

Subgroups of nightlife attendees: A latent class analysis

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ABSTRACT

Background. In cooperation with prevention projects involved in harm-reduction targeted towards young people involved in the party-scene, the following study succeeded in gathering information on the pattern of substance use within a sample of dance event attendees in a major metropolitan area of Germany. The study aims to detect prevalent consumption patterns within a population known for its affinity for substance use, establish what role novel psychoactive substances play and add to the limited knowledge on these substances that can be gained from general population studies.

Methods. A total of 1571 pen and paper questionnaires, assessing substance use behaviour were included in the analytical sample. The questionnaires included information about the 12-month prevalence rates and 30-day frequency rates of various substances, the combining of substances, the use of novel psychoactive substances and the sources used. Based on the 12-month prevalence rates for various substances a latent class analysis was conducted to detect differing substance use patterns.

Results. Four separate groups were identified with the latent class analysis, namely the conservative, traditional, psychedelic and indiscriminative class. The classes not only differed in their 12-month prevalence rates but also showed considerably different frequency rates as well as uses of novel psychoactive substances.

Discussion. The data represents an interesting and important addition to population surveys. Although the sample was recruited from the same population (i.e. patrons of nightclubs and dance music events), substance use patterns were far from homogenous. In addition, the study describes the use of novel psychoactive substances in the context of nightclubs. The findings bear important implications for policy and prevention makers.