

MESSAGE



Make Students Addiction-Free

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INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT – 2

RISK ANALYSIS

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1



Index

1.	Introduction	3
1.1.	<i>METHODOLOGY</i>	3
1.2.	<i>CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES</i>	3
1.2.1.	Questionnaire for students.....	3
1.2.2.	Questionnaire for parents.....	6
1.2.3.	Questionnaire for teachers.....	7
2.	Results	8
2.1.	<i>ITALY</i>	8
2.1.1.	Students.....	8
2.1.2.	Parents.....	8
2.1.3.	Teachers.....	9
2.2.	<i>POLAND</i>	9
2.2.1.	Students.....	9
2.3.	<i>PORTUGAL</i>	11
2.3.1.	Students.....	11
2.3.2.	Parents.....	12
2.3.3.	Teachers.....	12
2.4.	<i>ROMANIA</i>	13
2.4.1.	Students.....	13
2.4.2.	Parents.....	14
2.4.3.	Teachers.....	14
2.5.	<i>TURKEY</i>	14
2.5.1.	Students.....	15
2.5.2.	Parents.....	15
2.5.3.	Teachers.....	16
1.	Discussion	16
2.	Summary and conclusions	17
3.	References	18



1. Introduction

This report comes from the Make StudentS Addiction-frEe (MESSAGE) Project, which has been initiated and is coordinated by Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education in Turkey. The main purpose of the Project is to collect data on the attitude and approach of selected groups of people (teachers, students and parents) to the project topic in order to prepare a guide book for parents and teachers. The study was carried out by the following partners:

- I.P.S.I.A. A. Ferrari (Italy),
- Szczecińska Szkoła Wyższa Collegium Balticum (Poland); the survey has been conducted in VIII LO im. Olimpijczyków Polskich in Szczecin,
- Agrupamento de Escolas de Penalva do Castelo (Portugal),
- Colegiul National de Informatica Matei Basarab (Romania),
- YILDIRIM Vocational and Technical High School (Turkey).

It is the second out of four intellectual outputs of the project. The aim of the output was to detect students who are at risk of addiction.

1.1. METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted with common questionnaires, translated by each Partner to their native language from English.

Data were collected by group-administered questionnaires. Students, parents and teachers were answering the questionnaires anonymously and voluntarily. Students and parents were answering the questionnaires in the classroom with teachers or research assistants functioning as survey leaders. Teachers were answering the questionnaires individually.

The data collection took place in September and October 2016.

1.2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

1.2.1. Questionnaire for students



3



The questionnaire for students is composed of 73 yes/no randomly mixed items, representing potentially problematic functional areas. Students were asked to provide their sex, age, weight and height.

Potentially problematic functional areas are as follows:

- School performance.

Poor school performance may be an important reason for negative emotions. Repeatable frustration combined with other, unfavourable circumstances or factors may become a background to addiction.

- Attitude towards smoking cigarettes, taking drugs and drinking alcohol.

Students adopting an attitude that smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol or taking drugs is something normal, usual among teenagers are more likely to follow this pattern of behaviour in certain circumstances.

- Risk of computer and Internet addiction.

The scale contains 8 questions referring to various symptoms of computer and Internet addiction. The number of diagnostic (positive) answers in the scale reflects increasing risk of computer and Internet addiction.

Students whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations have been detected as those being at risk of computer and/or Internet addiction. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Nutrition habits

The scale contains 8 items on students' nutrition habits. To detect overweight students, the body mass index has been calculated.

Students with five or more diagnostic answers in this part of the questionnaire have been detected as problematic and risky, and their behaviour likewise.

- Mental Health

The scale contains 14 items measuring students' emotional disturbances. Psychological difficulties, low emotion regulation skills can serve as well as a background for addiction. Teenagers who want to deal with stress or counterbalance negative mood states may develop coping strategies based on substance use. A short-term comfort experienced as a consequence of substance use is not followed by a constructive solution to the problem. Still, the pattern of behaviour can be generalised and become a dangerous habit, which may lead to addiction.

Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as those who experience significant emotional disturbances. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Family relations



The scale contains 10 items on family relations and how they are perceived by students. Patterns of communication and cohesiveness, which are important determinants of psychosocial adjustment of teenagers, have been measured. Poor family management, unsatisfactory relations, conflict, parental inconsistency, use of physical punishment as well as lack of positive reinforcements can be associated with an increased risk of addiction.

Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as those facing problems in family relations. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Peer relations

The scale contains 6 items on students' peer relations – their quality, but also conventionality or deviance of specific peers the adolescent associates with.

Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as those who are facing problems in maintaining close, satisfactory relations with others, or who are attached to a deviant peer group, or both. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Social skills

The scale contains 9 items on students' social skills. Lower ability to form meaningful relationships with peers and significant adults may lead to social isolation, frustration of needs of love and belonging. It can also increase susceptibility to negative influences. Adolescents with low social skills are prone to experience anger, anxiety, depression and get under negative influences.

Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as those who have low social skills. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Leisure and recreation

The scale contains 7 items on students' availability of leisure time and how it is used, as it is another important factor influencing a tendency to engage in maladaptive behaviour such as drug taking or alcohol drinking.

Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as those who have problems with organising their leisure time in a satisfactory way. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Aggressive behaviour

The scale contains 10 items on students' aggressive behaviour. Aggressive, acting out behaviour may correlate with alcohol and drug use – either by being prior to substance use or a consequence of it.



Students with a number of diagnostic answers exceeding two standard deviations have been detected as exhibiting aggressive behaviour. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

1.2.2. Questionnaire for parents

The questionnaire for parents is composed of 64 yes/no randomly mixed items concerning their teenage child and representing potentially problematic functional areas. Additionally, parents were asked if they have ever felt that their child was addicted to alcohol or drugs.

Potentially problematic functional areas are as follows:

- Risk of computer and Internet addiction.

The scale contains 7 questions referring to various symptoms of computer and Internet addiction. The number of diagnostic (positive) answers in the scale reflects an increasing risk of computer and Internet addiction.

Children of parents, whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations have been detected as those being at risk of computer and/or Internet addiction. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Nutrition habits

The scale contains 6 items on students' nutrition habits.

The behaviour of students whose parents marked four or more diagnostic answers have been detected as a problematic and risky.

- Mental Health

The scale contains 19 items measuring students' emotional disturbances, psychological difficulties and low emotion regulation skills, all of which can serve as a background to addiction.

Children of parents, whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations have been detected as those who experience significant emotional disturbances. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Family relations

The scale contains 11 items on family relations and how they are perceived by parents.

Children of parents, whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations have been detected as those facing problems in family relations. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Peer relations



The scale contains five items on students' peer relations – their quality, but also conventionality or deviance of specific peers the adolescent associates with.

Children of parents, whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations, have been detected as those facing problems in peer relations. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

- Aggressive behaviour

The scale contains 15 items on students' aggressive behaviour. Aggressive, acting out behaviour may correlate with alcohol and drug use – either by being prior to substance use or as a consequence of it.

Children of parents, whose number of diagnostic answers exceeded two standard deviations have been detected as exhibiting aggressive behaviour. The results (also standard deviations) have been analysed separately for each country.

1.2.3. Questionnaire for teachers

The questionnaire for teachers is composed of 10 items concerning the following issues:

- School performance
- Experimenting with and smoking cigarettes
- Experimenting with and drinking alcohol
- Experimenting with and taking drugs
- Computer/Internet overuse
- Unhealthy nutrition habits
- Behaviour problems
- Problematic peer relations

Teachers were analysing the classes they have known well, marking how many students from the class, in their opinion, may represent problematic behaviour.



