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Profile of adolescents and young people exposed to drug use assisted by the health program at school

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Abstract: This research aims to trace the profile of students assisted by health program at school regarding drug use. This is a descriptive cross-sectional study of quantitative approach carried out in a municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE. For data collection, a closed unidentified self-completed questionnaire was used in the period of August/September 2017. Adolescents from 12 to 18 years of age enrolled in school and of both genders were included in the sample and those who did not have attendance in classes were excluded. The sample consisted of 41 adolescents. The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation. The results showed that the predominant age group was 13 to 15 years. Regarding the social class of the students' families, 63.5% belonged to class C. Regarding drugs, 61% of adolescents tried alcoholic beverages, 12.2% tobacco and 9.8%. All who tried such substances also tried alcohol and illicit drugs such as: marijuana, cocaine, crack, heroin, LSD and ecstasy were not mentioned by the adolescents. In view of the exhibition, we conclude that licit drugs have become something of common use for adolescents, demonstrating the need to plan actions focused on this



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theme, with the objective of reducing this reality, reducing vulnerability factors and expanding protective factors.

Keywords: Adolescents. Alcoholic beverages. Tobacco. Inhalants. Licit drugs.

1. Introduction

In Brazil, adolescents are between twelve and eighteen years of age according to the Child and Adolescent Statute (ECA). Adolescence is characterized by intense changes in biological, social and psychic aspects (SILVEIRA; SAINTS; PEREIRA, 2014). Therefore, adolescence should be understood as a category constituted from the social and economic needs of the social groups of which they are part, while they are composed by them. From this perspective, it is possible to speak of adolescents more specifically within their cultural, social and economic reality (FROTA, 2007).

Adolescence is a phase where there is an increase in social and family responsibilities, a period of learning regarding norms, social and moral principles (SANTOS, 2012). Phase marked by curiosities and discoveries, in which adolescents begin to give more importance to their groups, their relational and end up conflicting with themselves and with the family when they revolve around attending new environments and acquiring new behaviors (MONTEIRO *et al.*, 2012). The young man seeks his space in the environment in which he lives looking for similar, and with this is exposed to risks. This exposure makes them more vulnerable to chemical dependence and as a consequence they are exposed to risks related to their use (SANTOS, 2012).

Given the changes that occur at this stage and taking into account the ways in which they are presented in the adolescent's life, the family relationship is also affected. The family, in turn, becomes disoriented without knowing how to deal with the emotional instability experienced by this adolescent who often exposes him to risky behaviors. Feelings of helplessness, despair and anguish are expressed by these families (SILVEIRA *et al.*, 2013).

Drugs negatively influence both in the family context and in the school context. The use of licit and/or illicit drugs is correlated with low school performance, and can be observed by: missing and/or arriving late to class, not performing activities, repeating the year and school dropout, compromising the academic and professional future of this young person (GIACOMOZZI *et al.*, 2012; SILVEIRA *et al.*, 2013; MALTA *et al.*, 2014; CARDOSO; MALBERGIER, 2014).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) drugs is every substance not produced by the body that when introduced interferes in its functioning causing undesirable effects. Adolescents have their first contact with drugs usually during the period in which the brain structures responsible for temporal perception and impulse control are still in the ripening phase. The use of psychoactive substances provides immediate satisfaction, which meets the impulsive behavior and immediacy commonly present in this age group. Such behaviors, associated with physical, psychic transformations

and family and social conflicts, make them more vulnerable to the use of these substances (BITTENCOURT; FRANCE; GOLDIM, 2015).

In a study conducted by the "Pesquisa Nacional de Saúde Escolar" PeNSE (2015), with 9th year students from public and private schools in 2015, regarding the consumption of licit and illicit drugs revealed that 18.4% have tried smoking. When it comes to current consumption, that is, the last 30 days preceding the research showed that 5.6% of the students had smoked cigarettes. Regarding the use of other tobacco products, such as straw cigarettes or hand-rolled cigarettes, cigar, pipe, cigarillo, Indian cigarette or bali, hookah, snuff and chewing smoke, 6.1% of 9th graders used these products in the last 30 days prior to the research.

