



The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs

Application form for use of the ESPAD 07 Database

Date: 19/5/09

Person responsible for the dataset¹⁾

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Working title of the project:

Peer Effects in Teenage Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use: A Multi Country Analysis

Abstract: (Please describe objectives, methods and specify the research question(s), maximum 250 words.)

Peer effects, otherwise known as social interactions or network effects, refer to externalities in which the actions or characteristics of a reference group affect an individual's behaviour. Such effects are possible in a huge variety of social contexts including teenage substance use. But their existence and magnitude remains a matter of intense debate because their estimation is an exercise beset by numerous problems, including omitted variables and selection biases together with the lack of data sets that explicitly identify network (e.g. friendship) links between individuals.

In this project we will use the 2007 ESPAD data to estimate peer effects in teenage smoking, drinking and other drug taking across 40 European countries. The data are almost ideal for this purpose because they are based on a common set of questions across countries, because they include self-reported information on friends' substance use behaviour, and because they allow for school level fixed effects and instrumental variables techniques to be used to try to overcome omitted variables and selection biases. The main contribution will be in exploring the extent to which earlier findings on peer effects in this context for the UK can be generalized to other countries.

Specifically we have in mind the following research questions:

1. Do peer effects in teenage substance use exist in all ESPAD countries?
2. Does the magnitude of any peer effects found vary across countries?

¹⁾ This can only be a Principal Investigator or a Chair of an ESPAD Thematic group. When the application is approved the Principal Investigator/Chair of a Thematic group has to sign an agreement that the delivered copy of the 07 Database only will be used for the applied project and that the database will be handled according to the rules in the document "Rules for the use of ESPAD databases".

3. If so, how are differences in peer effects across countries related to cultural differences across countries, e.g. using Hofstede's 5 indicators?

Planned type of publication: Paper/article Report PhD
 Other, which:

Variables to be included in the analysis:

We need the following variables (using the number system from the 2007 questionnaire): 1, 2, 3b, 3d, 3f, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, (14a-14f), 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21d, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32d, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41c, 44, A1, A2, A3, A4c, A5, D1, D2, O3, O4, O5, O6, O7, O9, O14, R1, R2. These questions cover own behaviour, reports of friends' behaviours and control variables. Additionally we need school and country indicator variables.

Countries to be included in the analysis:

All accessible countries (Level 2)

A more limited number of countries, namely:

We request data for all 40 countries covered by ESPAD 2007 (the 35 countries from the first wave plus the 5 additional countries from the second/2008 wave).

To have the application reviewed by the Application Committee please e-mail this document to:
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