Szczecińska Szkoła Wyższa

7



RĂMNICU VĂLCEA

2. Results

2.1. ITALY

2.1.1. Students

Fifty two students, in total, participated in the survey:

Sex/Age	14	15	16	17	18	-	Total
Male	0	0	1	9	34	0	44
Female	1	2	1	2	2	0	8
-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	2	2	11	36	0	52

More than one-fourth (29%) of Italian students report unhealthy nutrition habits, while 23% of teenagers is overweight. Furthermore, 4% of respondents are not only overweight, but also have developed unhealthy eating habits.

About half of students perceive smoking (54%) and drinking alcohol (48%) among teenagers as normal behaviour, while 21% of respondents consider drug taking to be something usual.

The analysis of other functional areas show that 8% of adolescents report emotional disturbances and problems in peer relations, 6% of students indicate they are facing problems in family relations, 4% of them have low social skills and are not satisfied with how they spend their free time. Aggressive behaviour appeared in 2% of surveys.

There is a large group of students (77%), whose attitude and behaviour towards computer and Internet use is worrisome. 4% of students can be placed in a computer- or Internet-addiction risk group.

In all, 17% of students signalled various, multiple problems in different functional areas, which makes them more prone to any kind of addiction.

2.1.2. Parents

Fifty two parents of students participating in the project took part in the survey. 13% of them expressed their concern for their children who, in their opinion, may be addicted to substances.

Almost one-third (31%) of parents admit that their children have unhealthy nutrition habits.

In parents' opinion, their teenage children do not experience significant emotional disturbances. However, 13% of parents observe that their children are facing problems in peer relations, and 2% of them describe their children's behaviour as aggressive. Furthermore, in parents' estimation, 2% of teenagers experience difficulties in family relations.

Three-fourth (75%) of parents describe their children's attitude and behaviour towards computer and Internet in a worrisome way. 4% of teenagers seem to be at a risk of computer/Internet addiction.

In general, considering various, multiple problems in different functional areas, 17% of adolescents may be under threat of addiction.

2.1.3. Teachers

There have been 26 classes analysed by their teachers. Teachers suspect that in 46% of classes most or all students smoke cigarettes. Furthermore, in 77% of classes most or all students experiment with alcohol and in 12% of classes most or all students drink alcohol regularly. In teachers' opinion, drugs are much less popular among teenagers – in 8% of classes most or all students have tried drugs, while there is not even one class where many teenagers would use drugs on a regular basis. In teachers' opinion, in 69% of classes most or all adolescents overuse computer and the Internet.

Unhealthy nutrition habits among teenagers are also a significant problem. In teachers' estimation, in 42% of classes most or all students do not eat properly.

In 15% of classes most or all students display behaviour problems, but there are no classes where most or all students stay within a group of friends who have behaviour problems.

2.2. POLAND

2.2.1. Students

Thirty five students, in total, participated in the survey:

Sex/Age	14	15	16	17	18	-	Total
Male	0	0	5	3	0	0	8
Female	0	0	8	13	2	0	23



-	0	0	0	2	2	0	4
Total	0	0	13	18	4	0	35

Almost half (43%) of Polish students report unhealthy nutrition habits, and 3% of teenagers are overweight. However, students with high BMI report that they eat properly.

About one-third of students perceive smoking (29%) and drinking alcohol (34%) among teenagers as a normal behaviour, while 14% of respondents consider drug taking to be something usual.

The analysis of other functional areas demonstrates that 3% of adolescents report emotional disturbances. Furthermore, 11% of students indicate that they are facing problems in family relations, 6% of them have low social skills, they are not satisfied with how they spend their free time and experience significant difficulties in peer relations. Worrisome aggressive behaviour appeared in 3% of surveys.

The attitude and behaviour related to computer and Internet use among almost half of students (49%) is a matter of concern. At the same time 6% of students are placed in a computer or Internet addiction risk group.

