

Motivation of Female Drug Users in Compulsory and Voluntary Treatment



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BACKGROUND: A person may use illegal drugs for many reasons, which, in most cases, involve the risk of breaking the law, prosecution and, as a consequence, compulsory treatment. Female drug users often enter treatment voluntarily in an attempt to abstain and start living a life free of addictive substances. They seek reasons for abstinence during the treatment. **AIMS:** The aim of the thesis is to find out what motivates female drug users undergoing either compulsory treatment in prison or voluntary treatment, i.e. what their reasons for abstinence are, and whether compulsory treatment is of any use to them. **METHODS:** A motivation questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and a timeline. **SAMPLE:** Ten female drug users in compulsory treatment in prison in Opava, ten female drug users from the therapeutic community Podcestný Mlýn and aftercare centres in Olomouc and Brno, six therapists. This is a qualitative study. **RESULTS:** The motivation score of the participants in compulsory treatment is lower than that of the participants in voluntary treatment. The participants started treatment as a result of the secondary effects of substance abuse. In certain domains of the questionnaire enquiring

about the structure of their motivation, the samples showed significant differences in the rates identified. Female participants in compulsory treatment are motivated by their relatively high age, families, and children. As regards voluntary treatment, motives for treatment include psychological reasons, the influence of treatment in prison, and health problems. Our findings were verified by the therapists. In the course of time, users in treatment start searching for inner reasons for treatment and a change in motivation occurs. Women in compulsory treatment have little experience of treatment in comparison with the participants in voluntary treatment. **CONCLUSIONS:** In all female drug users, their role as women, which is closely connected with pregnancy and their role as a mother, plays a major part. Their partner also exerts considerable influence and often un-/knowingly keeps the user in a state of addiction. Helping professionals strive, *inter alia*, to boost client motivation and help clients internalise their reasons for abstinence. They attempt to involve a client in the treatment process as soon as possible, before a debacle situation arises, and make them explore their ambivalence about drug use, which may lead to abstinence.

KEY WORDS: MOTIVATION – FEMALE DRUG USERS – MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE – GENDER SPECIFICS IN FEMALE DRUG USERS – VOLUNTARY TREATMENT – COMPULSORY TREATMENT IN PRISON

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