Content Analysis of Thought and Lifestyle Books in the First High School Program in terms of Attention to Components of Addiction Prevention

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Abstract

Objective: One of the most important programs and strategies for addiction prevention is the teaching of thought and life skills at school. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to analyze the content of Thought and Lifestyle Books in terms of the amount of attention assigned to the components of addiction prevention based on the objectives of the Comprehensive Document on the Prevention of Addiction. **Method:** The method used in the content analysis was the Shannon entropy technique, and the units of analysis included text, questions, and photos. Thoughts and Lifestyle Books of the first high school constituted the statistical population of this study; and the book, entitled Thought & Lifestyle shared for boys and girls in the seventh and eighth grades was the statistical sample of this research. **Results:** The results of this study showed that the content of Thought & Lifestyle book in the seventh grade did not pay much attention to the component of education of drugs. In the content of the eighth volume of the book, the most and least attention were paid to education of drugs and assertiveness, respectively. **Conclusion:** It is important to consider the topic of addiction prevention and life skills, such as self-expression and assertiveness skills in course books and include training on narcotic drugs and addiction in textbooks.

Keywords: addiction, thought and lifestyle, content analysis

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Introduction

Drug use prevention is one of the most important issues that has attracted the attention of many scientific, social, and political experts over the past few decades. A review of the literature on drug prevention has shown that primary prevention, with emphasis on students and children and adolescents as well as youth, has exerted the greatest effectiveness among various drug addiction treatment programs. In addiction prevention programs, education is one of the most effective, affordable, and most commonly used methods in different cultural, social, and economic conditions. However, what should be meticulously taken into consideration is that schools always have a special place in the comprehensive preventive education plan (Jamali, & Ghorbani, 2008; Ebrahimi Ghavam, & Mohammadi, 2016). Adolescence is a critical period in life where inappropriate behavioral patterns begin to emerge. Adolescents' tendency to drug use is one of the main concerns of parents. On the other hand, adolescents are in a serious situation due to their rapid physical and mental changes and their identity is being formed. Therefore, they are at a higher risk of drug addiction (Sarrami, Ghorbani, & Minoyi, 2013). The mean age of onset of cigarette smoking in Iran has been 16.6 years and the highest age difference of onset of addiction (45.7%) was between the ages of 17 and 22 years; and the early onset increases drug use and contributes to the persistence of drug use and increases the possibility of using more dangerous substances (Fathi, & Fadavi, 2012). Draucker, & Mazurczyk (2013) concluded that there was a relationship between childhood harms and drug abuse. Drucker and Mazurzic (2013) showed that poor self-efficacy provides the basis for substance abuse in their students. Ibabe, Stein, Nyamathi, Bentler, & Peter (2013) conducted a research on Los Angeles and Californian homeless people and came to the conclusion that history of injury, drug use, chronic deprivation, and psychological stress have been predictors of substance abuse. There is also a relationship between ineffective coping strategies and inappropriate problem-solving methods in addicts. Addicts use ineffective problem-solving methods, such as helplessness, inhibition, and avoidance to a larger degree, while they take constructive problem-solving methods, such as creativity, trust, and tendency to a lesser extent. People with no social skills and with poor decision-making abilities show the worst prognosis and the highest rate of drug use (Bahrami, Mo'azedian, & Hosseini al-Madani, 2013). In addition, antisocial and aggressive behaviors are the most important risk factors for substance use (Amari, Pasha Sharifi, Hashemian, & Mirzamani, 2011). Those students who feel insufficiency take drugs to escape stress and difficulties and, ultimately, their vulnerability to peers is very high (Pourkord, Abolghasemi, Narimani, & Jamalouyi, 2013). Over the course of more than fifty years since the introduction of the first prevention programs, various strategies and programs have been introduced for the prevention of drug abuse (Botvin, Griffin, & Williams, 2001). One of the most important programs of these types was life skills training on addiction

prevention. These skills are decision-making and problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, ability to communicate effectively, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness and empathy, emotional management, and stress management. It is certain that skills training such as problem-solving, decision-making, personal and social communication, thinking and creativity, resistance to the illegitimate demands of others, saying no, self-assertion, strengthening spirituality and religiosity, self-abstinence, the proper use of time, and the enrichment of leisure time can award safety to the future of society. Meanwhile, training life skills and manners can be effective in the emergence of negative attitudes toward drugs. Through life skills training, a person can establish healthy and friendly relationship with his/her peers and, highlight him/herself in that community, and meet the need for respect (Herbert et al., 2005; Kopelowice, Liberman, & Zarate, 2006). Therefore, one of the factors leading to drug use tendency is young people's unfamiliarity with life skills (Botvin, & Griffin, 2004).

