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Poziom agresji i złości u młodzieży nadużywającej substancji psychoaktywnych

Aggression and anger levels in young psychoactive substances abusers

Streszczenie

Cel. Celem badań była ocena poziomu agresji i złości u młodzieży nadużywającej substancji psychoaktywnych.

Materiał i metody. Przebadano 100 osób nadużywających środków psychoaktywnych. W skład grupy kontrolnej wchodziło 301 osób, nieleczonych do tej pory z powodu zachowań ryzykownych. W niniejszej pracy wykorzystano Skalę Wyrażania Złości (SEG) autorstwa N. Ogińskiej-Bulik i Z. Jurczyńskiego oraz Inwentarz psychologicznego syndromu agresji (IPSA) Z. Gasia.

Wyniki. Przy ocenie agresji przy zastosowaniu skali IPSA stwierdzono, że w porównaniu do grupy kontrolnej młodzież nadużywająca środków psychoaktywnych osiągała niższe rezultaty w takich kategoriach zespołu agresji, jak: samoagresja emocjonalna (SE) i fizyczna (SF), tendencje niezamierzonej agresji (NSE), agresja przenoszona (APR) oraz agresja pośrednia (APO), agresja fizyczna przeciwko środowisku (AF), kontrola agresywnego zachowania (K), tendencja do działań odwetowych (O). Grupa badana także osiągała niższe wyniki w skali kontroli zachowań agresywnych, co oznacza, że potrafiła mniej skutecznie kontrolować objawy agresji. Przy zastosowaniu skali SEG w celu badania intensywności i typu złości, potwierdzono różnice pomiędzy grupą badaną i kontrolną w zakresie natężenia zarówno złości zewnętrznej jak i wewnętrznej. Młodzież w grupie NU osiągnęła wyższe wyniki w skali mierzącej złość skierowaną do środka.

Omówienie. Jest wiele badań na temat roli agresji jako zależnej osobowości jak również jej przedstawienie w związkach międzyludzkich. Agresja została potwierdzona również wśród młodych alkoholików. Braucht i Cekiera wymieniają porywczosć i wybuchowość wśród młodzieży nadużywającej substancji psychoaktywnych. Częste napady złości i wrogości, zarówno słownej i pozasłownej, skierowane przeciw rodzicom i nauczycielom, będące częścią profilu osobowości młodzieży uzależnionej od narkotyków, są wymieniane przez Maxwell'a. Cekiera i Dimoff oraz Carter potwierdzają wrogość i agresję wśród osób nadużywających substancji psychoaktywnych, a skierowaną przeciwko innym i im samym.

Wnioski. Nasza praca potwierdza występowanie agresji przeciwko innym i samym sobie oraz tendencje do współistnienia zachowań ryzykownych oraz społecznie szkodliwych form agresji u młodzieży nadużywającej substancji psychoaktywnych.

Słowa kluczowe: agresja, złość, środki psychoaktywne, młodzież.

Summary

Aim of the study. The study aimed to assess the level of aggression and anger in young people abusing psychoactive agents.

Material and methods. We examined 100 individuals abusing psychoactive agents. The control group consisted of 301 persons who were not treated because of risky behaviors so far. In this work The Anger Expression Scale (SEG) by N. Ogińska-Bulik and Z. Jurczyński and Psychological Inventory of Aggression Syndrome (IPSA) by Z. Gaś were used.

Results. When assessing the aggression by the use of IPSA, it was stated that comparing to the control group, youth abusing psychoactive agents reached lower results in such categories of aggression syndrome as: emotional (SE) and physical (SF) self aggression, unintended aggression tendencies (NSE), translocated (APR) and indirect aggression (APO), physical aggression against the surroundings (AF), aggressive behaviors control (K), tendency to the revenge activity (O). Examined group also reached lower results in the scale of aggressive behaviors control, which means that they are able to control the manifestations of their aggression less efficiently. Using the SEG scale to examine the intensity and type of anger the differences between the examined and control groups were stated on intensity of both external and internal anger. Youth in NU group reached higher results in the scale measuring the anger directed to inside.

Discussion. There are many studies showing the role of aggression as a correlate of the personality as well as its presenting in the interpersonal relations. Aggression and anger in young alcohol abusers was proved. Braucht and Cekiera inform about the irritability and explosiveness of young psychoactive substance abusers. Frequent bursts of anger and hostility, both verbal and non-verbal, against the parents and teachers being a part of the personality profile of the young drug addicts are mentioned by Maxwell. Cekiera and Dimoff and Carper confirm the hostility and aggression of the substance abusers that is directed to the others and themselves.

Conclusions. Our study confirms the occurrence of aggression against the others and themselves and the tendency to coexistence of the risky behaviors and socially unaccepted forms of aggression in youth being psychoactive abusers.

Key words: aggression, anger, psychoactive agents, youth.