All in all, 9% of students signalled various, multiple problems in different functional areas, which makes them more vulnerable to any kind of addiction.

2.2.2. Parents

Forty four parents took part in the survey (two questionnaires have been excluded from analysis due to too many missing responses). 10% of them expressed their concern for their children who, in their opinion, may be addicted to substances.

One – fourth (26%) of parents admit that their children have unhealthy nutrition habits.

The analysis of other functional areas shows that 7% of parents think that their children experience significant emotional disturbances. Furthermore, 5% of parents observe that their children are facing problems in peer relations, 7% of them describe their children's behaviour as aggressive. In the parents' estimation, 10% of teenagers experience difficulties in family relations.

Over two-third (67%) of parents describe their children's attitude and behaviour related to computer and the Internet as a matter of some concern.

All in all, considering various, multiple problems in different functional areas, 10% of adolescents may be in danger of addiction.



2.2.3. Teachers

There have been 9 classes analysed by teachers. Teachers suspect that in 44% of classes most or all students smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol regularly. In 78% of classes most or all students experiment with alcohol. In teachers' estimation, drugs are also popular among teenagers – in 56% of classes most or all students have tried drugs, while in 11% of classes teenagers use drugs on a regular basis. In teachers' opinion, in 89% of classes adolescents overuse computer and the Internet.

Unhealthy nutrition habits among teenagers also present a significant problem. According to teachers' opinion, in 89% of classes most or all students do not eat properly.

In 22% of classes most or all students display behaviour problems, and in 44% of classes most or all teenagers stay within a group of friends who have behaviour problems.

2.3. PORTUGAL

2.3.1. Students

Fifty eight students, in total, participated in the survey:

Sex/Age	14	15	16	17	18	-	Total
Male	6	7	12	17	1	0	33
Female	8	1	10	5	1	0	25
-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	8	22	12	2	0	58

According to the students' responses, 14% of them have unhealthy nutrition habits, while 17% are overweight. Furthermore, 2% of respondents are not only overweight, but have also developed unhealthy eating habits.

About one-third of students perceive smoking (31%) and drinking alcohol (36%) among teenagers a normal behaviour, while 10% of respondents consider drug taking to be something common and ordinary.

The analysis of other functional areas shows that 7% of adolescents report emotional disturbances, problems with family relations, and they are not satisfied with how they spend their free time. 9% of students indicate that they are facing problems in peer relations, 5% of them

have low social skills. None of the students however displays, in their self-estimation, aggressive behaviour.

In the case of 93% of students, their attitude and behaviour related to computer and Internet use is a matter of concern. At the same time 12% of students are placed in a computer or Internet addiction risk group.

All in all, 12% of students signalled various, multiple problems in different functional areas, which puts them under threat of addiction.

2.3.2. Parents

Twenty five parents of students participating in the project took part in the survey. 8% of them expressed their concern for their children who, in their opinion, may be addicted to substances.

Only 4% of parents admit that their children have unhealthy nutrition habits.

The analysis of other functional areas shows that 4% of parents think that their children experience significant emotional disturbances. Furthermore, 12% of parents observe that their children are facing problems in peer relations, 8% of them describe their children's behaviour as aggressive. In the parents' estimation, 16% of teenagers experience difficulties in family relations.

Almost two-third (60%) of parents describe their children's attitude and behaviour related to computer and the Internet as a matter of some concern. 12% of teenagers seem to be at risk of computer/Internet addiction.

All in all, considering various, multiple problems in different functional areas, 12% of adolescents may be in danger of addiction.

Summing up, the results of parents and children detected as being at a risk of addiction overlapped in 40%, which means that teenagers see themselves differently as compared to how they are perceived by their parents in some functional areas.