Drucker, & Mazurzic (2013) analyzed the content of school-based preventive programs in the United States and concluded that social and emotional skills are used for prevention in primary schools and information and awareness are provided in high schools about the consequences of drug use. In this regard, Tahiri, Gashi, Lsmajli, & Muja (2012); Cuijpers (2002); Farmani, Mo'aazedian, Hosseini al-Madani, & Bahrami (2011); and Younesi, & Mohammadi (2006) have pointed out that the main measures taken in high schools in the area of addiction prevention are focused on the provision of information on the consequences of narcotics and education on them. Similarly, Matsumoto et al. (2011) examined the possible impacts of intervention using the self-training books on drug addicts and showed that the use of the workbook leads to increased awareness of the problems of drug dependence and creates motivation for treatment. In the same line, Speath, Weichold, Rainer, & Wienser (2010); Bahrami et al. (2013); and Bapiri (2011) believe that life and social skills training is the most effective and affordable program among all preventive programs in schools. These skills include decision-making and problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, ability to communicate effectively, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness and empathy, emotional management, and stress management. These programs usually extend protective factors and reduce risk factors (Bapiri, 2011). Botvin's Life Skills Training Program (1998) was designed to prevent drug abuse, cigarette smoking, and alcohol drinking. This program aims to train about narcotics, drugs and attitudes about them, coping skills to social effects, promotion and development of self-management skills, and interpersonal skills. In their research, Turner (2008); Watson, Jeanne, & Gordon (2006); Botvin et al. (2001); Botvin, & Griffin (2004, 2005); Zollinger (2003); Bahrami et al. (2013) indicated that decision-making and problem-solving skills are effective in reducing addiction.

Various studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of life skills training (Botvin, 2002; Eisen, Zellman & Masset, & Amurray, 2004; Botvin, &

Griffin; 2004; Botvin, & Griffin, & Williams, 2001; and Bahrami, Mo'azedian, & Hosseini al-Madani, 2011). In this regard, Bahrami et al. (2013) also examined the effect of life skills training on changing students' attitudes and thinking about narcotics. Ariza et al. (2013) also found that the school-based program was effective in reducing cannabis use. Faggiano et al. (2010) also found that school-based programs, with an emphasis on students, are effective in reducing smoking and drug use. Karimian, Zavar, & Piri (2016) claimed that the component of emotion and stress management and the component of training about drugs have been respectively assigned the highest and least attention in the seventh grade Thought and Lifestyle Book from teachers' perspective.

Due to the widespread and rapid changes in various aspects of life, the responsibility and role of educational curriculum and the provision of useful experiences for the audience have undergone changes, as well. The curriculum should teach students how to go for problem-solving by creating appropriate opportunities for them to understand today's issues and problems (Saghleisi, 2010). In the meantime, course book content is one of the important elements in the education and plays a key role in achieving the goals of the system. A curriculum can play a very valuable role in enriching the educational environment by means of its rich content for teaching in the form of course books. Also, the provision of educational addiction prevention content in the curriculum design of different school grades, along with the observance of horizontal and vertical integration, is one of the infrastructures of each proposed model for addiction prevention (Jamali, & Ghorbani, 2008). The incorporation of appropriate materials on drugs and provision of prevention training and their integration with life skills training are among the elements of the sixth national program (providing drug prevention services in educational settings) (Comprehensive Document on Addiction Prevention, 2011, p. 64).

