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Unhealthy behavior of school youth from Goleniów administrative district

Zachowania antyzdrowotne młodzieży szkolnej powiatu goleniowskiego

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A – Study Design, B – Data Collection, C – Statistical Analysis, D – Data Interpretation, E – Manuscript Preparation, F – Literature Search, G – Funds Collection

Summary Objectives. The aim of the work was to evaluate unhealthy risk behavior (cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, drug use), with regard to incidence of side effects, in the youth of the Goleniów administrative district, in Poland, from two primary school and gymnasium senior classes.

Material and methods. Stimulant use was often a violation of social norms and was very often convergent with co-appearance, before becoming established as detrimental patterns in adult life. In this study, 349 girls and 345 boys, from the V and VI classes of primary school and the II and III classes of gymnasium, were examined by an anonymous questionnaire. In the calculations, a nonparametric Pearson's χ^2 test and correlation coefficient R of Spearman's rank were used.

Results. Results showed that, in the area of Goleniów administrative district, boys had more negative attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle than girls, and this differentiation was more distinct at the gymnasium, where among youth there was a conviction of a lack of harm from cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption increased, and easy access to drugs in the area of the school was common.

Conclusions. Knowledge of the issues mentioned above was dependent on whether parents played a role model for youth and was significantly higher in girls. Disconcerting phenomena were the substantial participation in unhealthy risk behavior and the relatively low level of youth's knowledge concerning their own health care as compared with other regions of Poland.

Key words: unhealthy behavior, school youth, gender.

Streszczenie Cel pracy. Celem pracy była ocena ryzyka zachowań antyzdrowotnych (palenia tytoniu, spożycia alkoholu i zażywania narkotyków), z uwzględnieniem wystąpienia skutków ubocznych u młodzieży z powiatu goleniowskiego w województwie zachodniopomorskim, w Polsce, z dwóch najstarszych klas szkoły podstawowej i gimnazjum.

Materiał i metody. W badaniu wzięło udział 349 dziewcząt i 345 chłopców z V i VI klasy szkoły podstawowej oraz II i III klasy gimnazjum. Wypełnili oni anonimowy kwestionariusz ankiety. Do obliczeń zastosowano nieparametryczny test χ^2 Pearsona oraz korelację rang R Spearmana.

Wyniki. W wynikach uwzględniono fakt, że w powiecie goleniowskim chłopcy przejawiają bardziej negatywne nastawienie do zdrowego stylu życia niż dziewczęta, a to zróżnicowanie jest wyraźniejsze w gimnazjum, gdzie wśród młodzieży przekonanie o braku szkodliwego wpływu palenia tytoniu i spożycia alkoholu wzrasta, natomiast łatwe pozyskanie narkotyków na terenie szkoły jest ogólnie dostępne.

Wnioski. Wiedza na temat powyższych zagadnień jest zależna od tego, czy rodzice są dla młodzieży wzorem do naśladowania i jest statystycznie istotnie wyższa u dziewcząt. Niepokojącym zjawiskiem jest stwierdzony duży udział zachowań antyzdrowotnych, ryzykownych i stosunkowo niski poziom wiedzy młodzieży w zakresie troski o własne zdrowie, w zestawieniu z innymi regionami Polski.

Słowa kluczowe: zachowania antyzdrowotne, młodzież szkolna, płeć.

Introduction

The Polish National Health Program for the years 2007–2015 postulated limits for cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption and the use of psychoactive substances – drugs. This activity was directed towards youth in school to prevent aggressive behavior and violence at school [1, 2]. According to Oblacińska and Woynarowska [3] undertaking risk behavior was a typical phenomenon for adolescents and was connected with self-identity and the search for autonomy, checking individual possibilities and coping with various problems. Therefore, all risk behavior and frequently also unsocial behavior commenced at that age. There were four determinants of human health status: biology (genetic features), environment, lifestyle and health care. The participation of lifestyle in the maintenance of health status was 60%. Health could be maintained and improved not only by application of advanced knowledge about health, but also by the choice of a proper lifestyle [4].

Objectives

The aim of work was to evaluate selected opinions about cigarette smoking and risk behavior involving drinking alcohol, in connection with being aware of their side effects, in the youth from the Goleniów district, in the West Pomeranian region, in Poland, from two senior classes in primary school and the gymnasium. The problem studied was dependent on age (the kind of school), gender (girls and boys), education in a complete or non-complete family, and happiness in life.

Material

In this study 694 students, aged 11–14 years participated: 349 girls and 345 boys from the V and VI classes of the primary school (11–12 years old) and the II and III classes of the gymnasium (13–14 years old) in the Goleniów administrative district, in West Pomeranian region, in Poland. They were examined by anonymous questionnaire. The results obtained were analyzed with regard to the kind of school, and in relation to chronological age, gender, education in a complete or non-complete family, and playing a role model by parents. The division of particular groups of students was 25% in relation to the entire number of respondents; at both primary school and gymnasium, the number of girls and boys was equal, and was close in each group of examined respondents.

Methods

The method used in this study was a diagnostic poll, and a tool – an anonymous questionnaire, with open and closed questions, constructed by the authors. Its reliability according to the Alfa-Cronbach coefficient was 0.89. The sampling of the groups studied had a purposeful character, because it was limited only to the oldest classes of primary school and gymnasium and was random, because it involved students of a given class, with an educational lesson on the day of study.