2.3.3. Teachers

There have been 22 classes analysed by teachers. Teachers suspect that in 32% of classes most or all students smoke cigarettes. Furthermore, in 68% of classes most or all students experiment with alcohol, but there are no classes where most or all students drink alcohol regularly. In teachers' estimation, drugs are much less popular among teenagers – in 4% of classes most or

all students have tried drugs, while in 9% of classes teenagers use drugs on a regular basis. In teachers' opinion, in 73% of classes adolescents overuse computer and the Internet.

Unhealthy nutrition habits among teenagers also present a significant problem. According to teachers' opinion, in 41% of classes most or all students do not eat properly.

In 14% of classes most or all students display behaviour problems, and in 18% of classes most or all teenagers stay within a group of friends who have behaviour problems.

2.4. ROMANIA

2.4.1. Students

Fifty three students, in total, participated in the survey:

Sex/Age	14	15	16	17	18	-	Total
Male	0	1	6	0	0	0	7
Female	2	7	16	20	0	0	45
-	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	2	8	22	20	0	1	53

Almost one-third (30%) of Romanian students report unhealthy nutrition habits, while 6% of teenagers are overweight. Furthermore, 4% of respondents are not only overweight, but have also developed unhealthy eating habits.

Less than one-fourth (21%) of students perceive smoking among teenagers as a common behaviour, while 8% of respondents consider drinking alcohol to be something usual. However all students think that using drugs by teenagers is not very common.

The analysis of other functional areas demonstrates that 6% of adolescents report emotional disturbances. Furthermore 9% of teenagers struggle with problems like family and peer relations as well as low social skills. 8% of adolescents are not satisfied with how they spend their free time. Aggressive behaviour appeared in 4% of surveys.

There is a large group of students (87%) whose attitude and behaviour related to computer and the Internet use is a matter of concern. At the same time 8% of students are placed in a computer- or Internet-addiction risk group.

All in all, 9% students signalled various, multiple problems in different functional areas, which puts them under threat of addiction.

2.4.2. Parents

Fifty three parents of the students participating in the project took part in the survey. None of them however expressed concern that their children may be addicted to substances.

Less than one-fifth (19%) of parents admit that their children have unhealthy nutrition habits.

The analysis of other functional areas demonstrates that 6% of parents think that their children experience significant emotional disturbances. Furthermore, 4% of parents observe that their children are facing problems in peer relations, 9% of them describe their children's behaviour as aggressive. In the parents' estimation, 8% of teenagers experience difficulties in family relations.

More than half (57%) of parents describe their children's attitude and behaviour in terms of computer use and the Internet use as a matter of concern. However, from the analysis based on the parents' perception of their children's behaviour it can be assumed that none of the teenagers is at a risk of computer/Internet addiction.

All in all, considering various, multiple functional areas, none of adolescents participating in the project, in their parents' opinion, is at a risk of addiction.

2.4.3. Teachers

There have been 8 classes analysed by Romanian teachers. Teachers suspect that in 63% of classes most or all students smoke cigarettes. Furthermore, in 88% of classes most or all students experiment with alcohol, but there are no classes where most or all students drink alcohol regularly. In teachers' view, drugs are much less popular among teenagers – in 13% of classes most or all students have tried drugs, while there is not even one class where teenagers would use drugs on a regular basis. In teachers' opinion, in all classes most or all adolescents overuse computer and the Internet.

Unhealthy nutrition habits among teenagers seem a significant problem. According to teachers' opinion, in 88% of classes most or all students do not eat properly.

In 13% of classes most or all students display behaviour problems, but there are no classes where most or all students stay within a group of friends who have behaviour problems.

2.5. TURKEY



14



Szczecińska Szkoła Wyższa

2.5.1. Students

Fifty one students, in total, participated in the survey:

Sex/Age	14	15	16	17	18	-	Total
Male	0	0	6	9	6	0	21
Female	0	0	10	14	6	0	30
-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	16	23	12	0	51

Almost half (43%) of Turkish students report unhealthy nutrition habits, while 10% of teenagers are overweight. Furthermore, 4% of respondents are not only overweight, but also developed unhealthy eating habits.