Given the importance of this issue in planning for the promotion of preventive knowledge, it is imperative to have extensive and adequate knowledge of the current status of schools and the quality of programs. For this purpose, the content analysis of course books is needed in order to be able to arrange pertinent actions and measures in line with the current situation. Since no content analysis in the field of addiction has not been done on course books so far and due to the necessity and importance of this issue, the content of Thought and Lifestyle Books (seventh and eighth grades) has been the focus of the current research. The manners and skills of life and thinking, including critical and creative thinking and problem-solving, can be effective in addiction prevention. In other words, the behaviors that should be taught in general education curriculum in course books and the obtained results can be used to determine the extent to which the determined content has valued addiction prevention.

Method
Population, Sample, and Sampling Method
The method used in this research was content analysis. Since the purpose of this study was to determine the status of Thoughts and Lifestyle Books (girls and boys' shared books) in the seventh and eighth grades with regard to addiction prevention components, this study is considered descriptive. In addition, in terms of purpose, it is considered as an applied research and falls within the category of quantitative research in terms of the nature of research data and measurement instruments. Content analysis often requires the following steps: 1. The pre-analysis step (preparation and organization); 2. Materials review (message); and 3. Data processing step (Sarmad, Bazargan, & Hejazi, 2016).

The statistical population of the current research was the Thought and Lifestyle books of the junior high school program, which have been compiled and published by the Office of Curriculum Planning and Compilation. Two books, entitled Thought & Lifestyle shared for boys and girls in the seventh and eighth grades in 2016 were the statistical sample of this research. A purposive sampling method was used in line with the research objective and these two books were considered because they are expected to have anticipated the issue of addiction prevention.

In this research, the main tool of content analysis was an Analysis Inventory. In order to construct the Analysis Inventory in this research, 7 major components and 40 indices were considered based on theoretical and empirical backgrounds. These components were drugs training (7 indices), thinking skills (9 indices), success skills and coping with failure (8 indices), communication skills (4 indices), emotional and stress management (4 indices), assertiveness skills (4 indices), and self-awareness and empathy (4 indices).

The method used in the content analysis was the Shannon entropy technique. The purpose of this method is to weigh and prioritize the criteria and indices. In scientific literature, a variety of methods have been proposed for data analysis via content analysis, which are based on the frequency of components. These methods have their own particular mathematical problems that reduce the validity of the results. One of the methods that does not suffer such problems is Shannon entropy method based Systems Theory (Izadi, Salehi Omran, Fathi Varajgah, & Abedini Beltork, 2010). In fact, pioneers mostly believe that data analysis will be much more robust and credible when it is carried out via Shannon entropy method (Azar, 2001).

For the assessment of the formal and content validity of the Analysis Inventory, the developed components and indices of the research were submitted to the related experts and two psychology professors familiar with addiction issues. After receiving their points of view, the necessary amendments were made and the final list was arranged. To assess the reliability of the research data, five raters were asked to code some part of the content under analysis on the basis of previously defined components. In other words, the reliability of the

classification stability had been defined in such a way that one lesson (how to solve our conflict and difference) was randomly selected from the compulsory and optional activities section and, then, the coders were requested to count the indices in each lesson (Delavar, 2004).

$$CR = \frac{Agreed\ Components}{Total\ components}$$

Since there is no logical criterion in content analysis for judging the reliability coefficient, pioneers and scholars have accepted the value of 60% (Izadi, Salehi Omran, Fathi Varajgah, & Abedini Beltork, 2010). The reliability in this research was obtained equal to 0.86 based on the above formula.

Results

In this section, the results of content analysis of the course books are presented based on the main question of the study. Descriptive statistics, information load, significance coefficients of the sample components and indices have been presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Information Load, and Importance Factors of the Sample Components and Indices

Components	Indices	Seventh grade				Eighth grade			
		Frequency	*Total Frequency*	*Information load*	*Importance factor*	*Frequency*	*Total Frequency*	*Information load*	*Importance factor*
Drugs training	Harmful effects of drugs	1	17			61			
	Creation of negative attitude towards drugs	0				19			
	Causes and factors of drug use tendency	4		0.148	0.067	16	116	0.67	0.174
	Familiarity with various types of drugs	0				18			
	Addiction Stages	0				1			
	Methods of addiction prevention	1				0			
	Resistance to peer pressure for drug use	11				1			
Thinking skills	Self-control (avoiding fights and disputes)	25	25			25			
	Decision-making based on accurate position evaluation	14	7			9			
	Commitment to implement the decisions and confidence in one's own decision	0				10			
	Correct response to situations using knowledge and skills	47		0.534	0.193	24	284	0.951	0.210
	Active investigation of aspects of the problem and solutions	50				49			
	Timely change of decisions	6				4			
	Measurement and evaluation the actions and ideas of oneself and others	81				11 0			
	Argumentation ability	23				47			
	Having the initiative in life	11				6			
Success skills and	Ability to banish bad friends	21	20	0.577	0.206	3	235	0.79	0.174
	Assessment of one's learning outcomes	16	4			0			
	Planning in life	16				11			

