HIGH EDUCATION STUDENTS' CONSUMPTION HABITS AND LIFESTYLES

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Abstract

Background:
Attending higher education institutions and being away from their family residence are factors that help promote consumption patterns that threaten young adult students' health.

Objective:
To profile higher education students' addictive behaviors and consumptions.

Methods: A descriptive and analytical cross-sectional study was carried out; a socio-demographic and academic background questionnaire directed to higher education students was used to collect data. The sample consisted of 1262 students. 75.3\% of the participants were female students and 82.1\% of the students are between 15 and 25 years old.

Findings:
83.4\% of the respondents consider that smoking cigarettes on a regular basis is very harmful to their health and 49.4\% of them believe that taking medicines without the right medical prescription can be quite harmful as well. 50.6\% of the students have never smoked a cigarette before and 13.8\% of them started smoking when they were between 15 and 25. 89.9\% of the students have already experienced alcohol and, according to their replies, 61.6\% of the respondents drink one or two alcoholic beverages on a normal day. 38.6\% of the students state that beer is their favorite drink. 52.9\% of the respondents admitted to driving after alcohol use or claimed they had already travelled in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking. However 68.9\% of the students stated they never drive after drinking. 26.8\% mentioned that they had already missed classes because they were not feeling well or because they were unable to drive or even walk to school/university after using alcoholic beverages. 79.9\% of the students declared that they have never taken illicit psychoactive substances (drugs).

Conclusion:
Data collected show the importance of the development of students' training programs based on a preventive intervention backed by these institutions' social support services. The Institution should cooperate to provide students with environments that will promote their health and welfare by promoting actions aiming at the improvement of students’ health and of the quality of their academic life.

Keywords: Higher Education, consumption habits.