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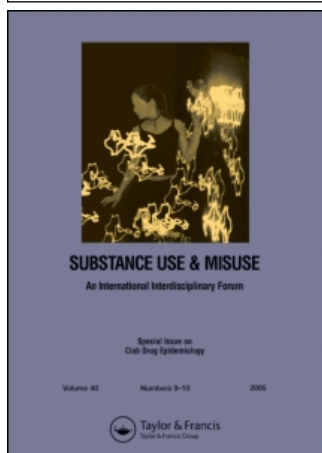
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Juvenile Drug Use and Delinquency: Youths' Accounts of Their Trajectories

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Juvenile Drug Use and Delinquency: Youths' Accounts of Their Trajectories

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This study focuses mainly on youths' opinions about their delinquency and drug use trajectories. A qualitative approach was taken for this phenomenological research. The life account method was used to conduct a total of 62 interviews: 36 boys and 26 girls recruited in youth detention and addiction treatment centers, youth centers, high schools, and on the streets of three cities in Quebec between 1996 and 2002. Thematic analysis was used, and the deviant trajectories of the youths are broken down into five stages. Our study provides an incomplete view of these youths' more or less deviant trajectories. It would be interesting to do a follow-up study.

Keywords youths; qualitative; trajectories; drugs; delinquency

Introduction

From a phenomenological perspective in which the priority is social actors' interpretations of the events in their lives, we conducted a study that focuses on youths' interpretations of their deviant trajectories, especially those surrounding their drug use and delinquency. The main purpose of this article is to address the following questions: Why do teenagers begin consuming, abusing, and even developing an addiction to drugs? What motivates teenagers to consume drugs and how do the motivations evolve along their trajectory? How do the youths link their drug use to their delinquency throughout their trajectory? And how do those who took steps to decrease or stop their drug use explain why they did so?^a

Teenage Drug and Alcohol Use

In 2002, the Quebec Institute of Statistics (QIS) reported that 71% of high school students had drunk alcohol during the previous year (Guyon and Desjardins, 2002). According to Vitaro et al. (1997), 15% of teenagers begin drinking alcohol frequently around the age of 13, whereas 10% get drunk at 14.

In Quebec (Canada), the number of young drug consumers has increased substantially since 1992, mostly due to the rise in the number of marijuana users (Vitaro, Gosselin, and

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Girard, 2002). A recent QIS inquiry (Guyon and Desjardins, 2002) reveals that 42% of Quebec teenagers consumed illegal drugs, especially cannabis (41%), in the past year. About 12% of the participants show signs of an emerging drug problem (making them vulnerable consumers, according to the QIS), whereas 5.8% already have an obvious drug problem (abusive or dependent consumers, according to QIS standards) (Guyon and Desjardins, 2002).

Drug use is much more prevalent in adult and adolescent inmate populations than in the general population (Dembo et al., 1997; Loeber et al., 1998). Moreover, many recovering drug addicts admit to having committed at least one delinquent act (Brochu, 1995; Byqvist and Olsson, 1998). Delinquency and drug use are closely linked in general, although the nature of their relationship is much more complex than is generally believed (Brunelle, Brochu, and Cousineau, 2003; Plourde and Brochu, 2003; Cousineau, Brochu, and Fu, submitted).

Drug Use and Delinquency Trajectories

Many authors who explore deviant trajectories identify various trajectory types and present them as a delinquent or drug addiction typology based on behavior and its evolution (Loeber et al., 1998; Nagin and Tremblay, 1999). Some longitudinal studies combine the evolution of deviant juvenile behavior with the teens' psychosocial environment, but from a quantitative perspective, with only a few dimensions being considered (e.g., relationship with family members, association with deviant peers, sexual promiscuity). These studies are based less on the adolescents' interpretations (inductive process) than on their hypothesizes (deductive process) (Nagin, Farrington, and Moffit, 1995; Le Blanc and Kaspi, 1998).

