

Substance abuse disorders among female secondary school students in Cairo

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This study was conducted among six schools in urban, semi-urban and rural areas in Greater Cairo. For each area, one governmental and one private schools were chosen to be studied ; from each school, three classes representing the secondary educational levels were randomly studied. The study was initiated and completed during the educational year of 2000-2001. It aimed to investigate substance use disorder among female secondary school students in Cairo. A pilot study, followed by the study proper (survey) was done. This work studied the substance abuse among 593 female students. The sample was assessed by self-administrated questionnaire for the detection of substance use disorders (Soueif, et al, 1986). The results showed that the overall prevalence of substance use disorders among female 2ry school students was 18.4% [alcohol (15.9%), illicit drugs (3.9%), tobacco smoking (2.5%) and cannabinoids (0.7%)]. Different occasions and circumstances to use certain substances were identified. The study focused on the importance of peers in the process of substance abuse. It was also found that among tobacco smokers, illicit drugs and alcohol users, the percentages of the active users exceeded those of the passive users; while among cannabinoids users, all reported passive use. The study concluded that substance use disorders are considered a multidimensional problem. Although different substances are linked to each other, yet each substance has its own correlates and it is important to know this correlates in order to prevent and manage this problem in a proper way.