

# New Psychoactive Substances. Problems of Addictions in Uzbekistan

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## Hintergrund und Fragestellung

Studies in several countries concluded that young people underestimate the risks associated with the use of new psychoactive substances (NPS). A review of literature showed that most articles are devoted to the harm and negative effects of NPS, the distribution channels, the level of awareness and the motives for using NPS. In Uzbekistan, young people mostly use NPS for recreational purposes and have a low awareness of the associated risks.

## Methoden

In this explorative study, a mixed-methods approach is utilized to collect and analyze the required data. We conducted a quantitative online survey among NPS users and 25 qualitative in-depth interviews with NPS users. Additionally, we conducted three focus group discussion with 28 medical specialists working with people with drug use disorders in Uzbekistan. The qualitative data is analyzed with the help of the software MaxQDA.

## Ergebnisse

Average age of the NPS users was 27 years. 20 out of 25 NPS reported to be in employment or self-employed, while 5 were unemployed. 47 percent of NPS users reported that they started using NPS in a social setting with friends. Mephedrone and alpha-PVP seemed to be the most popular substances in Uzbekistan, while the majority of users are using multiple substances and combine NPS with traditional drugs (cocaine, heroin) and pharmacological tablets (lirica, tramadol, regapen).

## Diskussion und Schlussfolgerung

The majority know that the NPS use is harmful, but continue to consume NPS. The motivations and reasons for NPS include pleasure, escaping reality, blocking of feelings, socialization, euphoria, and sexual enhancement. Drug addiction often have limited experience in dealing with NPS users and lack knowledge about socio-medical treatment and rehabilitation. There are some specific social-cultural factors in Uzbekistan, including shame, guilt and closeness.

## OFFENLEGUNG VON INTERESSENSKONFLIKTEN SOWIE FÖRDERUNGEN

Interessenskonflikte: Ich und die Koautorinnen und Koautoren erklären, dass während der letzten 3 Jahre keine wirtschaftlichen Vorteile oder persönlichen Verbindungen bestanden, die die Arbeit zum eingereichten Abstract beeinflusst haben könnten.

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