Describing trajectories based on the evolution of certain behaviors undoubtedly has important descriptive value; however, it tends to omit the influence of cognition and emotions (upstream) on the behavior (downstream) and vice versa. Whereas many authors have stressed the importance of cognitive and emotional processes in understanding behavior (Blumer, 1969; Brown and Harris, 1989; Debuyst, 1989; Beck and Freeman, 1990; Lazarus, 1999), little attention is given to the youth's voice, a point of view that can be particularly revealing given the chance (Billson, 1996; Way, 1998).

In this study, the juveniles' point of view is the initial reference point on which conclusions are based (inductive process). Being both different from and complementary to more traditional methods of studying juvenile deviancy, this approach is designed to attain a more diverse understanding of deviant trajectories developed during adolescence.^b

Objectives

Our study has the particularity of focusing on the processes of juvenile deviance, specifically drug use and delinquency, from a phenomenological point of view (Schutz, 1987). Gathering the youths' views on their personal experiences, particularly the paths they took, is the main focus of this study. Our first objective is to highlight the juveniles' interpretation of the links between their delinquency and their drug use. Our second objective is to understand the youths' points of view on the evolution of their deviant trajectory. The third and last objective is to identify and describe the different types of trajectories taken by the juveniles.

^bSee Stahler and Cohen (2000) for a discussion on the complementary contribution of qualitative studies in the drug abuse field.

Method

In keeping with the study's phenomenological character, a qualitative approach was used. It has already been established that this type of approach offers a better understanding of the specificity and complexity of the processes at work by providing an insider's point of view (Groulx, 1997; Pirès, 1997). Such an approach gives us access to the subjects' visions of their experiences—and not only the factual story of the events—as well as to the actors' interpretations of the events and explanations for their actions (Deslauriers and Kérésit, 1997).

Data were collected using the autobiographical life account method (Kohli, 1981; Desmarais and Grell, 1986). Beginning with a very open-ended instruction, this method leaves room for participants to deliver their accounts spontaneously and allows them to lead the interview. Life accounts are usually incomplete because participants can omit, voluntarily or not, certain aspects of their lives or their interpretations of them. Phenomenology focuses on the social actors' (conscious) reading of their own realities (Giorgi, 1997). The story may therefore not reflect all the cognitive processes; however, this is not the goal anyway. Overall, there are numerous explanations for a partial or falsified life account. However, well-managed interviews can reduce the risks of collecting incomplete accounts (Bertaux, 1997; Kohli, 1981).

To access the phenomenological material, the interviews were initially conducted in a retrospective and, as much as possible, chronological fashion to capture the interviewer's interrelations of the events arising during the youths' accounts. If certain themes were not investigated or an aspect was not described thoroughly enough, interviews were conducted with thematic^c semi-directive intervention.

Sampling was done with the help of practitioners, using the expertized selection procedure (*tri expertisé*, Angers, 1996)^d. The youths who were approached were guaranteed complete confidentiality, and compensation (a \$10 value) was offered to them. According to recruiters, the participation rate was 100%.

Sample size was determined according to the empirical saturation principal, which states that to reach a certain reflection of reality, data collection must end when the information collected becomes repetitive or anecdotal (Mayer and Ouellet, 1991; Pirès, 1997).

The results presented are based on 62 interviews conducted between 1996 and 2002 with boys ($n = 36$) and girls ($n = 26$) between 14 and 20 years old (average 16.5), from three cities in Quebec. Participants were recruited in youth detention centers ($n = 31$), addiction treatment centers ($n = 12$), youth centers ($n = 12$), high schools ($n = 6$), and the streets ($n = 1$).^e

Thematic analysis (Ghiglione and Matalon, 1978) was the main method used for material reduction and analysis. First, each interview was scrutinized to identify the significant material emerging. Three judges, including the main investigator, codified a total of six verbatim interviews to ensure a uniform analytical process. Then a transversal comparison was made of all the interviews to identify convergent and divergent points emerging.

To begin a sequential or diachronic and chronological structure analysis of a trajectory (Bertaux, 1997), three biographical lines—1) life story in general (social trajectory); 2) drug use, and 3) delinquency at different ages—were drawn and presented graphically for each

^cA grid containing different themes was used as an interview guide.

