

MEETING ABSTRACT

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Gender specific analysis of alcohol use

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Background

Several studies all round the world have noted specific differences in the pattern of alcohol use among male and female genders [1-3].

Aim

To examine specific gender differences in alcohol use among university students in Minsk, Belarus.

Materials and methods

Over 2000 students at random in four major universities in Minsk, Belarus were explained the study objectives. Approximately 75% of students in these universities are females. Only those who agreed to participate were considered for the study. A total of 465 males (mean age - 21 yrs) and 1030 females (mean age - 20.5 yrs) were administered anonymous AUDIT questionnaire and other alcohol related questions. Data analysis: statistical calculations were performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 16.0 version for Windows; the criteria of Pearson (χ^2) and Student's t-test. The value for significance was as $p < 0.05$.

Results

Alcohol users were 85.7% males and 88.5% females. Problem drinkers were 33.7% males and 10.1% females. Approximately the same percentages of both males and females use only beer as alcoholic drinks. Significant percentage of males (16.8%) use spirits, wine and beer in their combination, compared to only 5.1% females. Bad mood as a deciding factor for alcohol use was reported by a higher percentage of males (8.1%), compared to the females - 1.9%. Alcohol use for celebrations was higher among the females than in the male population: a female to male ratio of 1.4.

Conclusions

This study reveals that the prevalence of alcohol problems is significantly higher among the males, compared to the females in the general Belarusian students' population, although no significant differences in the percentages of alcohol users among both genders exist. Differences in the preference for different alcoholic drinks and the causes for alcohol use were noted among the males and females.

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