Substance abuse at Jordanian universities: Perspectives of pre-service special education teachers

Eman Al-Zboon & Kholoud Al-Dababneh

Pages 1-8 | Received 23 Jun 2016, Accepted 14 Nov 2016, Published online: 27 Jan 2017

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14659891.2016.1271031

ABSTRACT

The aim of this large-scale in-depth interview study was to investigate special education student-teachers’ perspectives on substance abuse and measures for combating it in Jordanian universities. Participants were 202 special education pre-service teachers who were purposively selected from three universities for open-ended interviews following a broadly structured guide. Content analysis was used to examine responses which were summarized into five major themes: (1) prevalence of substance abuse among students, (2) reasons for substance abuse, (3) the university experience as a risk for substance abuse, (4) adequacy of substance abuse services, and (5) possible solutions for addressing substance abuse. Informants perceived substance abuse among their student peers as pervasive, with the leading substances being tobacco and water-pipe smoking, followed by marijuana, synthetic marijuana (“joker”) and alcohol for men. For women, water-pipe smoking was perceived as the most common with tobacco notable. Students expressed that the university experience was a risk for substance abuse, that substance abuse education at their university was inadequate, and that a desire for more services to combat substance abuse existed. Recommendations are provided concerning the role of universities in substance abuse education and programs to combat substance abuse.

KEYWORDS: Jordan, pre-service teachers of children with disabilities, students, substance abuse, universities