^dPractitioners were provided with a document containing instructions explaining how to introduce the study to potential participants and sampling criteria to meet.

^eThe main investigator (author) conducted 38 interviews, while 24 were conducted by one of her research assistants who is studying Special Education for her master's degree and who was trained by the author.

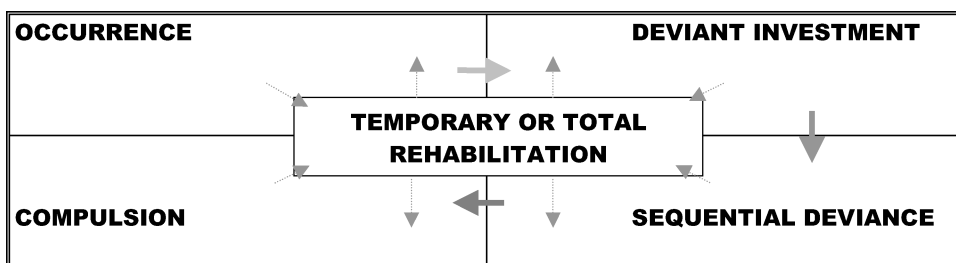


Figure 1. Drug consumption stages among the young participants.

participant, so that they could be combined. This allowed us to see which situation came first, in which context, etc. In other words, it brought the trajectory analysis to life.

Results

Results are presented in such a way that the reasons for the young participants' drug use may be associated with the drug consumption trajectory, which is divided into five stages (see Fig. 1). First, not every adolescent goes through all five stages. Figure 1 demonstrates that the usual trajectory moves clockwise (from occurrence, to more in-depth investment, to sequential deviance, to compulsion) with back-and-forth movements at partial rehabilitation stages, until definitive rehabilitation occurs.

Occurrence Stage

The drug consumption trajectory begins at the occurrence stage, with occasional drug use. Unlike the other stages in our model, the occurrence stage is obligatory since it marks the youth's initiation to alcohol or drug consumption.^f

Curiosity.

The first time I tried it, it was to see what it could do . . . (Tania, youth center)

Many teenagers indicated that they had tried drugs simply out of curiosity, to feel the effects. Most of them experimented for the first time in the company of other teens.

Pleasure.

In the beginning, I got high just for fun . . . (Rachel, youth addict center)

No matter what level or stage of drug use teenagers reach, their initial motives remain generally superficial, of a leisurely nature. They use terms like fun, trip, and cool when referring to the first time they tried illegal drugs, usually cannabis.

Family Identity.

. . . my delinquency and my drug use come from my father. I think it started there, from my father's blood. (Stéphanie, youth detention center)

^fThis stage is similar to the phase of the same name in Brochu's drug-crime integrative model (1995) concerning adults.

Like Stéphanie, some young participants' had parents or siblings who took drugs, and some went from passive witnesses to active participants. Some were even initiated by their parents or siblings. Many took the trajectory that we named *continued trajectory in the form of a deviant model* (Brunelle, Cousineau, and Brochu, 2002b). We could say that these teens followed in the family footsteps consciously and voluntarily. Some others found their deviant family situation very difficult, particularly when there was substance abuse, and reacted negatively. Most of them took a trajectory called *discontinued trajectory directed towards the search of amnesic pleasure* (idem).

Belonging to a Group of Peers.

I found it so cool. All the guys had really cool cars, BMWs, Mercedes and Jaguars. It was great, I loved it. So I started hanging around with them. They accepted me, I was the only white person and the only one of my age, and they accepted me. (Nathan, youth detention center)

Nathan is just one of the participants who developed an admiration for a group of deviant teenagers and wanted to join them, drug use being the method he used. Because adolescence is a period when people are searching for their personal identity, being accepted and respected by a group is often very important to one's self-esteem and, consequently, to their identity. Associating with deviant peers is a risk factor for future delinquency and drug use (Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller, 1992). Teenagers involved in these circles gain access to people and resource methods needed in a deviant lifestyle and are exposed to nonconformist social values (Brochu, 1995).

