

Motivation of Male and Female Users of Illegal Drugs Undergoing Court-ordered Treatment and Voluntary Treatment



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BACKGROUND: every drug abuse treatment system has to take motivation into consideration. Gender issues play an important role in treatment. The type of treatment (court-ordered or voluntary) is equally important. It is vital to pay attention to these factors while working with clients because they may facilitate the process of recovery.

OBJECTIVES: the aim of our research study is to describe the differences in the intensity and structure of motivation among substance users in terms of two variables: gender and the type of treatment (court-ordered “protective” treatment and voluntary treatment). **METHODS:** both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to answer the research questions. The key methods were a motivational questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, and a life timeline. **SAMPLE:** the research sample consisted of 40 drug users: 10 men and 10 women treated in the Opava Prison, and 10 men and 10 women in voluntary treatment. The criteria for selection were a long-term history of illicit drug use, current abstinence, and institutionalisation in

a treatment facility. In addition, six therapists were interviewed to increase the validity of the study. **RESULTS:** the participants mostly entered treatment because of external incentives, i.e. as a result of negative effects of their substance abuse. While the structure of their motivation for abstinence does not appear to be affected by the gender factor, we found significant differences between the voluntary and the court-ordered treatment modalities which were confirmed both statistically and qualitatively. Our findings based on the data obtained from drug users in treatment were verified by the therapists. **CONCLUSIONS:** specific themes that were typical for both gender groups were identified. While minor differences in the content were found, the profile of the motivational domains is the same. More differences were observed when comparing users in voluntary treatment and users in court-ordered treatment. The results can be inspiring for those who work with ex-drug users in treatment facilities.

KEY WORDS: MOTIVATION – MALE AND FEMALE DRUG USERS – VOLUNTARY TREATMENT – COURT-ORDERED TREATMENT IN PRISON – GENDER

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