Attitudes, High-Risk Behaviors and Interaction with Others in Substance Abuse in the Tabriz's High School Students

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Abstract: Adolescent substance abuse potentially holds a number of negative implications for the health and well-being of the individual, including increased risk for injury and death from interpersonal violence, motor vehicle accidents and drowning. There is limited information available on adolescent's substance abuse in Iran. The main objective of this research is recognition of student's attitudes, risk behaviors and their connectedness to peers, parents and teachers in relation to addiction. Of all grade-9 and grade-10 students in Tabriz, Iran, 500 were randomly sampled. A self- administered questionnaire was used to collect demographic data, student's attitudes, risk behaviors and their connectedness to peers, parents and teachers in relation to addiction. The findings showed that 92% of these students denied the usage of the drugs and 10% were used to drugs as a positive mode. But 27% believed that the curiosity is the main factor to get in these drugs and 50% were ashamed of the worst consequences of these drugs. Due to the positive attitude about 10% of the students to the drugs and the results from the different studies can play a great role in prevention of the drugs.

Key words: Adolescent, substance abuse, attitude, risk behaviors

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent substance abuse potentially holds a number of negative implications for the health and well-being of the individual, including increased risk for injury and death from interpersonal violence, motor vehicle accidents and drowning (Miller *et al.*, 2001) increased probability of engaging in high risk sexual behaviors (Flisher *et al.*, 1996) and increased risk for suicidal ideation and behaviors (Stoelb, 1998). Priority health-risk behaviors, which contribute to the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among youth and adults, often are established during youth, extend into adulthood, are interrelated and are preventable (Grunbaum *et al.*, 1999). An association has also been found between adolescent substance abuse and co-morbid psychiatric disorders, such as conduct and mood disorders (Gilrame, 2000). Adolescent substance abuse has been associated with academic performance, declining grades, absenteeism, truancy and school drop-out (Chen *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, some other studies indicate that there is a link between substance abuse and getting involved in a crime and a high prevalence of substance abuse among juvenile offenders (Zhang and Wieczorek, 1997).

Substance abuse is one of the most common problem and challenge for health and social policy makers in the world (Azamy *et al.*, 2004). Iran has the highest rate of using narcotic drugs in the world (Bahranian *et al.*, 2003). According to the studies carried out among high school students of Tehran, about 25% of them tried the use of narcotic and it is estimated that, 5% of them are current user of drugs (Jazaiery *et al.*, 2001). During 2000 to 2004, it is estimated the number of addicted students about 6000-10000 in the country (Rahimimoagar and Soheilezadian, 2004). In addition, 26.5% boys and 17.5% girls in later years of high school had at least one addiction history in Kerman city (Zeiaedini *et al.*, 2005).

Epidemiological study in 30 European country showed that, 50% of students with 15-16 years old, have experienced using Alcohol and drugs (Hibell *et al.*, 2000). There is limited information available on adolescent's substance abuse in Iran. The results of two

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studies which were conducted on 10-grade male students in Shiraz (Ayatollhi *et al.*, 2005) and Tabriz (Mohammad Poorasl *et al.*, 2007) cities showed that 2.1% Shiraz's students and 2.0% of Tabriz's students had lifetime drug abuse.

Numerous studies showed that, addiction in adults relate to the age of high school. Study has shown that young people are more likely to have mental health problems and to use substances in the later years of schooling if they report low school connectedness and interpersonal conflict in early secondary school (Lyndal *et al.*, 2007). Overall young people's experiences of early secondary school and their relationships with others may continue to affect their moods, their substance use in later years and their likelihood of completing secondary school. Having both good school connectedness and good social connectedness is associated with the best outcomes. The challenge is how to promote both schools and social connectedness to best achieve these health and learning outcomes (Libbey, 2004).

Schools use a large number of different strategies to reduce or prevent youth substance use and other problem behaviors. A national study in USA of school assed prevention (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 2001) showed that the median number of different prevention activities currently underway in the typical school was 14. The number of such activities ranged from o in some schools to 66 in others (Gottfredson and Wilson, 2003). So examining the risk and protective factors for mental health and substance use in Tabriz's students is necessary; because determining the factors that affect to youth attitudes, changing the lifestyle are the most important steps that must be taken in schools. Although, In Iran numerous organizations are responsible for decreasing addiction, but it is rarely paid attention to the effective school-based substance abuse preventions. Surveys shows that from 3031 articles published about drugs in three decades ago, only four articles were about exactly in social influence of education and mass media (Rahimimoagar *et al.*, 2004). The main objective of this

research, is recognition of student's attitudes, risk behaviors and their connectedness to peers, parents, teachers in relation to addiction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is descriptive and carried out as Cross-sectional mode. For gathering the data, we used questionnaire composed of two parts: Demographical factors and the related question about student's opinions in the addiction, high risk behavior and social network connectedness. The questionnaire was designed as Likert Five degree mode. In addition, it was self-made that considered technical opinions in two turns and submitting them (Validity and Reliability) was Carried out on 42 ones (15 boys 27 girls). These were acceptable and the Correlation rate was 0.74.