Drugs Used to Spend Illegal Income.

I didn't have a bank account, I didn't put anything in the bank. My parents would have found everything out. My parents didn't suspect anything like that. (Christian, youth detention center)

Some adolescents explain that taking drugs was the only fast and safe way to get rid of the money they obtained illegally (by stealing or selling drugs). People around them as well as the police were less likely to suspect their illegal activities if they bought drugs rather than material things, considering their age and their parents' physical proximity.

Described above is the inverted causal model (Hammersley et al., 1989; Collins, Hubbard, and Rachal, 1985), since it seems to be lucrative offences that drive teenagers like Christian to use drugs. Moreover, our results indicate that delinquency often appears before the use of illegal drugs in the young participants' trajectory.

Deviant Investment Stage

While the occurrence stage corresponds mostly to the youth's first experiences using drugs, the deviant investment stage refers to persistent deviant behavior, but without the seriousness of a dependency. Many youths will never go pass this stage, and some will never reach it, their first experience being their only one.

Pleasure as Reinforcement.

(I did it) to get, just to get high . . . For me, I always did it to get high. That's my reason to live, you know, have fun, being with the ones I care about and love . . . (Moh, street youth)

For most teenagers who persist in taking drugs, like Moh, pleasure remains their main motivation. We named their trajectory the *continued or increased trajectory directed towards the search of leisure pleasure* (Brunelle, Cousineau, and Brochu, 2002b). The continuous aspect is observed in their main motivation to use drugs: pleasure. Drug use may remain more or less stable during this stage or it can increase to the point of being problematic, in which case, it changes categories, as we will demonstrate.

Affiliation Desire: A Quest for Love and Identity.

I felt so good with my friends, I felt much better, I felt that we did the same things (including drugs and delinquency), and you know, I was tough, and . . . dammit, I took some, I was part of the gang, I really liked my experience. (Charlie, drug treatment center)

For some teenagers with low self-esteem, particularly those who feel abandoned or neglected by their parents, drug-use environments create a feeling of affiliation to friends, which allows them to leave behind the feeling of family disaffiliation. Still, this affiliation is made between deviant peers.

. . . I wanted to prove that I was mature, that I was somebody. So that they would like me because . . . I didn't really feel loved. (Pamela, drug treatment center)

Pamela is one of the young participants who did not stop at drug experimentation but continued to use drugs and increased her drug use. She believes that using drugs allowed her to have an interesting personality by belonging to a group of peers that she idolized, thus receiving the love that she did not believe she was getting elsewhere. The desire to take drugs to join a group during the occurrence stage can evolve into the desire to be loved by the group members and to remain a part of that group during the deviant investment stage.

Crime Facilitation.

Drugs are there to give a bit more courage. Then after, if the person wants to do it without drugs, he can do it without smoking . . . it's like when someone drinks and talks to a girl afterward. (William, youth detention center)

Still in the deviant investment stage, we observe that for some, drugs can facilitate delinquency. William explains that drugs fill a utilitarian function; it gives him the courage to commit certain crimes. We must specify here that, contrary to popular belief, the need or desire to commit a crime precedes drug consumption, drugs only being the means taken to commit it.⁸

⁸It is possible to link this theory to Goldstein's tripartite model (1985, 1987) psychopharmacological explanation because the drug's effect on certain adolescents could contribute to their committing a crime. However, teenagers' expectations surrounding the effects of the drugs taken can actually lead them to commit the offence. Let's not forget Marlatt and Rohsenow's study (1980) on placebo effects. Nevertheless, utilitarian purpose of drug use constitutes another motivation to continue consuming drugs for some adolescents.

Sequential Deviance Stage

Regular, sometimes aggravated, drug use and delinquency are characteristics of the sequential deviance stage. Not every youth goes through this stage, some staying at the occurrence or deviant investment stage.

Marking Events.

Many of the youths' discourses are built around a marking event that usually represents a turning point in their trajectory from which their deviant behavior worsened (Brunelle, Cousineau, and Brochu, 1997). The young participants built their accounts around this event, which becomes a reference point, everything seeming to happen either before or after that turning point.