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Information Load, and Importance Factors of the Sample Components and Indices

Components	Indices	Seventh grade				Eighth grade			
		Frequency	Total Frequency	Information load	Importance factor	Frequency	Total Frequency	Information load	Importance factor
Communication skills	Goal setting and methods of achieving them	35				32			
	Resilience and tolerance of hardships	43				22			
	Life based on social norms	17				31			
	Life based on religious beliefs	43				10			
						6			
	Self-care and minimization of threats	13				30			
	Convincing of others and influencing them	15	82	0.359	0.128	5		0.504	0.111
	Active listening in dealing with others	11				13			
	Provision of feedback and receipt of feedback from others	39				3	21		
	The skill of asking for help and guidance from others	17				0			
Emotional and stress skills	Strategies to cope with anxiety	33	93			53			
	Anger factors	26		0.396	0.140	16		0.70	0.154
	Physical and psychological effects of anger on the self and others	18				25	109		
	Anger management strategies	16				15			
Assertiveness skills	Participation in talking with others (verbal and non-verbal)	32	62			57			
	Hurry for the beginning of a social encounter	13		0.230	0.117	4		0.376	0.083
	How to express emotions in the crowd	16				6	73		
	Acceptance of criticism	1				6			
Self-awareness and empathy skills	Awareness of the uniqueness of the self in terms of characteristics	57	172			33			
	Feeling of self-satisfaction and/or need to change (self-assessment)	30		0.42	0.149	60	104	0.53	0.117
	Acceptance of others with all their differences and features	42				8			
	Management and conflict resolution with others	43				3			

As it can be observed in the table, in the content of Thought and Lifestyle Book in the seventh grade, the highest and lowest importance factors respectively belong to success skills and coping with failure (0.206) and drugs training (0.067). In the content of Thought and Lifestyle Book in the eighth grade, the highest and lowest importance factors belong to thinking skills (0.210) and assertiveness skills (0.084), respectively. Therefore, the amount of attention to life skills in the Thought and Lifestyle Book in the seventh grade is higher than that in the Thought and Lifestyle Book in the eighth grade, while the amount of attention to the component of drugs training in the Thought and Lifestyle Book in the eighth grade is higher. Therefore, in the content of the eighth grade book, the focus is on teaching and training about drugs, while in the seventh grade book, the least attention has been paid to this component.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that the components of addiction prevention training have been given attention in the Thought and Lifestyle books of the seventh and eighth grades, but the degrees of attention in these books are different. In the Thought and Lifestyle book of the eighth grade, the highest attention has been paid to the component of drugs training while in the book of the seventh grade, the least attention has been paid to this component. This finding is consistent with the findings of research conducted by Ariza et al. (2013), Huang et al. (2012), Faggiano et al. (2009), Turner (2008), Zollinger (2003), Bapiri (2011), Raja'ea, & Bayazi (2006), Valiani, Samou'ea, & Monshe'ea (2004). These researchers pointed out that life skills training can be effective in preventative behaviors from substance abuse. These programs have been designed to extend protective factors and reduce risk factors (Bapiri, 2011). Botvin's Life Skills Training Program was designed to prevent drug abuse, cigarette smoking, and alcohol drinking. This program aims to train about narcotics, drugs and attitudes about them, coping skills to social effects, promotion and development of self-management skills, and interpersonal skills (Asghari, 2011). Under such training programs, people are taught how to develop healthy behaviors and to identify and confront the situations that are more at risk of addiction and are likely to be under peer pressure (Sohrabi, Hadian, Da'emi, & Asgharnejad, 2008).