Statistical analysis

To evaluate the results obtained, the Statistica 7.1. program with calculations of the nonparametric Pearson's χ^2 test and a correlation coefficient R of Spearman's rank were used.

Results

All results obtained from the collected responses to particular questions were considered with regard to the determinant of the kind of school: primary or gymnasium. Except for one (q. 1, Tab. 1, girls), answers were dependent on the kind of school. Results were shown in Table 1: Pearson's χ^2 value coefficients and Spearman's rank – R -values in regard to gender, and the question was considered in connection with the additional determinant of school. The opinion about the harmfulness of cigarette smoking differed in girls and boys (q. 1, Tab. 1). Girls from primary school (92.8%) and the gymnasium (90.7%) knew that it was harmful to health. The boys response to this question showed a lower percentage: at primary school – 91.1%, and at gymnasium – 84.2%, and in their case there was a significant difference between the kinds of school. A conviction about the harmful influence of drinking alcohol on health was higher at primary school, in girls 88.0%, in boys – 82.2%, respectively. At gymnasium, in girls, persuasion about the harmfulness of drinking alcohol was at the level of 76.9%, and in boys – 59.4% (q. 2, Tab. 1). Juvenile people found it easy to obtain alcohol by buying it at a shop (q. 3, Tab. 1). This was emphasized by boys at gymnasium – 47.3%, and for boys at primary school it was 20.6%. In the case of girls the percentages were: 36.8% and 16.2%, respectively. The question about tasting alcohol (q. 4, Tab. 1) was dependent on age. At primary school 39.5% girls had tasted alcohol, and at gymnasium – 84.1%. In the case of boys these percentages were: 50.0% and 80.0%, respectively. The age of tasting alcohol was very important in recognizing its influence on youth (q. 5, Tab. 1). There were significant differences between primary and gym-

Table 1. Pearson's χ^2 value coefficients and Spearman's rank – *R*-values in regard to gender and question considered in connection with additional determinant as school (bold means statistical significance)

Question	Determinant	Gender	Pearson's χ^2 value	df	p	Spearman's rank – <i>R</i>	t	p
1. What is your opinion about smoking cigarettes (harmful, not harmful, neutral, difficult to say)?	school	girls	2.658	3	0.447	0.050	0.918	0.359
		boys	10.365	3	0.016	0.147	2.723	0.007
2. Is drinking alcohol harmful for your health?	school	girls	8.524	2	0.014	-0.006	-0.113	0.910
		boys	22.542	2	0.000	-0.144	-2.686	0.008
3. How non adult person can get alcohol?	school	girls	29.734	4	0.000	-0.048	-0.893	0.373
		boys	37.526	4	0.000	0.004	0.074	0.941
4. Have you ever taste alcohol?	school	girls	134.335	6	0.000	0.612	14.151	0.000
		boys	90.324	6	0.000	0.494	10.199	0.000
5. At what age have you tasted alcohol? Were you below 13 years of age?	school	girls	16.739	3	0.001	0.004	0.071	0.943
		boys	8.813	3	0.032	-0.043	-0.779	0.437
6. How alcohol find into your hands?	school	girls	18.713	3	0.000	-0.283	-4.312	0.000
		boys	23.832	3	0.000	-0.322	-4.985	0.000
7. Can you agree that a sporadic drinking of alcohol is harmful at your age?	school	girls	31.341	4	0.000	0.298	5.771	0.000
		boys	43.460	4	0.000	0.337	6.591	0.000

nasium in the tasting of alcohol before 13 years old (q. 5, Tab. 1). In boys it was at a younger age than in girls. At primary school, 55.7% of girls below 13 years old had tasted alcohol, and at gymnasium this figure was 63.2%; for boys the percentages were: 47.2% and 55.8%, respectively. There were also many possibilities to have the opportunity to drink alcohol. The responses on q. 6 (Tab. 1) show that in girls and in boys getting alcohol from a peer or an adult person was more possible at primary school (q. 6, Tab. 1). All the youth studied state that drinking alcohol was harmful at school age (q. 7, Tab. 1), and this conviction was higher at gymnasium, both for girls and boys.

The results obtained on risk behavior: cigarette smoking and drinking alcohol were convergent with the result of the international study HBSC 2001/2002 [5].

Discussion

It was commonly known that smoking cigarettes open the way to the consumption of alcohol and other psychoactive substances. These behaviors

had a tendency to coincide and were appropriate in the development period. This data was included in the HBSC 2001/2002 study of European youth [5]. On the basis of our own results, an increasing conviction was noticeable, especially among boys, that smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol was not harmful to health. This tendency, as compared to our results, increased in parallel with the increase in school level, and it was higher at gymnasium, and over time, which was also confirmed for the Goleniów administrative district [6].

Conclusions

1. Boys from Goleniów district manifested much more negative attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle as compared to girls, and this differentiation is more distinct at gymnasium, where the conviction increases in youth regarding the lack of harmfulness of smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol.
2. In relation to the data obtained from gymnasium youth about drinking alcohol during education at primary school, a tendency was

- observed of an increase in alcohol consumption among youth from primary school, particularly among boys.
3. Knowledge of these issues was dependent on a complete or non-complete family and whether parents played a role model for youth, and is significantly higher among girls.
4. A worrying phenomenon was a high level of participation of risky activities in comparison with other regions of Poland.

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