

WIOLETTA ŁAWSKA¹, RYSZARD BRACZKOWSKI²

Postawa młodzieży gimnazjalnej pochodzącej z rodzin z problemem alkoholowym wobec dalszego kształcenia

The attitude of junior secondary school students coming from families with alcohol problems to further education

Streszczenie

Wprowadzenie. Problem uzależnienia od środków psychoaktywnych, w tym od alkoholu, nabiera coraz większego znaczenia społecznego. Aby skutecznie przeciwdziałać tej chorobie współczesnego świata, która pochłania liczne ofiary, wytrąca młodych ludzi z życia szkolnego, zawodowego i rodzinnego, należy wpływać na ogólną wiedzę i kulturę społeczeństwa w taki sposób, żeby zrozumienie wysokiej szkodliwości nałogu w sensie indywidualnym i zbiorowym stało się powszechne.

Cel. Celem pracy była próba uzyskania odpowiedzi na pytania: czy młodzież z rodzin alkoholowych ma trudności w nauce?, czy młodzież z rodzin alkoholowych jest ambitna i chce się kształcić?, czy młodzież z rodzin alkoholowych ma świadomość problemu choroby alkoholowej w swojej rodzinie?, w jaki sposób choroba alkoholowa wpływa na wizerunek rodziców w oczach dziecka?

Materiał i metody. Badaniami objęto młodzież gimnazjalną z miasta Nowy Targ i jego okolic. Przeprowadzono badania w grupie 45 dzieci pochodzących z rodzin obarczonych alkoholizmem i w grupie kontrolnej 46-osobowej. Metodą badania był sondaż diagnostyczny, do którego zastosowano autorski kwestionariusz ankiety adresowany do młodzieży gimnazjalnej pochodzącej z rodzin obarczonych chorobą alkoholową.

Wyniki. Podobne wyniki w nauce osiągają zarówno dzieci z rodzin obarczonych chorobą alkoholową, jak i dzieci z grupy kontrolnej. Dzieci z rodzin alkoholowych osiągają dobre wyniki w nauce i są ambitne, jednak w porównaniu z dziećmi z rodzin wolnych od alkoholizmu nie mają wiedzy na temat swojego dalszego kształcenia po ukończeniu gimnazjum. Dzieci z rodzin obarczonych chorobą alkoholową mają świadomość nadużywania alkoholu w swoich rodzinach. Mimo wcześniej podawanych problemów, dzieci rodziców z chorobą alkoholową twierdzą, że czują się w swojej rodzinie szczęśliwe. Problem choroby alkoholowej nie przeszkadza respondentom uznawać autorytet swoich rodziców.

Summary

Introduction. The problem of addictions to various substances including alcohol is becoming more and more serious and widespread. To prevent this phenomenon, which has many victims and negatively influences young people's lives, our society should be introduced with common knowledge on this type of addiction and its consequences.

Aim. The aim of the thesis was to answer the following questions: Do teenagers from alcohol addicted families have problems at school? Are they ambitious enough to continue education? Are they aware of the problem of alcohol addiction existing in their families? How does drinking problem influence the way children perceive their addicted parents?

Material and methods. The research was done among junior secondary school students from Nowy Targ and the local area. Forty five (45) students were from alcohol addicted families and other 46 students were the part of the control group. The method used in the research consisted of an author's questionnaire addressed to lower secondary school teenagers living in alcohol addicted families.

Results. Children from alcohol addicted families have similar results at school to the children from the control group. The children from families with alcohol problems have good results at school and they are ambitious, however, as compared to their peers from the control group, they do not know whether they want to continue their education after leaving junior secondary school. Children from families with alcohol problems are aware of their parents' addiction. Despite the problems mentioned previously the children from addicted families claim they feel happy. Alcohol addiction does not prevent the children from perceiving their parents as authority figures.

Słowa kluczowe: alkoholizm, dzieci, rodzina, edukacja.

Key words: alcoholism, children, family, education.

¹ Podhale State College – Nursing Institute

² Chair of Public Health, Medical University of Silesia in Katowice

INTRODUCTION

The school age is the period of dynamic development of a child. At this age many disorders appear, they become more serious and the future behaviors connected with health are formed. Health potential acquired in childhood and adolescence determines considerably health and the quality of further life as well as proper social roles. That is why, according to many international organizations, like WHO or UNICEF, children and teenager's health should be considered the important part of all countries' health policy. One of the components of this policy is preventive treatment of children and teenagers at schools [1].