Data regarding the experimentation of alcoholic beverages by schoolchildren performed by PeNSE (2015) corresponds to 55.5%, being significantly higher than tobacco experimentation. Regarding the current consumption of alcoholic beverages among students, evaluated by the consumption made in the 30 days preceding the research, it was 23.8% in Brazil. As for the use of illicit drugs such as: marijuana, cocaine, crack, cola, loló, perfume throws, ecstasy, oxy, etc. PeNSE data (2015) show that 9.0% of the students have used illicit drugs, with the current consumption of illicit drugs in the last 30 days preceding the survey reported by 4.2% of the students.

In order to develop health promotion actions in the school environment, the School Health Program becomes the result of a historical walk, seeking to improve the health of school-age children and adolescents in Brazil. The PSE is the result of an integrated work between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, in favor of the expansion of specific health actions to students in the public school system: Elementary School, High School, Federal Network of Professional Education and Technology, Education of Youth and Adults (BRASIL, 2012). The School Health Program (PSE) was created through Decree 6,286 of December 5, 2007, and was effectively launched in September 2008 (BRASIL, 2007).

Drug addiction is a disorder that profoundly affects people's lives. The abusive consumption of drugs by adolescents and young people causes serious consequences to their physical and mental health, besides negatively influencing the social relationship. The approach to this problem needs to occur in an integral way, prevention or treatment actions need to be oriented to combat the problem in all spheres.

Among the strategies of actions in the area of health education, the School Health Program stands out, which aims to explain the problem in question, and through intervention objects to prevent this consumption and provide information to achieve the objective.

In view of the above, the study aims to trace the profile of adolescents and young people assisted by the School Health Program regarding drug use in a school in the municipality of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE.

2. Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional study of quantitative approach was conducted in a school in the municipality of Vitória de Santo Antão/PE. Data were collected in August/September 2017.

The research was authorized by the Department of Health by letter of agreement. From then on, a meeting was held with the nurse responsible for the implementation of the Health at School Program to learn about the themes addressed by the program and present the project. Among the themes trabalhadas by the PSE none was focused on drug consumption, but it reported interest in developing activity focused on the theme, becoming an adjunct in the research.

The research took place at the Municipal School Santo Yves, located in the neighborhood of Cajueiro in the municipality of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE. The school has 100 students from 6th grade to 9th grade, enrolled with different age groups. The inclusion criteria were used in the selection of the sample, students enrolled from 6th grade to 9th grade in school and of both genders who had between 12 and 18 years and participated in the activities proposed by the PSE and excluded those under 12 years and over 18 years, or who were between 12 and 18 years old, but do not have attendance in class, or have between 12 and 18 years, but for some reason left, gave up or was transferred from one school to another.

A closed self-completion questionnaire was used without identification, which contains some questions from the 6th National Survey on Psychotropic Drug Use among Elementary and High School Students of public and private schools in the 27 Brazilian Capitals – Questionnaire A. The questionnaire contains 22 questions about sociodemographic data, pattern of use of licit and illicit drugs and adolescents' knowledge about drugs.

To analyze the socioeconomic profile of adolescents, we used the method of the Brazilian Association of Research Companies (ABEP, 2014) using the Criterion of Economic Classification Brazil that uses possession of items (color television; radio; bathroom; automobile; monthly maid; washing machine; VCR and/or DVD, refrigerator and freezer: independent appliance or part of the duplex refrigerator.) and degree of instruction of the head of the family to classify them in: class A, class B, class C, class D and class E.

The data was analyzed through Microsoft's EXCEL 2016 program®. A spreadsheet was used to create the database and then obtained by mean, standard deviation and percentage of results.

The research was approved by the Ethics Committee in Human Research (CEP) under opinion no. 55523216.3.0000.5619, and data collection was performed after signing by the participants of the Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE) and/or Free and Informed Consent

Term (TALE), as recommended by Resolution No. 466/2012 of the National Health Council.