Decision-making and problem-solving skills training is effective in mitigating people's positive attitudes towards drugs. Based on the experimental foundations, this part of the research findings is in the same line with the research findings reported by Turner (2008), Watson et al. (2006), Botvin (2005), Marilyn (2005), Zollinger (2003), Botvin (2002), Conner, & Abraham (2001), Astroth (1996), Elias, & Kress (1994), Boyd (1991), and Bahrami et al. (2012). Prior research has shown that the component of decision-making and problem-solving skills is one of the most effective factors in addiction prevention, and that learning and teaching help people make the best decision and select the possible solution in the face of issues and problems.

Although the component of drugs training is an important factor in the prevention of addiction, the Thought and Lifestyle book of the seventh grade has paid little attention to this component compared to other components. However, if people are well aware of the risks of substance abuse, they will change their attitudes towards it, alter their behavior, and avoid substance abuse. Providing information on substance abuse is some part of the life skills program, and this training can lead to approximately a 56%-to-67%-reduction in the proportion of smokers (Sohrabi et al., 2008). This is a program that began in the late 1980's and has survived to date. The pioneers of addiction prevention believed that arousal of extreme fears was a fundamental and useful way of preventing children and adolescents from conducting self-destructive behaviors. This model emphasized the negative consequences of behaviors and was based on the

assumption that drug use was the result of a decision-making process. If adolescents become aware of the dangers of substance abuse, they will make a rational and informed decision and will not turn to drug use (Bakhshani, & Bakhshani, 2011). This finding is consistent with the findings reported by Draucker, & Mazurczyk (2013), Tahiri et al. (2012), Matsumoto et al. (2011), Cuijpers (2002), Farmani et al. (2011), and Younesi, & Mohammadi (2006). They pointed out in their findings that school-based preventive programs, especially at high school, are based on the provision of information on the biological and behavioral consequences of narcotics. Thus, the disregard of this component is tantamount to the faulty implementation of preventive programs. On the whole, it can be argued that addressing this component contributes to the better preparation of the content of Thought and Lifestyle book, leads to more optimal outcomes in terms of prevention. In addition, the detriments of drug use, cigarette smoking, and alcohol drinking should be included at all education levels in line with content of the other books.

In addition, when it comes to prevention, assertiveness skills makes it possible for individuals to solve their conflicts with peers in a constructive and useful way. With the increase in cognitive coping skills, the tendency to drug use is reduced and drug prevention increases. If individuals are empowered, their capacity to respond decisively to social bullies and powers, e.g. offer of cigarette smoking and drug use, increases and their susceptibility to be negatively affected in these settings will be reduced. Based on Carole's teaching method, the employment of different methods, such as self-assertion, can increase individuals' resistance to addiction and protect them against it (Bahrami et al., 2012). However, the least attention has been paid to self-assertion skills in the content of the Thought and Lifestyle book in the eighth grade. In the same way, the seventh grade book has paid scant attention to this issue. The results of this study are inconsistent with those of the studies conducted by Eisen et al. (2004) and Ghorbani, & Fatehizadeh (2004) in terms of the component of self-assertiveness. In their research, they pointed out that self-assertion and coping skills training are important factors in addiction prevention. Self-assertion training has a positive effect on drug use tendency in students.

It can be claimed that curriculum should prepare students to identify problems and solve problems and difficulties by providing them with appropriate educational opportunities. The inclusion of addiction prevention issues and life skills points, such as self-assertion and drug-based training in course books can be important in many ways since it reduces the power of bullying individuals and increases the students' resistance against addiction. In addition, the inclusion of these materials in course books leads students to learn about this social problem, teaches them life skills in changing their attitudes, and raises learners' awareness about the complications of substance abuse. Considering the research background and the findings of the present research, it is recommended that more attention be paid to the components of prevention of addiction, especially

assertiveness skills and training about drugs, the Thought and Life Style book of the seventh grade and similar books. It is also suggested that future studies on the prevention of addiction focus on similar training packages available in other organizations, such as the Welfare Organization and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education. In addition, researchers interested in this area are recommended to study the necessity of familiarizing and teaching students with the methods and foundations of drug addiction prevention education as well as the viewpoints of teachers, students, and their families in this regard. More research can be conducted on assessing the effectiveness of course books, in particular, the Life skills book, students' attitudes toward drugs and addiction.

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