Over half (57%) of students perceive smoking among teenagers as a common behaviour, 33% of respondents consider drinking alcohol to be something usual, and 6% of them think that drug taking is common among adolescents.

The analysis of other functional areas shows that 4% of adolescents report emotional disturbances. Furthermore, 6% of young people struggle with problems in peer relations, 2% have low social skills. 10% of teenagers report problems in family relations, 8% of adolescents are not satisfied with how they spend their free time. Aggressive behaviour appeared to be a significant issue in 6% of surveys.

There is a large group of students (67%) whose attitude and behaviour related to computer and the Internet use is a matter of concern. 10% of students are placed in a computer- or Internet-addiction risk group.

All in all, 12% of students signalled various, multiple problems in different functional areas, which puts them under threat of addiction.

2.5.2. Parents

Forty nine parents of the students participating in the project took part in the survey. 10% of them expressed their concern for their children who, in their opinion, may be addicted to substances.

One-third (33%) of parents admit that their children have unhealthy nutrition habits. Furthermore, 6% of teenagers seem to be at a risk of computer/Internet addiction.



Considering various, multiple problems in different functional areas, 12% of adolescents may be prone to any kind of addiction.

2.5.3. Teachers

There have been 13 classes analysed by teachers. Teachers suspect that in 69% of classes most or all students smoke cigarettes. Furthermore, in 54% of classes most or all students experiment with alcohol and in 54% of classes most or all students drink alcohol regularly. In teachers' opinion drugs are less popular among teenagers – in 15% of classes most or all of the students have tried drugs, also in 15% of classes most or all teenagers use drugs on a regular basis. In teachers' opinion, in 85% of classes most or all adolescents overuse computer and the Internet.

Unhealthy nutrition habits among teenagers present a significant problem. According to teachers' opinion, in 85% of classes most or all students do not eat properly.

In 85% of classes most or all students display behaviour problems, and in 69% classes most or all of students stay within a group of friends who have behaviour problems.

1. Discussion

The findings of the survey, even if different for each country, show similar tendencies in students' behaviour and attitudes despite cultural differences. The collected data clearly shows that the use of computer by teenagers has become a significant problem nowadays. Teachers, parents and students admit that much more than half of the teenagers overuse computer, which puts them under threat of addiction in the future. Furthermore, in all of the surveyed countries parents seem to underestimate problematic Internet and computer use of their children or, yet another possibility is that teenagers are more strict in rating their behaviour and attitude towards Internet and computer. Also, adolescents' nutrition habits should be taken under consideration as many students do not eat properly. The use of addictive substances by students is a constantly marked problem.

The data collected in different countries cannot be compared due to many uncontrolled variables, which influenced the presented results. Interestingly enough, in all of the countries teenagers see themselves very differently as to how they are perceived by their parents in some functional areas. Students, who in their self estimation describe their behaviour and well-being as a matter of concern, are usually perceived by their parents rather positively, and *vice versa*. In other



words, the results obtained from the parents' questionnaires did not often parallel the results obtained from their children's questionnaires.

2. Summary and conclusions

The results of the survey presented in the report show similar tendencies in the students' behaviour and their attitudes despite cultural differences. Yet, the data collected in different countries cannot be compared due to many uncontrolled variables, which influenced the presented results.

However, it is noticeable that in all of the countries teenagers see themselves very differently to how they are perceived by their parents in some functional areas.

The collected data clearly shows that the use of computer by teenagers has become a significant problem nowadays. Teachers, parents and students admit that much more than half of teenagers overuse computer, which puts them under threat of addiction in the future.

Furthermore, students, parents and teachers agree that nutrition habits of many teenagers are unsatisfactory.

In all of the countries significant problems in the depicted functional areas apply to a small percentage of students and only accumulation of issues can be considered in terms of risk of substance or behavioural addictions.



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