3. Results and Discussion

Of the 100 students available for the research and after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 75 students were assiduous, among these, 06 students are under 12 years old and 02 students are over 18 years old. Since then, 67 adolescents have fit the profile of the research and among these adolescents 41 (\cong 61.2%) agreed to participate voluntarily by delivering the duly signed terms and answering the questionnaire.

When analyzing the sociodemographic profile of the 41 students who comprised the sample, 54% were female and 46% male, predominantly the age group of 13-15 years. Regarding family composition, 56.1% reported living with a father, mother and other family members, in relation to the parents' interaction, 61% reported that they live together. Regarding the receipt of government assistance, 46.3% of the adolescents reported receiving some kind of government aid. Regarding the social class of the students' families, 63.4% belonged to class C, followed by class D (Table 1).

Table 1 - Sociodemographic characteristics of students of the municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE, 2017.

Variables	N	%
Gender		
Male	19	46%
Female	22	54%
Total	41	100%
Age		
12	4	9,8%
13	9	22,0%
14	11	26,8%
15	12	29,3%
16	2	4,9%
17	2	4,9%
18	1	2,4%
Total	41	100%
With those who live		
Father and mother	5	12,2%
Mother	3	7,3%
Father, mother and sister(s) or brother(s)	15	36,6%
Father, mother, sister(s) or brother(s)	3	7 20/
and grandmother(s) or grandfather (s) Mathematical and prother(s)		7,3%
Mother, sister(s) or brother(s)	4	9,8%
Father, sister(s) or brother(s) and	1	2,4%

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$grandmother(s) \ or \ grandfather(s)$			
Mother and stepfather		1	2,4%
Mother, stepfather and sister(s)	or		
brother(s)		5	12,2%
Father, stepmother, sister(s) brother(s) and grandmother(s)	or		
grandfather(s)	or	1	2,4%
Grandmother (s) or grandfather (s)		3	7,3%
Total		41	100%
How parents live			
They live together		25	61,0%
They live apart		11	26,8%
One of them has died		4	9,8%
Other		1	2,4%
Total		41	100%
Government aid			
Receives assistance		19	46,3%
Does not receive assistance		6	14,6%
Don't you know		15	36,6%
Didn't answer		1	2,4%
Total		41	100%
Economic insertion			
Class B		3	7,3%
Class C		26	63,4%
Class D		10	24,4%
Class E		2	4,9%
Total		41	100%
Courses Author			

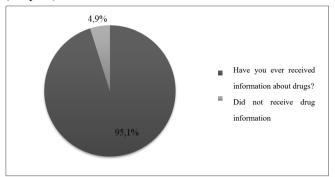
Source: Author.

In studies conducted by SANTOS, 2012; GIACOMOZZI et al., 2012; FREIRE et al., 2014; ELICKER et al., 2015; VIERO et al. (2015) female gender was predominant, and these results showed agreement with the current research. The predominance of the female gender can be explained according to some authors, because it is the majority who attend classes.

With regard to family composition, studies by SANTOS, 2012; SILVEIRA *et al.*, 2013 and CARDOSO; MALBERGIER, 2014 demonstrated that 58.3%; 42.9% and 64.1%, respectively, adolescents live with father and mother, presenting agreement with the results obtained in the research. Regarding the socioeconomic profile study of SANTOS, 2012 presented results similar to the research where 54.2% of the adolescents belonged to Class C. This result can be justified by the fact that the research is conducted in public schools, since students from the public school system have a lower

family income than in the private network.

Regarding the educational information about drugs referenced by the 41 adolescents included in the sample, it was observed that 95.1% had some knowledge about the subject (Graph 1).

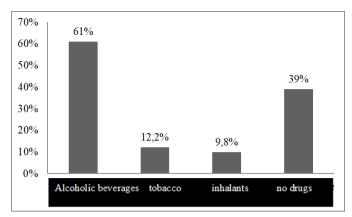


Graph 1 - Educational information on drugs referenced by students of the municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE, 2017. **Source:** Author.

