Comparative Analysis of the Risks Towards Drunkorexia Suffering at Three Secondary Schools in Medellín, Colombia

Castano, Luisa

Drunkorexia is a psychological and metabolic disorder in which the individual stops consuming food and replaces it with alcoholic beverages in order to avoid extra caloric intake. In Medellín, Colombia,its symptoms are seen principally in adolescents, though at this point in time no population-wide studies have been conducted on this disorder at a local level. This study was conducted with the aim of identifying the level of knowledge about this disease and its possible risks in adolescents in grades 6th through 11th in 3 secondary schools in Medellín: one school with a student population from lower socio-economic classes (classified as strata 0,1 and 2) and two other with a student population from middle socio-economic classes (classified as strata 3 and 4). Approximately 100 students were selected and surveyed in each institution. In two of the participating schools, no survey subjects were familiar with the term “Drunkorexia”, while in the third school 17.4% were familiar with the term. In all three schools, all survey subjects were familiar with the terms“Anorexia” and“Bulimia”. The results suggest that drunkorexia may be associated with two possible causes in this population: the lack of economic conditions that allow for good nutrition (primarily in the high school with students from lower socio-economic classes) and the preoccupation of these adolescents with physical appearance. Additionally, the tendency of these students and their families to consume alcohol encourages a higher incidence of drunkorexia. The results of this study will be presented in the three participating schools, as a first step towards the prevention of this illness in Medellín´s adolescents.

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