Since the ability of controlling behaviour in adolescence is low, young people are especially subject to identity and affiliation problems. This state might result in, so called, risky behaviour, like smoking, drinking alcohol, drug taking, premature sexual intercourse, playing truants, violence (fights), driving after alcohol consumption, juvenile delinquency, etc. Risky behaviors often appear together. Taking psychoactive substances may lead to aggression, problems at school, uncontrolled sexual contacts, breaking the law [2].

Although alcoholism has been present in our civilization for a long time, the problems of children coming from alcohol addicted families were treated seriously in 1980s. Alcohol addiction is especially dangerous because it remains valid over the years and decades [3].

There are about four million people living in alcohol addicted families in Poland, among them there are two million children. They grow up in conditions that are disadvantageous to their psychosomatic development. The lack of harmony and appropriate atmosphere in an alcohol addicted family is caused by the fact that an addicted person is over-controlled by his/her partner. This situation may lead to neglect of the children as well as emotional disorders of all the family members [4].

It is worth mentioning that living in an alcohol addicted family bears long lasting effects. One of them is the negative influence of such a family on, so called, life chances of a child. The choice of profession, partner or a lifestyle is often tightly connected with previous family role. If often happens that a person has small chances to have a happy family or refuses to live. The second, and the worst, effect is alcohol addiction of the family is the recurrence of the alcohol disease. The drinking problem recurs among 60% of the children of the alcohol-addicted parents [1].

In my research I deal with the problem of the children coming from families where one or both parents are addicted to alcohol. The research describes the influence of parents' alcohol addiction on future plans of junior secondary school teenagers.

AIMS

In my thesis I focused on answering the following questions:

1. Do teenagers from families with alcohol problems have difficulties in studying?
2. Are the teenagers ambitious and do they want to educate themselves?
3. Are they aware of alcohol problem in their families?

4. How does alcohol addiction influence the way the children look at their parents?

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research was conducted among junior secondary school students from Nowy Targ and the neighbouring area. The surveys were distributed among 45 students coming from alcohol addicted families, found on the basis of previous inquiry, and 46 students from a control group. The research lasted eight months: from September 2007 to April 2008. As the number of the children is small, the results are only introductory. The tool used for the research was an author's questionnaire addressed to junior secondary school students. The questionnaire has been validated by α Cronbach method. All the respondents were informed about: the aim of the research, its confidentiality and the way the results would be used. A filled in form meant that the respondents agreed to participate in the research.

MATERIAL ELABORATION

Statistic analysis of the material was based on the methods mentioned below. I used the software package Statistica v. 5.1 by StatSoft and Mirosoft Excel 2000 by Microsoft. Independence test χ^2 was used to verify the hypothesis concerning the existence of relationship between nominal variables. The stochastic independence of the variables hypothesis was verified at relevance level $p = 0.05$.

In case of the existing relationship between the analyzed features V Cramer convergence coefficient has been calculated. It defines steady measure of feature dependence strength. The coefficient measures partition (0.1). $V=0$ when the features are independent, $V=1$ when the features are functionally dependent. It follows that the closer the coefficient to unity, the relationship is stronger.

The population studied in terms of gender consisted of 23 girls (51%) and 22 boys (49%), while the control group consisted of 26 girls (57%) and 20 boys (43%) as Table 1 shows.

TABLE 1. Sex of the respondents.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 45	%	n = 46	%	n = 91	%
Girls	23	51.1	26	56.5	49	53.8
Boys	22	48.9	20	43.5	42	46.2
Total	45	100.0	45	100.0	89	100.0

The respondents lived mainly in the country – 55 people (62%). The rest live in cities (34 people – 38%). It is worth mentioning that there are no people living in cities among the control group. The people living in the country should be the part of the control group. The main research group should be extended to more people living in the country (Table 2).

TABLE 2. The place of living.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 44	%	n = 45	%	n = 89	%
Village	10	22.7	45	100.0	55	61.8
City up to 10 thousand inhabitants	10	22.7	0	-	10	11.2
City up to 20 thousand inhabitants	2	4.5	0	-	2	2.2
City over 20 thousand inhabitants	22	50.0	0	-	22	24.7
Total answers	44	100.0	45	100.0	89	100.0
No answers	1	2.2	1	2.2	2	2.2
Total number of people	45	49.4	46	50.6	91	100.0

THE RESULTS

Problem 1. Do teenagers from families with alcohol problems have learning difficulties?

Over a half of the respondents (51 people – 57%) have good results at school, every fifth person (22%) has no opinion, every fifth person (21%) does not have satisfactory results at school. The variables – alcohol addiction in a family and good results at school are independent.