In a study conducted by VIERO *et al.* (2015) in two public schools of education, located in the south of Santa Catarina with 150 adolescents on knowledge in relation to the themes: oral health, prevention of drug use and sexuality. Regarding the knowledge of adolescents about drugs, it was observed that 97.2% reported having some knowledge about the theme, a result similar to the current research. The interest in this subject can be justified by the phase experienced by them, a phase marked by curiosities and discoveries that lead adolescents to seek information on the subject.

In qualitative research conducted by ZEITOUNE *et al.*, 2012 with 35 adolescents living in a community of Rio de Janeiro, it was observed that adolescents had some knowledge about licit and illicit drugs, as observed in this research. Such information reflects as a protective factor for drugs. The search for knowledge makes them more aware of the risks related to the use of these substances.

When analyzing drug use, there was a prevalence for the use of alcoholic beverages representing 61% of the students who reported having used some type of drug in their lives. The second most consumed drug was tobacco with 12.2%, followed by inhalants (perfume throw, loló or others) representing 9.8% of the students. Illicit drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, crack, heroin, LSD and ecstasy were not mentioned by the students and 39% reported not using any type of drug (Graph 2).



Graph 2 - Lifetime use of drugs by students (N = 41) of the municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE, 2017.**Source:** Author.

In studies conducted by SANTOS, 2012 with 96 adolescents enrolled in the first year of high school classes in the municipality of Gloria de Dourados, alcohol was the most consumed drug representing 87.2%, presented agreement with the research findings. One adolescent in this study reported having tried alcoholic beverages for the first time at the age of five, a similar result was found in the current survey, where one adolescent reported that at the age of six, he tried alcohol for the first time.

The early consumption of alcoholic beverages may be associated with the high permissiveness that is given by parents and family members because they do not consider alcohol as a drug, contributing to an increasingly early consumption among adolescents. In addition, the facility found for the acquisition of alcoholic beverages acts as a facilitator to this practice.

Studies conducted by GIACOMOZZI *et al.*, 2012 in nine municipal and state public schools with 789 students between the seventh year of elementary school and the third year of high school in the city of Florianópolis, it was observed that the abusive use of alcoholic beverages was reported by 30.1% of the adolescents, corroborating the results obtained in this research.

In a quantitative and qualitative research conducted by SILVEIRA and collaborators (2012) with 35 adolescents from a community in Rio de Janeiro, 45.7% were users of alcoholic beverages. Studies conducted by FREIRE *et al.*, 2014 with 146 students, it was observed that alcohol was the drug most consumed by adolescents from a public school, in the rural area of the municipality of Petrolina-PE, corresponding to 63.01% of the sample, such results showed similarity to those obtained in the current research.

In a survey conducted by SILVEIRA; SAINTS; PEREIRA, 2014 in a Municipal Public School located in Uberaba - MG with 189 students enrolled in the 7th and 8th grades, it was observed that 60.8% stated that ter consumed alcoholic beverages, a similar result was observed in the current research.

In the studies conducted by ELICKER and collaborators (2015) the predominant drug among adolescents was alcohol, representing 49.6% of the 832 students enrolled in the 8th grade of the schools of Porto Velho, showing similarity to the results of this research.

The reason why alcohol is considered a common drug for adolescents can be elucidated because it is more acceptable by society in a lawful way, besides being spread by the media. The use of alcoholic beverages by adolescents is illegal and offers risks to both the health of the individual and society, such substances make them vulnerable to brain damage, compromising the adolescent's academic and professional performance, in addition to increasing the chances of abusive use or alcohol dependence, and is also related to the worsening and development of diseases.

Alcohol consumption is a social phenomenon and constitutes a serious public health problem. According to the Health and Alcohol Information Center (2017), another point to be considered is the rates of traffic accidents due to alcohol use that are higher among adolescents.

