



Association of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs use by early adolescents in Argentina with home-level and school-level socio-economic status

Raúl Mejía

Hospital de Clínicas José de San Martín, Universidad de Buenos Aires y CEDES, Buenos Aires, Argentina - raulmejia57@gmail.com

Adriana Pérez *

Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad de Buenos Aires y Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES), Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina - aaperez@ege.fcen.uba.ar

Lorena Peña

CEDES, Buenos Aires, Argentina - lo@ipaddress.com.ar

Paola Morello

Ministerio de Salud de la Nación y CEDES, Buenos Aires, Argentina - paolamorello@hotmail.com

Sandra Braun

Hospital de Clínicas José de San Martín y CEDES, Buenos Aires, Argentina - sandrabraun@fibertel.com.ar

James Sargent

Dartmouth Medical School, New Hampshire, USA - James.D.Sargent@dartmouth.edu

Abstract

In Argentina, tobacco, alcohol and drugs consumption among adolescents is a serious public health problem. Research focused in factors associated with students' substance use is needed to develop comprehensive preventive programs. The aim of this study was to determine if early adolescents attending to schools with lower parent educational level – and therefore schools with a lower expected socioeconomic status (SES) - are associated to tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs use even after controlling for the effects of home SES. Data came from a cross-sectional survey of 3172 students from 1st year of 33 secondary schools in three Argentinean provinces (Buenos Aires, Córdoba y Tucumán). Multilevel logistic regression was applied to model the role of parental education (at individual and at school level) in predicting student substance use. Schools with lower parental education had a higher prevalence of smoking, susceptibility to smoke, drinking and drugs use ($p < 0.02$), after adjustment for sex, age and parent education of the respondent. Parent education at individual level showed no association with these outcomes. Susceptibility to drink was not significantly associated to parental education at any level. These findings suggest a higher risk of addictions in early students from schools with disadvantaged SES measured by the average educational attainment of parents.

Keywords: tobacco, alcohol, drugs, adolescents, multilevel model.