, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24) and cognitive impulse (with questions 4, 6, 15, 23). In process of standardization of Iranian form for this questionnaire, five questions were omitted and the other 25 were questions were remained in three components of impulsivity.

## Findings

The frequency distribution of the sample age showed that 14 (25.4%) of the female prisoners were between 20 to 30 years old, 29 (52.8%) between 31 to 40 years old, 10 (18%) between 41 to 50 years old, and two persons (3.6%) were over 50 years old. The most frequent is the age group of 31-40 years old. The mean and standard deviation of the sample age were 34.78 and 7.68, respectively. Two of the participants in the study (3.6%) were single. 36 of the

participants (65.5%) were the first time to be imprisoned. Table 1 shows mean and standard deviation of the sub-tests and total score of impulsivity (n=55).

**Table 1:** Mean and standard deviation of impulsivity.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skidding	Stretching
Motor impulse	36.04	5.76	-0.12	-0.12
Non-planning behaviors	17.82	4.97	0.10	-0.06
Cognitive impulse	12.42	1.38	-0.71	-0.46
Total score	66.26	4.87	-0.85	1.04

According to the results shown in Table 2, it can be stated that motor impulse and non-planning behaviors of in jail women are statistically different from the total population and the mean of scores in these two categories are more than normal population of Iranian female.

**Table 2:** One-Sample t-Test for compare mean of impulsivity in sample with statistical population.

Variables	t	df	sig
Motor impulse	2.81	54	0.034
Cognitive impulse	0.971	54	0.81
Non-planning behaviors	3.041	54	0.221
Total score	1.101	54	0.633

## Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, there is a significant difference between motor impulse and non-planning behaviors with females in jail from with non-incarcerated females. It can be stated that when these women encounter problems because of their disability to control their impulsivity, as such they cannot successfully solve many problems. These impulsive non-planning behaviors become clearer when solving problems require deep

thinking and control of impulsive decision-makings. In such situations, they probably will adopt a timely approach and use weaker strategies to solve the problem. In another words it can be said that these women use weaker strategies for their problems in their real lives, so they start to sell substance and drugs to earn money, in order to be satisfied in life and try to solve the routine problems. It is not clear that impulsivity makes women start selling substance or selling substance amplifies and reinforces impulsive traits, but it seems logical that it is considered a defective cycle and the resumption of this cycle may be committing the crimes that results in jail.

## Conclusion

The findings of this short report are limited to women prisoners in Iran and should be cautious in generalizing the results to men. Another limitation is the use of a questionnaire for data collection, therefore, the self-assessment may result in bias.

## References

1. Momtazi S, Rawson RA (2010) Substance abuse among Iranian high school students. *Curr Opin Psychiatry* 23(3): 221-226.
2. Zarghami M (2015) Iranian common attitude toward opium consumption. *Iran J Psychiatry Behav Sci* 9(2): e2074.
3. Ziaaddini H, Ziaaddini T, Nakhaee N (2013) Pattern and trend of substance abuse in eastern rural iran: A household survey in a rural community. *Journal of Addiction* 2013 (2013): 1-6.
4. Rafeiee R, Olyae S, Sargolzaiee A (2013) The relationship between the type of crime and drugs in addicted prisoners in zahedan central prison. *Int J High Risk Behav Addict* 2(3): 139-140.
5. Tillson M, Strickland JC, Staton M (2017) Age of first arrest, sex, and drug use as correlates of adult risk behaviors among rural women in jails. *Women Crim Justice* 27(5): 287-301.
6. Zhu XM, Zhou JS, Chen C, Peng WL, Li W, et al. (2017) Prevalence of borderline personality disorder and its risk factors in female prison inmates in China. *Psychiatry Res* 250: 200-203.
7. Foroozandeh E (2017) Impulsivity and impairment in cognitive functions in criminals. *Forensic Res Criminol Int J* 5(1): 00144.