Regarding tobacco use, the studies referenced above showed the following results 18.8%, 20.1%; 17,1%; 16,44%; 10.58%, 17.5%, respectively, however, the sample used in the research differs from the samples used by the authors, which explains a higher percentage for tobacco use. A lower percentage found in the current research on the use of tabaco may be related to anti-tobacco campaigns, disseminated by several information vehicles that make smoking malseen before society, alerting to the risks related to the use of these substances. The consumption of tobacco derivatives (cigarro, cigar, hookah) is related to the development of more than 50 diseases, mainly cardiovascular diseases, cancer and chronic obstructive respiratory diseases, among other complications (BRASIL, 2017).

Regarding the use of inhalants by adolescents in the studies of SANTOS, 2012; GIACOMOZZI *et al.*, 2012; FREIRE *et al.*, 2014 and ELICKER *et al.*, 2015, 17.9%; 3%; 10.96% and 16.3%, respectively, reported having experienced it at some point in their lives. The use of inhalants by adolescents reflects the particular desire to adapt to some group, the influence of fad where there is a repetition of behaviors, to the social model that the adolescent is inserted in and may influence its use.

According to the Brazilian Psychiatric Association (2012), the use of inhalants decreases brain activity and is responsible for changes in physical and mental responses, and may immediately compromise the control of breathing by the central nervous system.

Regarding the consumption of illicit drugs in santos studies, 2012 it was observed that 6.4% have tried marijuana at some point in their lives, 2.1% have tried crack and 3.1% reported having used LSD. According to GIACOMOZZI *et al.*, 2012 7% of the adolescents included in the study reported having used marijuana or hashish, 1.3% reported having already used cocaine and 0.6% reported having already used crack and 3% reported having used other types of drugs. After studies by SILVEIRA *et al.* (2012) 5.7% of adolescents used illicit drugs. Studies by FREIRE *et al.*, 2014, only 3.42% reported having ever used illicit drugs at some time in their lives.

However, the difference in the results presented when compared to those obtained in the current research can be 6 Amorim, R.G.P.; Nunes, M.G.S.; Silva, F.L.; Souza, H.P.J.; Costa, J.E.V.; Calazans, F.A.; Intermaninense, J.N.C.; Santos, T.T.L.; Silva, A.I.A.; Silva, D.G.M.; Souza, A.C.A.; Costa, S.L.A. Profile of adolescents and young people exposed to drug use assisted by the health program at school...

explained by not having included in the sample adolescents who did not have attendance in classes, and may be related to school dropout with the use of illicit drugs, or even those who refused to participate in the research, not having full control of adolescents of this age group, which the search is directed at.

In the current research, it was observed that 68.29% of adolescents have already purchased alcoholic beverages, demonstrating the ease of access to this substance, characterized as a risk factor for alcohol use. According to FILHO and collaborators (2015) licit drugs seem to be more accessible to adolescents, although the sale of alcoholic beverages or other products whose components may cause physical or psychic dependence is prohibited.

When analyzing the students who would have used some type of drug in life, it was observed that for the use of alcoholic beverages 56% were female and 84% were between 13 and 15 years of age, regarding the use of tobacco, the predominant gender was the male gender with 80%, in relation to the use of inhalants, the distribution of the variables gender and age were egalitarian (Table 2).

Table 2 - Distribution of the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco and instillers according to gender and age of students of the municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE, 2017.

Use in the life of alcoholic beverages		
Variables	N	%
Gender		
Male	11	44%
Female	14	56%
Total	25	100%
Age		
12	1	4%
13	4	16%
14	7	28%
15	10	40%
16	1	4%
17	2	8%
Total	25	100%
Use in the life of tobacco		
Gender		
Male	4	80%
Female	1	20%
Total	5	100%
Age		
13	1	20%

14	2	40%
15	1	20%
17	1	20%
Total	5	100%
Use in the life of alantes		
Gender		
Male	2	50%
Female	2	50%
Total	4	100%
Age		
13	2	50%
14	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Source: Author.

Studies conducted by FREIRE *et al.*, 2014, the female gender predominated for the use in the life of alcoholic beverages with 54.35%, corroborating the research findings. With regard to the age group, this study presented divergence from the current research, predominantly the ages of 16 to 18 years, however alcoholic beverages are accessible to all people collaborating for their use in all age groups.

