



THE 16<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION  
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

**New Trends in Psychology**

**Addictive behaviours among Adolescences and Emergent Adults**

**Lacramioara Mocanu<sup>1</sup>, Elena-Lidia Nita<sup>2</sup>**

**Abstract:** The psychological wellbeing and general health of adolescences and emergent adults are a continuous concern at this level. Research has constantly shown that adolescents and emergent adults emerge themselves in harmful behaviours that endanger their health, which inevitably influence their psychological wellbeing. These behaviours include alcohol and drugs consumption, unprotected sex, poor diet choices and even delinquent acts characterized by a negative influence upon colleagues and growth in risks. The addictive behaviours of young people are a special cause for significant negative results, because they can transform into long term habits and can have negative effects upon the physical health of individuals and upon their financial status.

**Keywords:** internet; society; drugs, alcohol

**Introduction**

The psychological wellbeing and general health of adolescences and emergent adults are a continuous concern at this level. These are critical periods in time in human development, because a lot of the patterns of these harmful behaviours appear in a lifetime during these periods of time. Research has constantly shown that adolescents and emergent adults emerge themselves in harmful behaviours that endanger their health, which inevitably influence their psychological wellbeing. These behaviours include alcohol and drugsconsumption, unprotected sex, poor diet choices and even delinquent acts characterized by a negative influence upon colleagues and growth in risks.

The addictive behaviours of young people are a special cause for significant negative results, because they can transform into long term habits and can have negative effects upon the physical health of individuals and upon their financial status. The state of wellbeing, characterized by a set of psychological features, including personal relationships and lack of suffering, is vital for a positive functioning of a human being, but very easily susceptible to addictive behaviours. An extra challenge in the support of young wellbeing appears because addictions and addictive behaviours can appear under many forms. Although addiction is usually associated with an abusive overuse of substances, there is a large range of objects and activities to which you can become addictive to.

Excessive use of alcohol, especially among young people, is a global problem for a long time. In the Unite States, for example, alcohol is the most frequently used substance and wrongly used among young people, has a rate of prevalence of 18% in the monthly alcohol consumption. For men, this means a

---

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, PhD, Danubius University of Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., Galati 800654, Romania, Tel.: +40372361102, Romania, E-mail: lacramioaramocanu@univ-danubius.ro.

<sup>2</sup> Psychologist in supervision.

behaviour equal with five or more alcoholic beverages and for women, for or more alcoholic beverages in approximate two hours. Furthermore, the greatest episodic alcohol consumption takes place among young people with the ages between 15 and 19 years old. In a similar way, in Finland, 37% of the adolescences said that they have drunk alcohol, that means being drunk, at least one time in their lifetime, and 7% said that they have drunk alcohol every week with the intention of getting drunk.

Excessive use of alcohol at any age is a serious public health problem, especially among youngsters during the important fazes of development. As further research has shown, it can have an impact in brain development can lead to intoxications, accidents, infectious diseases and even death.

Drugs characterize another group of substances that has a huge potential serious impact on health and the individual and society wellness. Previous research has constantly shown that the consumption and abusive use of drugs is at its maximum peak in the emergent period, which can lead to a higher risk of consumption disorders of substances later in life. In Finland, to illustrate, the supplying and general consumption of drugs has risen in the last two centuries and statistics show that drugs are often offered to young people between 15 and 24 years old: 13% have said that they have been offered drugs in the last year. In the same time, collective attitudes of people towards drugs have become more lenient and are very liberal when it comes to experimenting cannabis. A partial reason for this shift in attitude it is believed that it can be attributed to a number of social relationships that people have with individuals that sell or consume regularly drugs. It is suggested that the personal affiliation with drug consumers can minimize the fear and the concern associated typically with the consumption of drugs.

The repeated use of unlawful drugs- or even of some drugs that are legal- can become harmful for their consumers and can have negative consequences: apart from the fact that they are destructive for our health, they increase the probability of accidents and the involvement in criminal activities and can affect social relationships and the financial status of people. The excessive consumption of drugs can lead to further problems, such as taking bad decisions and supplementary addictions, because of the possible modifications of the function of the motivational circuits of the brain. Furthermore, the problems created by drug consumption that begin in adolescence are more likely to persist to maturity.

Like other addictive behaviours, excessive gambling can have extensive harmful effects at an individual level as well as at a social level. Even though some many gambling activities are illegal for young people under 18 years old in many countries, gambling is a popular activity among teenagers and emergent adults from the whole world. As a consequence, gambling among teenagers is a growing international problem. Excessive gambling is a problem in evolution because of the technological development; because many new forms of gaming activities take place online now, this making them easier and more accessible to youngsters.

According to the National Finnish Health and Wellbeing Institute, gambling starts usually at the age of 16. The risky behavior of gambling has risen in the past few years and it is the most frequent among people between 18 and 24 years old. With it is excessive gambling can induce emotional suffering, can lead to severe financial problems, can facilitate other risky behaviors, such as the illicit use of substances and can create tensions in social relationships.

In a relatively short period of time, the Internet has become an inseparable part of humans' life. It is estimated that approximately 60% of the world population has internet connection. However, because of modern portable devices (for example: smart phones, laptops, tabs) have Internet the percent can be even higher. It is estimated that an average user of the internet spends online as much time or even more time than offline. The Internet has for sure many benefits, its use have brought in time new types of problems and challenges, especially when it comes to the social development of teenagers. As the use

of drugs and gambling, the use of the internet can become excessive and can begin to interfere with the normal function of humans.

Previous research have investigated the excessive use of the internet in various terms, including internet addiction, compulsory, excessive and pathological use of the internet, though, no matter the term used, excessive use of the internet and its addictive features were kind of difficult to measure. Multiple studies have tried to identify how common is the pathological use of the internet or internet addiction (IA) and what category of people are more inclined to use the internet in an excessive way. The studies have constantly shown that teenagers have more chances to engage themselves in a compulsory use of the internet and even to become addictive to it – they were more vulnerable to the negative effects of the internet. It is estimated that the global rate of the pathological use of the internet it is approximately 6 %. A study of young people in Finland has shown that 22% from the teens that participated at the study have used excessively the internet and 1.3 % were identified with UIP. The internet addiction, as it was discussed in previous researches, is extremely problematic and can lead to bad habits when it comes to eating and sleeping, poor academic performances and decrease in traditional interactions face to face with friends and family.

## References

- Best, P.; Manktelow, R. & Taylor, B. (2014). *Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review*.
- Blinn-Pike, L.; Worthy, S. L. & Jonkman, J. N. (2010). Adolescent gambling: A review of an emerging field of research. *Journal of Adolescent Health*.
- Boman, J. H. IV; Stogner, J. & Lee Miller B. (2013). Binge drinking, marijuana use, and friendships: The relationship between similar and dissimilar usage and friendship quality. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*.
- Brechwald, W. A. & Prinstein, M.J. (2011). Beyond homophily: A decade of advances in understanding peer influence processes. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*.
- Buckingham, S. A.; Frings, D. & Albery, I. P. (2013). Group membership and social identity in addiction recovery. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*.