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BACKGROUND

Many risk factors of the psychoactive substances using by the youth have been listed in the literature. Windle et al. [1] distinguished five fields to which they attribute risk factors of adolescents drinking alcohol, depending on their social location so: socio-environmental factors, school, family, peers and individual. Youth confessing to drinking of big amounts of alcohol is characterized by the combination of personality attributes indicating low self-control level and tolerance attitudes towards behaviors different from the norm, lower evaluation and expectation of successes in learning and higher level of seeking the sensations and impulsiveness [2, 3].

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to assess the level of aggression and anger in young people abusing psychoactive agents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research was conducted in the group of patients from the centres and wards where they were treated. The group consisted of 100 persons between the age of 14 and 19, who were psychoactive agents abusers (G-NU). In his group the following subgroups were separated: youth abusing alcohol (G-A1) – 46 (100%) persons and youth abusing drugs (G-Nar) – 54 (100%). Inclusion criteria applied were as follows: undertaken treatment of alcohol or drugs abuse (first month of stay), no symptoms of serious physical diseases and signs of organic injury of central nervous system, no mental handicap or mental disease, patients' and their parents consent for the examination. The control group consisted of 301 persons who were not treated because of risky behaviors and complied with the assigned criteria. The study was conducted between 2003 and 2006 in Poland.

In the subgroup of drug abusers 85.19% were between 16 and 17 years of age, 3.7% between 18 and 19, 11.11% between 14 and 15 years of age. In the subgroup of alcohol abusers – 84.78% of respondents were between 16 and 17, 2.7% between 14 and 15, 10.4% between 18 and 19 years of age.

In the group of psychoactive agents abusers majority of respondents attended to the grammar schools and had learning difficulties so that these centres provided educational duty. Most of respondents in the subgroup abusing drugs attended to a grammar school. In the subgroup drinking alcohol 26% of respondents attended a grammar school, 24% to the high school, 24% to the technical college and 20% to the vocational school.

The research utilized The Anger Expression Scale (SEG) by N. Ogińska-Bulik and Z. Juczyński. The scale consists of 20 statements being the parts of two subscales. The first of them concerns the anger directed to the outside (10 statements), the others – the anger directed to the inside (another 10 statements). This scale is used to measure the intensity of anger which is not connected with the particular situation, but refers to the general situations and reactions usually showed in this kind of situations. The anger is identified not only with the hostile and aggressive behaviors but also with the forms of behaviors that are socially accepted.

Psychological Inventory of Aggression Syndrome (IPSA) was elaborated by Z. Gaś in 1980. The aggression syndrome was defined as a complex of experiences, attitudes and behaviors, whose aim or result (intended or unintended) is to cause the direct or indirect harm to the aggressor or the others [4].

There were 83 questions chosen of a big pool consisting of different signs of aggression. Those questions formed ten scales.

Scale I – Emotional self-aggression – negative self-evaluation, self-demeaning and wish of death

Scale II – Physical self-aggression – directing the aggression towards oneself, suicidal attempts.

Scale III – Hostility against the surroundings – projecting one's hostility towards the surroundings, distrust and suspiciousness.

Scale IV – Unintended aggression tendencies – tendency to manifest apparently non aggressive activities and behaviors.

Scale V – Translocated aggression – direct attack against the other person is turned to attacking the objects.

Scale VI – Indirect aggression – attacking the individuals by ridiculing, criticizing and gossiping.

Scale VII – Verbal aggression – cursing, quarrels etc.

Scale VIII – Physical aggression – using the physical violence towards the others.

Scale K – Aggressive behaviors control – controlling of self aggression signs and aggressive impulses.

Scale O – Tendency to revenge activity – aggressive reactions to the real or imaginary harm, so revengefulness.

In the Inventory there are also four indicators of aggression: general indicator – WO, self-aggression indicator – S, aggression indicator – U and external aggression indicator – Z. The accuracy of this Inventory can be testified by high correlation with the Inventory of Buss-Durkee (0.83 – 0.87) [4].

RESULTS

Both groups, the studied one and controls differed by obtained results of IPSA.

Comparing with the control group, youth abusing psychoactive agents reached lower results in such categories of aggression syndrome as: emotional self aggression (SE), physical self aggression (SF), unintended aggression tendencies (NSE), translocated aggression (APR), indirect aggression (APO), physical aggression against the surroundings (AF), aggressive behaviors control (K) and tendency to the revenge activity (O). These data imply that young people abusing psychoactive agents show lower tendency to criticize themselves and directing physical aggression towards themselves, showing activities and behaviors apparently non-aggressive. They project the aggression towards the distinct persons on the objects and deride the others less often. To smaller extent they act using the physical violence as comparing to the control group. They are less revengeful and less often they justify their aggression with the behavior of the other people.

The examined group reached also lower results in the scale of aggressive behaviors, which means, that they control the signs of their aggression less operatively, they have difficulties in making choice, and because of that they show more destructive and less acceptable forms of aggression [Table 1].