It may be said that both the children from alcohol addicted families and the children from the control group have similar results at school.

The majority of the respondents (50 people – 56%) consider themselves to be good students, every fourth person (26%) has no opinion, the rest of the respondents (17 people – 19%) do not consider themselves to be good students. In the control group as well as in the research group there are children having good school results.

Great majority of the respondents (69 people – 78%) think they do not have any problems in learning, only 11 people (12%) have no opinion, the rest, 9 people (10%) think they have problems in learning. The variables – alcohol addiction in a family and problems with studying at school are independent. In both groups the children have the same problems in learning.

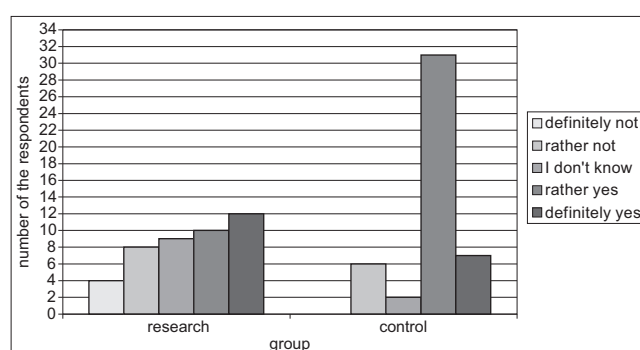
The majority of the respondents like learning (47 people – 52%), only 9 people (10%) have no opinion; the rest – 35 people (38%) state they do not like learning. The variables – alcohol addiction in a family and satisfaction in learning are independent. In both groups there are children who like learning and the children who do not like learning.

Table 3 and Figure 1 present the answers to the following question: Do you broaden your knowledge yourself? The majority of the respondents (60 people – 67%) broaden their knowledge on their own, some people (11-12%) have no opinion, the rest (15 people – 20%) do not increase knowledge on their own.

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c = 0.48$ (medium dependence). There are more children who deepen their knowledge on their own in the control group (rather yes – answer).

TABLE 3. Individual knowledge broadening by the respondents.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 43	%	n = 46	%	n = 89	%
Definitely not	4	9.3	0	-	4	4.5
Rather not	8	18.6	6	13.0	14	15.7
I don't know	9	20.9	2	4.4	11	12.4
Rather yes	10	23.3	31	67.4	41	46.1
Definitely yes	12	27.9	7	15.2	19	21.3
Total answers	43	100.0	46	100.0	89	100.0
No answers	2	-	-	-	2	2.2
Total number of people	45	49.4	46	50.6	91	100

**FIGURE 1. Individual knowledge broadening by the research group.**

Problem 2. Are the teenagers ambitious and do they want to educate themselves?

Table 4 and Figure 2 show the teenagers' answers to the question concerning opportunities of further education. The majority of the respondents (77 people – 86%) stated that they have the opportunity to study after leaving junior secondary school, some people (11-12%) have no opinion, only 2 people (2%) think they will not have such an opportunity.

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the

TABLE 4. The possibility of further education after leaving secondary school according to the respondents.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 44	%	n = 46	%	n = 90	%
Definitely not	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rather not	2	4.6	0	-	2	2.2
I don't know	9	20.4	2	4.4	11	12.2
Rather yes	9	20.4	16	34.8	25	27.8
Definitely yes	24	54.6	28	60.9	52	57.8
Total answers	44	100.0	46	100.0	90	100.0
No answers	1	-	-	-	1	1.1
Total number of people	45	49.4	46	50.6	91	100.0

children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c = 0.31$ (medium dependence). There are more children from addicted families who do not know whether they have opportunity to study after leaving lower secondary school.

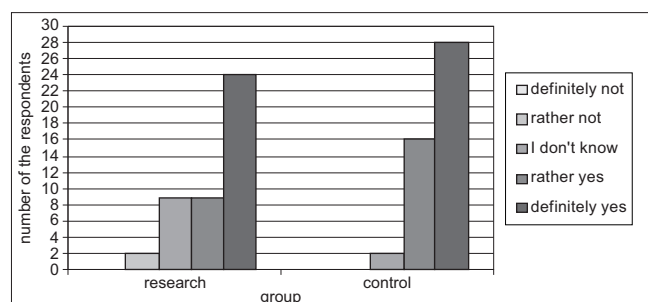


FIGURE 2. The possibility of further education after leaving junior secondary school according to the teenagers.