The number of the sample in this study were 500 ones, boys and girls guidance school and high-school from Tabriz. These data were taken up randomly from public and privet schools of Tabriz. The rate of gathering information was 438 ones (87%).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean age of student was 16/43±0/96. 47.9 and 52.1% of the sample were male and female, respectively. 2.3% of these student were from guidance school and 30.9% first year of high school and 59.7% the Second year of high-School. Totally, 33.1% of them were the only child of the family. Some of their father's job was 55.8% free jobs 36.2% governmental alderman and 3% unemployment. These families educations were 57.1% fathers and 46.1% Mothers were diploma and higher education.

The finding shows that 92% of these students denied the usage of the drugs and 10% were used to drugs as a positive mode. But 27% believed that the curiosity is the main factor to get in these drugs and 50% were ashamed of the worst consequences of these drugs. Table 1 presents the attitude of students toward drug using.

Table 1: Presents the attitude toward drug using Tabriz's high school students

Options	Answer				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Use of drugs is denied in my opinion	81.7	7.6	2.5	2.5	2.5
Does the use of drugs influence on the happiness?	6.7	3.7	4.8	6.5	78.3
Does the curiosity influence on the use of drugs?	9.4	18.0	15.2	21.7	35.7
How does the statistical results influence on your opinions?	28.8	22.6	18.9	18.7	11.1
Attitudes towards harsh behaviors	75.6	7.4	2.3	2.1	12.7
Can you refuses the drugs which offered by friends?	13.8	5.8	6.2	14.1	60.2
Do you keep your relation ship with your addicted friends?	2.1	1.8	5.5	11.1	79.5
Do you get in crowding addicted atmosphere?	7.6	18.4	20.7	31.3	21.9
Interaction with relatives a bout drugs	13.4	21.7	18.9	26.5	19.6
Do you talk about drugs with your friends?	9.0	17.5	18.9	27.9	26.7
Do you talk about drugs with your parents?	40.8	24.0	12.7	13.6	9.0
Do you talk about drugs with your parents?	31.3	32.3	18.7	13.1	4.6

In the other hand, 12.7% of the student cannot reject the use of drugs easily and only 4% of these go to the dangerous places. To find a good way of influencing drugs on the attitudes, social connectedness to friends and family members showed that the students mostly talk about the drugs with their families friends and they their teachers and only % 9 do not introduce it to their parents.

In this study 92% of the student reject the use of the drugs and this is very close to the Tehranian student and 11.5% of them think that it is a better way to get happy (Jazaiery *et al.*, 2001). In recent study, in Kerman 93.2% of the students believed that addiction is a most important problem in youth and also 9.4% Kerman students (Zeiaedini *et al.*, 2005) and 7.1% Tehran's students believed that curios can be attractive variable to use of drugs. The comparison of potential behaviors in Tabriz student showed that 12.7% cannot accept the drugs easily but the rate of this case was about 11.7% in Tehran but again 7.1% wanted to try it out one time. During the 30 days proceeding the survey among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years in U.S.A results showed 64.5% had drunk alcohol and 53.0% had used marijuana (Grunbaum *et al.*, 1999).

Generally 13.8% Tabriz and 32.1% Tehran student do not want it but their relationships with addicted ones and 4% of Tabriz and 6.4% Tehran student had a positive attitudes towards the drugs. There is little empirical evidence of how policy directly or indirectly influence students' drug taking. But school drug policies must be comprehensive to parents and students, how they are implemented and what policy variables impact students' drug use at school and their perceptions of other students' drug use at school. Along with connectedness to family, connectedness to school during adolescence has emerged as a key area for building protective factors for positive educational outcomes and lower rates of health-risk behaviors (Libbey, 2004). School is particularly important as a social and learning environment, impacting not only on academic and vocational pathways, but also on present and future health (Lyndal *et al.*, 2007).In this study, social interaction of students showed that parents friends and teachers talk about the drugs and 9% of them of not introduce their friends to the family members.

CONCLUSION

Due to the positive attitude about 10% of the students to the drugs and the results from the different studies can play a great role in prevention of the drugs. Their interaction can be considered by involvement based on prevention through peers at school or homes and conducting the National Alternative High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey in Iran.

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