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INFLUENCE OF ALEXITHYMIA, SELF-CONCEPT AND HEALTH LOCUS OF CONTROL ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION OF YOUNG PORTUGUESE

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Portugal still holds a leading place in the per capita consumption of alcohol at a world level, with high mortality rates due to hepatic cirrhosis, high indexes of road/work killings, besides a vast range of physical and mental, family and occupational health problems caused by alcohol. The narrow connection between juvenile/academic events and alcohol consumption makes youngsters vulnerable to this consumption.

A descriptive-correlational and transversal study was conducted with a 552 students' sample of the Nursing degree aiming to determine some psychological characteristics that might influence/predict alcohol use/abuse in youngsters: alexithymia, self-concept and health control locus. The data collection instrument comprehended: Graffar Social Classification; Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS20), What Do I Think Of Health, Self-Concept Clinical Inventory (SCCI) and Alcohol Involvement Scale (AIS).

Male gender is related to alcohol involvement ( $\rho = -0.276$ ;  $p = .000$ ), revealing that 35% of the male gender and 7% of the female are normally drinkers with problems.

Externally oriented thought (F3-TAS20) ( $\rho = .084$ ;  $p = .048$ ), the impulsiveness (F4-SCCI) ( $\rho = .119$ ;  $p = .005$ ) and the external control locus ( $\rho = .118$ ;  $p = .005$ ) are correlated to the involvement with alcohol.

Hierarchic multiple regression revealed as behaviour predictor variables of that involvement: gender (3.8%;  $p = .000$ ), impulsiveness (1.4%;  $p = .005$ ) and self-efficiency with inverse relation (F2-SCCI) (1.0%;  $p = .015$ ).

It is concluded that the choice of preventive strategies must be focused in actions that facilitate personal and social development, that promote personal and social skills, culminating in a freedom of choice by healthy behaviours and life-styles, diminishing the risk of PLA.