

Epidemiology of Alcohol Abuse in Iran

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Background: World Health Organization report in 2014 indicates a considerable range of alcohol consumption across the world which had a growing trend during last 5 years. A study on 5,231 students in 57 universities has shown that alcohol consumption became more common than other drugs, and alcohol is in the first rank for repeated usage. In another study in 2010, the prevalence of alcohol use was 15.1% among high school students in Tehran with predominant use among boys. This study was aimed to estimate the hidden population of alcohol consumer, commissioned by the Bureau of Mental and Social health and Addiction, Ministry of Health of Iran.

Methods: In 2012, Iranian Ministry of Health has implemented a national program for estimation of the frequency of alcohol abusers from the hidden and high risk population by an indirect method. The method of network extension, social network measurement and data collection tool were done through questionnaire.

Results: The consumption of alcohol is more than other substances in the country and it is estimated to involve 1,583,752 individuals. This was observed in all of the provinces and included more than 2,000 individuals per 100,000 population which consumed alcohol at least once in the past year. In young population, 1,063,557 people have consumed alcohol at least once in the previous year, which represents an incidence of 5%. Consumption in men aged 18 to 30 years is higher than the other age-groups. In terms of geographical separation, Isfahan, Fars, Tehran, Kurdistan, Zanjan, Yazd and Golestan provinces are at a very high risk.

Conclusion: Alcohol is a serious health problem in our society. Based on higher rate of consumption in men and younger population, there must be higher attention. Adjusting systems for alcohol screening and treatment policies should be prioritized. In addition, studies to estimate the knowledge, attitude and practice of alcohol abusers are required.

Keywords: Alcohol Drinking; Epidemiology; Ethanol; Iran

A Comparative Review on National Alcohol Prevention Policies in Different Selected Countries

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Alcohol, with its impact on both communicable and non-communicable diseases, is considered as the third global public health priority. Alcohol ranked third among causes of ill health and premature death, and ranked second in terms of cost among all the substances of abuse, after tobacco, even though nearly half the world's population drinks alcohol.

In most countries, where alcohol is considered as legal; governments facing the dilemma of dealing with alcohol, as they play the roles of the regulator, the wholesaler, and the retailer. In these countries, a broad unity of purpose and action has been emerged within the alcohol problems perspective, against diverse cultural, social and economic situations and experiences with alcohol at national level. The scientific basis for that perspective enrooted in a sustained global research effort. Many common features of these policies include monitoring of public health and safety impacts of policies, increased prevention programming (with a focus on children and youth and on modifying risky drinking behaviors), rigorous monitoring and enforcement of laws, enhancement of the addiction treatment and rehabilitation system, evaluation of prevention policies and programs and involvement of public health experts in the planning of future changes to alcohol policy. Many success stories has raised in reducing the alcohol problem in different countries, however, many challenges still exist.

In this presentation policies of different countries on alcohol problem prevention were reviewed to provide a wealth of evidences to address the issues that policy makers are facing in terms of alcohol prevention program in Iran.

Keywords: Alcohol-Induced Disorders; Iran; Health Policy; Prevention