

Monitoring of Factors and Changes in Addictive Behaviour – The Basement of Active Prevention Programmes

Dear readers,

in this issue, we bring the further interesting studies that have their common issue lying in identifying risk factors for addictions, investigating the addictions effects on the population health, and creating platforms for the construction of effective health policies that also include targeted prevention programmes. The 6 research studies and 1 protocol study are summarised in this issue too, which are the outcome of the systematic research work of national and international research teams. We believe that the readers will also be interested in the contents and their results will confirm a difficulty, as well as a necessity of a systematic solution to this issue, even within the multidisciplinary teams.

The gambling issue is currently being intensively researched with the goal of revealing new determinants of the development form of this addiction, as well as the construction of effective policies. The number of pathological gamblers has been constantly increasing and at the same time, the harm has been also increased: health, economic, and personal. The gambling is related to all the age groups, not just the young generation. It influences many people even in their productive age, but also the pensioners. There are many reasons. Massive and aggressive advertising also influences the increase in gambling addiction.

These facts are also reflected in the first study, whose goal was to examine the participation impact in sport betting on depression among young people in Nigeria. The authors confirmed a significant association between sports betting and youth depression. The study is a strong call for policymakers to reflect on promoting best practices for sports betting and initiating suitable programmes for youth.

The second study is also focused on investigating the issues of addiction of the young population. The goal of the authors was to investigate how the generation Z perceives the promotional techniques of HTP products (IQOS and glo) in the Czech Republic. The authors conducted the qualitative research through the semi-structured interviews. They confirmed the powerful effects of the modern marketing techniques of the tobacco

industry on the generation Z. They suggested many recommendations for policymakers, including a complete ban on advertising, promotion, and sponsorship of new tobacco and nicotine products that have a strong negative impact on children, adolescents, and non-smokers.

The treatment processes are closely related to the addiction processes. The authors of the third study deal with the issue of institutional treatment of addicted patients in the Czech Republic. A serious issue is the early termination rate of the treatment of addicted patients that negatively influences the overall outcomes of the treatment. It also influences the treatment economic aspects. The study is published in the form of a protocol study and offers the strong signals about its significance and the usability of the obtained outcomes in the field of personalised treatment.

The strong negative effects of drug addiction are evident in many dimensions. One of them is violence between drug users. The authors of the fourth study, which is focused on investigating the prevalence of gender-based violence among women who use drugs, draw attention to this issue. The authors examine the prevalence of gender-based violence in the six European Union countries and applied several data collection methods depending on the target groups. The authors provide several recommendations on how to improve the solution to this problematic area that is again a beneficial finding for policymakers. The international dimension of the study offers a space for initiating subsequent research and an implementation of the comparative analyses.

The authors from Slovakia and Poland focused on the comparative analyses in the fifth research study. The goal of their investigation was consumption tax and its impact on passive smokers and health consequences. The authors identify the consequences of passive smoking particularly and draw an attention to the necessity of solving this issue in its initial stages. They explored several international databases and found that a higher tax burden led to lower consumption of tobacco and cigarettes in many countries.

The subsequent study also reflects on the investigation of the relationship between the consumption taxes and addictive behaviour. In this study, the authors focused on the alcohol use and on the investigation of the impact of the consumption taxes on alcohol, on the development of alcohol addiction in the selected OECD countries and in Slovakia. The authors came to the conclusion that it is needed to continue to systematically investigate this issue and to identify the sensitivity of the tax systems to the changes in the population addictions in the individual countries. The new topics for research are offered by the authors when exploring the economic recession, high inflation, their impact on tax and regulatory mechanisms, and successively, on the possibility of regulation of the addictive behaviour of the population. Together with the targeted prevention strategies, these regulatory policies can also have a significant impact on addiction elimination and health improvement in the individual countries.

The important role is played by the competency-based addiction training and education programmes in postgraduate and continuing medical studies. These issues are discussed by the authors of the last study, whose aim was to identify quality standards and competency-based education models of postgraduate and continuing medical education in the field of addiction.

We believe that many studies provide not only a strong knowledge potential, but also inspiring topics for new research and for construction of discussion platforms that are necessary in the construction processes of effective policies and prevention strategies.

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