Santos, 2012, relevant results were found regarding the age of alcohol experimentation between 13 and 15 years, a result similar to that obtained in the current research. Stage of adolescence where desire and mm to try new things is more exacerbated.

In research conducted in the 27 Brazilian capitals conducted by Think (2015) regarding tobacco experimentation, the male gender predominated with 19.4%, showing similarity to the results obtained in the research, regarding the age studies of Freire *et al.* (2014), the ages from 16 years to 18 years for tobacco consumption predominated, diverging from the research in question, which can be justified by the divergence in the public contemplated during data collection.

Regarding the distribution of drug use by parents and friends of school students, it was observed that for the use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco the father presented higher percentages with 36.6% and 12.2%, respectively, regarding the use of marijuana and inhalers 7.3% and 12.2% respectively reported that friends use these substances (Table 3).

Table 3 - Distribution of the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, inhalants and marijuana by parents and friends(s) of students of the municipal school of Vitória de Santo Antão - PE, 2017.

Variables	N	%
Variables	N	

Use of alcoholic beverages by parents

No	14	34,1%
Father	15	36,6%
Mother	5	12,2%
Both	6	14,6%
Don't you know	1	2,4%
Total	41	100%
Tobacco use by parents		
No	28	68,3%
Father	5	12,2%
Mother	3	7,3%
Both	1	2,4%
Don't you know	3	7,3%
Left blank	1	2,4%
Total	41	100%
Use of alcoholic beverages by friend(s)		
No	29	70,7%
Yes	9	22,0%
Don't you know	2	4,9%
Left blank	1	2,4%
Total	41	100%
Tobacco use by friend(s)		
No	34	82,9%
Yes	2	4,9%
Don't you know	3	7,3%
Left blank	2	4,9%
Total	41	100%
Marijuana use by friend(s)		
No	33	80,5%
Yes	3	7,3%
Don't you know	4	9,8%
Left blank	1	2,4%
Total	41	100%
Use of inalantes (spear, loló or others) by friend(s)		
No	29	70,7%
Yes	5	12,2%
Don't you know	5	12,2%
Left blank	2	4,9%

Total		41	100%
-	4 .1		

Source: Author.

Regarding the use of alcoholic beverages and tabaco studies by Elicker *et al* . (2015) demonstrated that for these two variables the father had higher use with 23.4% and 13.9%, respectively, so there was agreement with the findings of the current study. Since the use of drugs by family members acts as a facilitator for the practice of inappropriate habits increasing vulnerability to the consumption of such substances. Regarding the use of tobacco by friends, 14.2% reported that the majority used tobacco and 8.2% used other substances. These results were similar to those found in the research, taking into account that adolescence is a phase where the individual seeks his space in the environment in which he always lives looking for similar, the involvement with people of undue habits regarding the use of drugs makes them vulnerable to the use of these substances.

4. Conclusions

The research reported on drug use among adolescents from a municipal school in Vitória de Santo Antão - PE. Addressing this subject is not easy, since they involve social issues, cultural factors, gender and illegality that favor the concealment of some information.

In view of the data obtained, a predominance was observed for the use of alcoholic beverages, similar results were also found in other studies conducted in Brazil, demonstrating with this substance became something of common use in the lives of adolescents, the second drug mentioned by the adolescents were tobacco and who reported having tried such substance were included among those who tried alcoholic beverages.

Promotion and prevention are effective means of intervention for drug use and abuse and must involve the family, its socioeconomic and cultural context in order to achieve the objective. In this case, it is necessary that the family, together with education and health professionals, be prepared to receive, to guide the risks related to drug use, to promote education and health actions for adolescents who are in a situation of vulnerability.

Results obtained in the research allowed to trace the profile of school adolescents enabling professionals responsible for school management and family health strategy (ESF) professionals involved in the School Health Program information that will serve to direct educational actions aimed at this theme, with the objective of modesty this reality, reducing vulnerability factors and expanding protection factors.

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