Table 5 and Figure 3 present the answers concerning planning further education. Most of the respondents (77 people – 86%) are going to continue education, some people (8-9%) have no opinion, only 4 people (4%) are not going to continue their education.

TABLE 5. Planning further education after junior secondary school.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 45	%	n = 44	%	n = 89	%
Definitely not	2	4.4	0	-	2	2.2
Rather not	2	4.4	0	-	2	2.2
I don't know	8	17.8	0	-	8	9.0
Rather yes	6	13.3	10	22.7	16	18.0
Definitely yes	27	60.0	34	77.3	61	68.5
Total answers	45	100.0	44	100.0	89	100.0
No answers	-	-	2	-	2	2.2
Total number of people	45	49.4	46	50.6	91	100.0

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c = 0.39$ (medium dependency). There are more children from drinking families that do not know whether they want to continue their education.

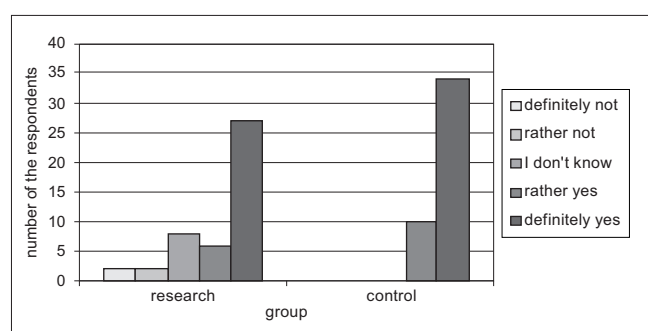


FIGURE 3. Planning education after leaving junior secondary school.

Table 6 and Figure 4 show students' responses concerning the question about the students' ambitions. The majority of the respondents (45 people – 52%) think that alcohol addicted parents weaken their children's ambitions, every fifth person (17 people – 19%) have no opinion, however 25 people (29%) have different opinion.

TABLE 6. Weakening children's ambitions by their parents' alcohol addition – according to the respondents.

Answers	Respondents					
	Research group		Control group		Total	
	n = 42	%	n = 45	%	n = 87	%
Definitely not	13	31.0	4	8.9	17	19.5
Rather not	5	11.9	3	6.7	8	9.2
I don't know	10	23.8	7	15.6	17	19.5
Rather yes	6	14.3	13	28.9	19	21.8
Definitely yes	8	19.0	18	40.0	26	29.9
Total answers	42	100.0	45	100	87	100.0
No answers	3	-	1	-	4	4.4
Total number of people	45	49.4	46	50.6	91	100.0

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c = 0.37$ (medium dependency). There are more children from drinking families that think that their parents' alcohol problems do not weaken their ambitions.

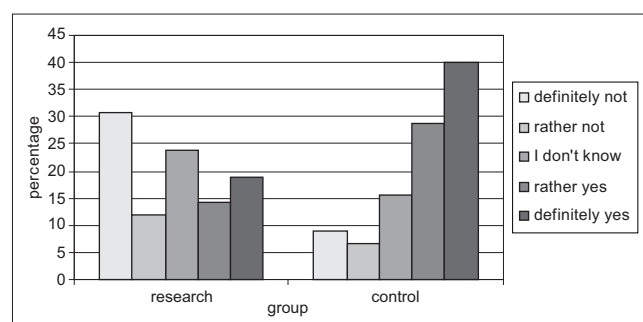


FIGURE 4. Weakening the children's ambitions by their parents' alcohol problems.

Nearly all of the students who took part in the research (86 people – 94%) think their parents want them to continue their education, only 3 people (3%) have no opinion,

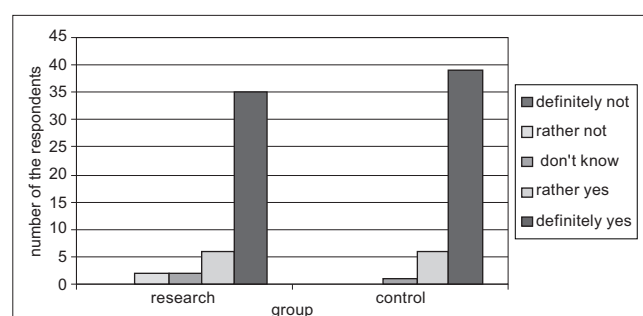


FIGURE 5. Parents' attitude to future education of their children.

2 people (2%) have the opinion that their parents do not want them to continue education. The variables – alcohol problems in a family and the parents' aspirations concerning their children's education are independent. In both groups the parents want their children to continue their education (Figure 5).