As such, Louis' narrative is very enlightening. Louis is a 17-year-old whom we met in a Montreal youth detention center. He never met his father, didn't get along with his stepfather, and was taken by the Child Welfare Services at age 12. The marking event in his life was when his foster family, with whom he lived at age 14, was decertified by Child Welfare Services. He had finally been happy there:

I was starting to like them . . . Anyway, it (the foster family) was a bit of luck that I had, to get out of a bad situation I was in and become better, you know, and I started to feel better, you know . . . and bang, something comes along and slaps you in the face. It's always like that, I felt that my life was going around in circles, and it wasn't worth it, you know . . .

Louis felt disillusioned with his life and links this event to his low self-esteem that he expresses throughout his long account:

My self-esteem, it wasn't high anyway, you know . . . You don't say to yourself that you deserved it but you act like it anyway, unconsciously. You feel like that, you feel like a piece of shit . . . You feel guilty about a bunch of things that you really shouldn't be.

When referring to his delinquent behavior, Louis adds: "*In reality, I had nothing to lose.*" His interpretation of that event and its consequences caused him to have a low self-esteem and a feeling of having nothing to lose, all of which helped to strengthen his delinquency.

Consequences of Drug Use Inducing More Drug Use.

. . . I started taking drugs too much at school, I flunked 9th grade. . . I was very sad that I flunked my grade. I felt that I was inferior to the others. And, my second 9th grade was really hard, my drug use was a lot worse . . . But it was mostly school that had a big impact, a big impact on me, and that's what made me feel good (taking drugs with her friends). (Charlie, youth addict center)

As Charlie mentions, some teenagers are aware that their drug use can sometimes lead to negative consequences in their lives. So they try to forget by taking even more drugs. And this is how the vicious circle begins.

An Accumulation of Deviant Opportunities.

... We smoked... He stole bicycles. He introduced me to a guy who brought some hash... I got to know the guy... he had older friends that were always well dressed... He was part of an organized network... I began to become accepted in the network, got to know the contacts, crack houses and clients... Then, it was great, the business, always having money, the freebase. (Nathan, youth detention center)

Sometimes when adolescents are already involved in drug use or delinquency, they sink even further into delinquency by expanding into social environments that are less and less conformist. The positive value given to delinquency in these environments encourages teenagers to continue their activities, and joining these environments offers them opportunities to consume more drugs and commit more crimes.

Lucrative Crimes to Support Regular Drug Use.

At first, it was just for fun... then I sank really deep. I got into selling drugs. I started selling them to be able to take even more of them. (Nathan, youth detention center)

At the sequential deviance stage, delinquency may also begin to serve drug use: it can become very useful in supporting the adolescent's increasing drug use or abuse. It is at this point, when the teen is using drugs regularly, that lucrative delinquency, selling drugs in particular, appears. Low economic power can explain why many teenagers turn to lucrative delinquency to pay for their drugs, even inexpensive drugs (Brunelle, Brochu, and Cousineau, 2000)^h. As a result, mutual reinforcement is created between drug use and juvenile delinquency (Brochu, 1995).

Compulsion Stage

The adolescents in our study who reached the compulsion stage are those who believe they developed a serious drug problem. Again, not all participants reached this level, only a minority.

The Search for Amnesic Pleasure.

Then, I really got into it (cocaine)... Then, I started feeling bad. My only escape that I found was to take dope, and take more dope, and, uh, when I was high, well then, I didn't think of anything. (Antoine, youth detention center)

During the compulsion stage, the main motivation to take drugs is the desire to forget reality, to escape problems or, in Antoine's words, to have nothing to think about for a while. Teenagers who reached this stage followed the discontinued trajectory towards the

^hThis economic association is not observed in Goldstein's economic compulsive model (1985, 1987) concerning adult, because adults must be dependant on very expensive drugs and have low legal income to observe this phenomenon. Consequently, it is usually noticed later on in the adult drug use trajectory.

search for amnesic pleasure identified in Brunelle et al. (2002b). Discontinuity is observed when the motivations to take drugs change from the search for pleasure to the desire to forget one's problems.

