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School Resistance to the Consume of Psycho-active Substances: Case Study Lithuania

Daiva Bubeliene , Gediminas Merkys

Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Abstract

The use of psychoactive substances is increasing in Lithuania. Challenge for schools: How can prevention work be made more effective? An attempt is made to apply the Icelandic experience. Methods. Anonymous survey of 14- to 19-year-old students, N=844, 17 schools. The dependent variable: The list of substances included 33 primary items. A 7-step response format was used, ranging from "every day or several times a day" to "never in my life". Factor validation made it possible to create five subscales and a total index for the use of psychoactive substances. The independent variable included 35 items and 3 scales: 1) students' attitudes towards drug addiction; 2) Effectiveness of prevention work; 3) School culture. Asymmetric distributions that record consumption necessitated the use of nonparametric methods: cross-tabs and Chi2 test; Kendal's Tau Coefficient. Results. Electronic cigarettes are smoked quite a lot. Alcohol is consumed in moderation, drugs are used extremely rarely. "Never in my life" – 96 %; 1,55 % use it systematically. Independent variables influence students' propensity to actually use substances. All findings are highly significant. Conclusions. Substance use decreases when schools: 1) implement science-based attitudes towards drug addiction; 2) the community is involved in prevention; 3) By caring for the well-being of the students, the institution develops into a "school of happiness". Consumption increases when: attitudes prevail among pupils that underestimate the dangers of drug addiction; 2) Prevention is imitated; 3) School stress and academic pressure are prevalent, the institution tends towards the anti-ideal of a "school prison".

Keywords: Adolescence; Health Education; Prevention; School Culture; Survey