

Abstract

Background: Psychonautics is a scientific method used to describe intoxication and effects of psychoactive substances and a form of recognition used by some in order to achieve self-experience and transcendence. Hallucinogenic and psychedelic substances most commonly used for this purpose can possess therapeutical, but also destructive potential, how many researches on the psychedelic therapy topic have shown. During auto-experiments, these substances are being used in nonclinical environment and often without professional or other control, which can lead to many risks, but also benefits.

Aim: The goal is to understand the way of psychonautics self-defining through statements and actions of psychonauts. The main goal is to describe a pattern of drug use, subjective consequences and meaning of psychoactive substances use in the lives of the psychonauts from their point of view.

Sample: Research set consisted of 5 respondents chosen based on two methods – the snowball method and intended selection.

Methods: The used method of data collection was a semistructured interview, in which the collected data was analysed by the clustering method and pattern recording method and an online questionnaire that has been evaluated based on descriptive analysis principles by an answer sheet.

Results: Characteristic patterns of psychonauts' drug use were identified as very similar to psychedelic therapy. The most commonly used substances are cannabis, hallucinogenic mushrooms and LSD. Negative effects of psychonautics were defined mainly on psychological and social levels. In consequence of psychonautics, there has been a positive change in the value system of the users from their own perspective, in their attitude and actions on both psychological and social levels. Majority of the respondents rate this experience as most significant. The most commonly mentioned motivational factors are self-recognition, transcendence, being one with oneself, with others and with God.

Resume: Intention and goals of the thesis were fulfilled. Psychonautics exhibits the same features as psychedelic therapy except it is set in nonclinical environment without professional control. Although this form of psychoactive substances use does not have to pose a thread to society, it brings certain risks to particular users.

Keywords:

psychonaut – psychonautics – altered states of consciousness – drug use – consequences of drug use – motivation to use drug