Abstract:
This study assessed whether (i) adolescents treated in hospital for acute alcohol intoxication show different habitual drinking patterns from adolescents of the general population and whether (ii) predictors for repeated treatment can be identified. A sample of adolescents who had undergone inpatient treatment for intoxication (clinical sample) comprised n=482 under 18-year-old subjects, who had additionally been surveyed within the context of the project "Hart am Limit" (HaLT) between 2008 and 2010 (mean age: 15.1 years, 44.4% girls). The population sample consisted of n=1,994 Bavarian students who had taken part in the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) in 2007 (mean age: 15.7 years; 54.4% girls). Within the clinical sample, gender differences in age, level of education and motivation to get drunk were found. Adolescents of the clinical sample were on average younger and had a higher level of education than adolescents in the general population sample. Although students in the clinical sample drank alcohol less often (2.8 vs. 5.0 times within the past 30 days), they drank more alcohol per occasion (36.4 g vs. 22.3 g pure alcohol per drinking day). Assessments by a third-party show that the risk of repeated inpatient treatment due to alcohol intoxication is positively associated with perceived psychosocial stress and negatively associated with perceived family
A hospitalisation due to alcohol intoxication does not sufficiently indicate alarming habitual drinking behaviour. The risk of hospitalisation seems to depend on the drinking context and other factors of the drinking situation. Nevertheless, a sub-group of adolescents, who seem to display an elevated risk for intoxications, could be identified. It is for this sub-group, that supportive measures must be made available.