It is important to note that the leisure pleasure is usually still there but the main reason to use drugs, at this stage, has become to forget one's problems. The young participants in our study revealed that family conflicts, victimization, and being taken away by Child Welfare Servicesⁱ are the main experiences that they want to forget (Brunelle, Brochu, and Cousineau, 1998). Many state that they have felt unhappy since childhood or that they are dissatisfied with their past or present quality of life. Or they believe that an event created so many negative emotions that they wanted to deaden them with drugs (Brunelle, Cousineau, and Brochu, 2002b).

Lucrative Crimes to Support Compulsive Drug Use.

I started doing a lot of coke, I drank every night, I stopped going to school... Everyday I took drugs, I drank and I stole all the time. It started becoming expensive. I sold drugs and I stole to make money and I worked a bit too... I started doing coke and that's when I decided to steal to have some.
(Julienne, youth detention center)

At the compulsion stage, teenagers who have developed serious drug problems may turn to crime to support their drug habit, their legal income being insufficient. At this point, their drug addiction is the basis of their criminal activity, as Julienne's case study (above) illustrates.^j

Thus, as in adults, drug addiction, which is characteristic of this stage, can lead to more frequent and more serious lucrative delinquency in teenagers than will the occasional drug use associated with the occurrence stage or the regular drug use typical of the deviant investment and sequential deviance stages. However, we must remember that for teenagers, lucrative delinquency linked to drug use often begins even before the addiction appears because of their very limited financial resources.

Total or Temporary Rehabilitation Stage

From the contents of the participants' life accounts, we can identify a stage in which the teenagers stopped or significantly diminished their drug use (see Fig. 1). Because the participants are young, it is difficult to tell if it is total or permanent rehabilitation; nevertheless, it is a possibility. However, this stage generally occurs many times in a person's life and is often followed by a return to another stage (Brunelle, Cousineau, and Brochu, 2002a).

A Cognitive Limit Reached.

At one point, I had two really intense weeks and I got tired of it. I asked myself: "Why? What does it do? I didn't know if my parents were going to find out. And

ⁱThis situation is probably due to our information being taken from a sample that had already been through events where they were seized by the Child Welfare Services in virtue of the Child welfare law (LPJ) and Young delinquent law (LJC). The results might not have appeared in another population.

^jThis kind of situation corresponds to the economic compulsive phase in Brochu's integrative model (1995) designed to explain drug crime relationship among adults.

then, I got tired of always being scared, and I realized that I had nothing to gain in doing that. So why should I be scared of something that doesn't change anything. I quit." (Samuel, youth center)

Some teenagers, like Samuel, explain that their halt or decrease in drug consumption is due to their realizing that they had too much to lose or nothing to gain on a personal and interpersonal level by continuing to take drugs. Others state that they didn't want their quality of life to deteriorate. These specific teenagers have maintained at least one positive relationship with a family member. They were also rather satisfied with their living conditions. In addition, these teenagers adopted a less deviant lifestyle than the others.

A Morality Limit Reached.

And then, I got to the point where I started doing coke and then I said to myself: "I don't want to sell my body on the street." I wasn't feeling very good, I was real unhappy . . . (Pamela, youth addict center)

For other teens, the feeling of having too much to lose or nothing to gain by continuing their drug use is based on a morality limit that they have reached or surpassed according to their own personal value system. Their social representations are usually the reason. For example, certain girls associate cocaine with prostitution and homelessness, and this is a limit they are not willing to cross. They therefore reduce their drug intake or enter a drug treatment center.

A Conformist Social Circle.

Two years ago, some good friends of mine helped me quit drugs. I stopped getting into fights and doing stupid things. I stopped hanging around with my gang. I changed my group of friends. They are normal people, like you and me, people like that. (Isabelle, youth detention center)

Some teenagers attribute a period in which they lowered or stopped their drug consumption to frequenting more conformist friends or, as Isabelle says, "normal people." We note a positive perception of this conformism throughout their accounts. This conformist identity or social circle is often created by a new-found love or a reunion with conformist friends.