Problem 3. Are the children aware of alcohol problem in their families?

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c=0.36$ (medium dependency). There are more children from drinking families who think that there is higher alcohol consumption among their relatives than in the control group (Figure 6).

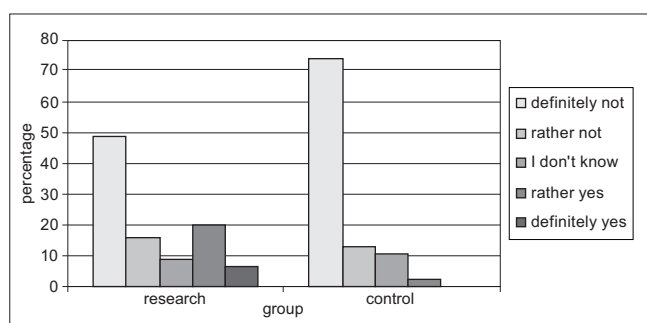


FIGURE 6. The comparison of alcohol consumption in families.

There is a crucial difference in statistics between the children from families with drinking problems and the children from the control group. V Cramer convergence coefficient is $V_c=0.51$ (medium dependency). There are more children from drinking families who think that their parents should limit alcohol consumption than in the control group (Figure 7).

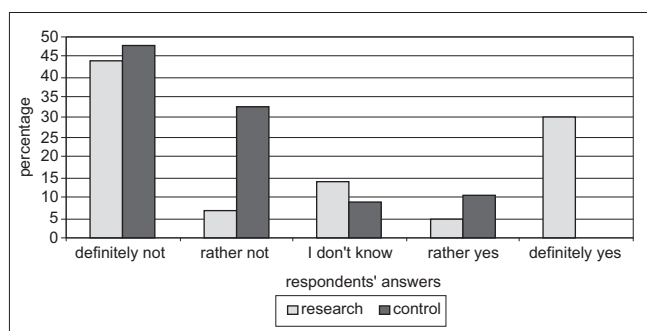


FIGURE 7. The obligation of limiting alcohol consumption by the parents according to the students.

Problem 4. How does alcohol addiction influence the way the children perceive their parents.

Nearly all of the students (83 people – 91%) answered “yes” when asked if they feel happy in their families, some of the students (7 people – 8%) have no opinion, only one person (1%) stated that he or she does not feel happy.

The majority of the respondents (77 people – 86%) think their parents are their role models, some students (8 people

– 9%) have no opinion, only 5 students (6%) think their parents are not good role models for them. The majority of the respondents (74 students – 81%) think their parents are authority for them, some people (13 students – 14%) have no opinion, 4 students (4%) do not see their parents as authority (Figure 8).

The variables – alcohol addiction in a family and the parents seen as authority are independent.

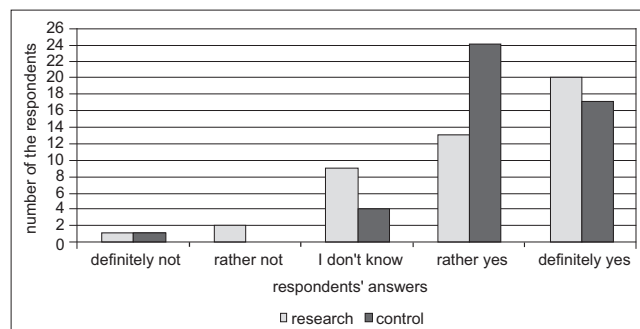


FIGURE 8. My parents are authority for me – according to the students.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Children from alcohol addicted families have similar results at school to the children from the control group.
2. The children from families with drinking problems have good results at school and they are ambitious, however, as compared to their peers from the control group, they do not know whether they want to continue their education after leaving lower secondary school.
3. Children from families with alcohol problems are aware of their parents' addiction.
4. Despite the problems mentioned previously the children from addicted families claim they feel happy.
5. Alcohol addiction does not prevent the children from perceiving their parents as authority figures.

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Informacje o Autorach

Mgr piel. WIOLETTA ŁAWSKA – Instytut Pielęgniarstwa, Podhalańska Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa w Nowym Targu; dr hab. n. med. RYSZARD BRACZKOWSKI – kierownik, Katedra Zdrowia Publicznego, Wydział Zdrowia Publicznego, Śląski Uniwersytet Medyczny w Katowicach.

Adres do korespondencji

Mgr Wioletta Ławska
Instytut Pielęgniarstwa, Podhalańska Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa w Nowym Targu
ul. Kokoszków 71, 34-400 Nowy Targ