TABLE 1. Differences between the youth abusing the psychoactive agents (NU) and young people of control group (GK) in terms of the aggression measured with the Psychological Inventory of Aggression Syndrome – IPSA.

Scales	NU		GK		Test t		
	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	p.i.
Emotional self-aggression	7.75	2.02	8.56	1.60	-2.60	77	*
Physical self-aggression	8.09	1.51	9.37	0.94	-5.75	67	***
Hostility against the surroundings	7.87	1.61	7.96	1.35	-0.40	195	n.i.
Unintended aggression tendencies	5.77	2.23	8.53	1.19	-8.54	63	***
Translocated aggression	6.75	1.85	8.16	1.32	-5.08	72	***
Indirect aggression	8.04	1.58	9.61	0.81	-6.92	62	***
Verbal aggression	6.51	2.13	5.78	1.12	2.38	63	*
Physical aggression	7.34	1.58	9.22	0.79	-8.26	62	***
Aggressive behaviors control	7.45	1.84	3.08	1.41	15.74	76	***
Tendency to revenge activity	6.30	2.04	7.04	1.25	-2.47	67	*

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$

Differences in direction of aggression were showed. Comparing to the control group young people of NU group more often showed the aggression directed to themselves (S) and less frequently showed the aggression to the outside (Z) as well as hidden aggression (U). It was noted that the youth of NU group more often showed aggression directed to themselves, and youth of control group – to the outside [Table 2].

TABLE 2. Differences between the youth abusing the psychoactive agents (NU) and young people of control group (GK) in terms of the direction of aggression measured with the Psychological Inventory of Aggression Syndrome – IPSA.

Indicators	NU		GK		Test t		
	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	p.i.
Self-aggression indicator	9.20	1.83	8.01	1.25	-4.44	71	***
Hidden aggression indicator	7.08	1.60	8.68	1.11	-6.72	71	***
External aggression indicator	7.19	2.31	9.12	1.10	-5.86	61	***

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$

Comparing the intensity and type of anger measured by the use of SEG scale to the control group, different results were obtained on examination of the intensity of internal and external anger. Young people in the NU group reached higher results in the scale of anger directed inwards. They were characterized by the well-defined inability to show the fury, anger and other negative emotions [Table 3].

TABLE 3. Differences between the youth abusing the psychoactive agents (NU) and young people of control group (GK) in terms of the anger measured with the Anger Expression Scale (SEG).

Scales	NU		GK		Test t		
	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	p.i.
External anger	5.82	1.88	5.28	1.45	2.39	176	*
Internal anger	6.24	1.52	5.96	1.40	1.49	242	n.i.

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$

Comparing the subgroups of youth abusing the drugs and alcohol in regard to the level of the anger and aggression, no significant differences were stated in the results obtained by the use of inventories IPSA and SEG. Both groups reached similar results on examination of risky behaviors and anger expression.

DISCUSSION

Individuals abusing the psychoactive agents in presented group approved the susceptibility to external stimuli that distract and stress them, causing their defensive attitude. It made them insecure as to the people intentions and the aversion to enter into closer contacts could be stated. As a result, the examined individuals were irritable, losing their temper easily, opposing others just on principle and achieving the benefits. They controlled the signs of their aggressiveness very poorly. The examined individuals confirmed that they were supposed to be too aggressive towards the family and peers.

It was found that the youth was characterized by aggression towards themselves. They were not able to naturally express the feelings. They also showed the distinct inability to show the fury, anger and other negative emotions. Cekiera [5] informs about the irritability and explosiveness of people being the psychoactive substances abusers.

There are many studies showing the role of aggression as a correlate of the personality as well as its presenting in the interpersonal relations. Aggression was proved in young alcohol abusers. [6]. Frequent bursts of anger and hostility, both verbal and non-verbal, against the parents and teachers being a part of the personality profile of the young drug addicts are mentioned by Maxwell [7].

Cekiera [5] and Dimoff and Carper [8] confirm the hostility and aggression of the substance abusers that is directed to the others and themselves, that consists of verbal affronting and fist fights, demolishing the objects in anger, inflicting the pain to themselves by the self-mutilation or suicidal attempts.

It is worth noting that studies on psychoactive agents abuse and the use of the violence by the adolescents show, that both these risk behaviors tend to coexist [9-13].

CONCLUSIONS

The examined young people of the psychoactive abusers group more often show the aggression towards themselves comparing to the control group, that is characterized by the aggression towards the outside. Less operationally they control the signs of their aggressiveness, they have difficulties in making choice, and because of that they show more destructive and less acceptable forms of aggression.

The examined individuals were more irritable, easily lost their temper, controlled the signs of their aggressiveness very poorly. Examination of the intensity and type of anger showed that young people abusing the psychoactive agents show distinct inability to show the anger, fury and other negative emotions. The research performed on the group of young people abusing the psychoactive agents showed the aggression towards the others and themselves and the tendency to coexistence of behaviors posing risk and forms of aggression that are not socially accepted.

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