Discussion and Conclusion

Juvenile deviant trajectories are presented in five stages, divided according to the motivations given by the adolescents for their drug use. Essentially, the more advanced the stage, the more 1) the reasons given by youths to explain their drug consumption go from pleasure to numbing their pain; and 2) delinquency is a result of drug use. However, we must stress that not every teenager goes through all the stages; many never go past the occurrence stage.

Considering that an approach based on personal "success" factors could be very interesting and positive, we will elaborate more on the results obtained at the rehabilitation stage. First, it is interesting to note that authors such as Esbensen and Elliot (1994) had already discussed the importance of conformist peer association in ceasing delinquency. This result leads us to promote intervention programs that involve helping peers with the teenage

population. These programs consist in older, more conformist teenagers being taught to listen, support, and help younger adolescents in need.

Teenagers' social representations are also worth considering, as they remind us that deviant adolescents have conventional beliefs and values and don't always want to act in a deviant way. Erickson and Weber's study (1994) on drug-addicted adults showed that the adults' beliefs, emotions, and social representations could explain why they ceased or decreased their drug use at certain times. Similarly, the teenagers in this study indicated that a situation that they see as very negative or undesirable could make them put an end to their deviant trajectory.

Finally, our results indicate that if parents maintain positive relationships with their drug-using or delinquent children, the moment they are ready to change trajectories in life, they will have a positive relationship to hold on to. Born and Thys (2001) state that the possibility of renewing family ties seems to be a factor that influences the decrease in delinquency.

Our study also revealed that positive and negative emotions appear to be key elements in understanding youths' deviant trajectories. Teenagers generally continue to use drugs for pleasure, but those who become addicted (a minority) or those who follow a more deviant trajectory than the others, are those who say they are unhappy with their past or current life conditions. Consequently, the negative emotions associated with various aspects of their life, their condition, and even themselves seem to be the greatest risk factor for deviant trajectories.

Finally, compared with most studies on drug use and delinquent trajectories, which were almost exclusively based on adult populations or which rely on a quantitative methodology (deductive process), our study provides a complementary, different, and enlightening understanding of the processes surrounding these trajectories. It shows that to obtain an overall understanding of teenagers' trajectories, one must go beyond the traditional factual analysis of the events in their lives. The focus must be on the chronological sequence of the events, while considering the perception and emotions expressed by the youths concerning the factual events. To do so, one must give youths the right to speak.

RÉSUMÉ

La lecture personnelle que font les jeunes de leur trajectoire d'usage de drogues et de délinquance constitue l'intérêt principal de cette étude. Nous avons utilisé une approche qualitative pour cette recherche phénoménologique. La méthode de récits de vie a permis de mener un total de 62 entrevues: 36 garçons et 26 filles recrutés en centre de détention et de traitement de la toxicomanie, en maison de jeunes, dans la rue et à l'école dans trois villes québécoises entre 1996 et 2002. Nous avons utilisé la méthode d'analyse thématique et nous présentons les trajectoires déviantes des jeunes par le biais de cinq stades. Notre étude procure une vision incomplète de ces trajectoires. Une étude de suivi serait intéressante.

RESUMEN

La opinión personal que tienen los jóvenes de su trayectoria de uso de drogas y de delincuencia constituye el interés principal de este estudio. En dicha investigación fenomenológica se ha utilizado un enfoque cualitativo. Los relatos de vida como método han permitido llevar a cabo un total de 62 entrevistas: 36 chicos y 26 chicas contratados en centros de detención, de tratamiento de la toxicomanía, casas de juventud, en medio de la calle o en la escuela en tres ciudades quebequenses entre 1996 y 2002. El análisis temático ha sido utilizado. Las

trayectorias marginales de los jóvenes van presentadas por medio de cinco grados. Nuestro estudio proporciona una visión incompleta de esas trayectorias más o menos apartadas de las normas. Un estudio que tuviera continuación quedaría muy interesante.

THE AUTHORS



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