Title: Predictors of Sexual Risk Behaviors among Iranian Adolescent Females: A Population Based Study

Abstract: Introduction: Female adolescents may be more susceptible to sexual transmitted diseases when exposed. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the prevalence of sexual risk behaviors and related factors that influence the initiation of sexual experience among female adolescents.

Methods: The current study is a population-based cross sectional survey with multistage sampling method. This study was conducted among 609 female adolescents in Tehran, Iran in 2010 using the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior System questionnaire. Results: About 9% of girls had sexual experience and 1.6% of girls had sexual experience for the first time before age 13 years and 8.4% of girls were currently sexually active. Among girls who had had sexual experience, 74.5% reported that had not used a condom during last sexual intercourse, 33.3% reported that had not used birth control methods to prevent pregnancy before last sexual contact, and 13.2% had drunk alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse. Univariate analysis of factors associated with sexual experience among girls showed the significant differences in the term of sexual experience found only in older age, school type, fathers' and mothers' educational level, use of punishment by parent, parental supervision on adolescent friend selection, pattern decision making in family, preferring male sex by parent, social class, life time smoking cigarettes, life time smoking water pipe, life time drinking alcohol, life time using opium, marijuana, crack, and ecstasy. Multiple logistic regression analysis with sexual experience among girls revealed that mothers' educational level, social class, life time smoking water pipe, and life time drinking alcohol were also significant factors. Conclusion: Sexual activity is a proximate cause of sexually transmitted disease and unwanted pregnancy that are prevalent among adolescents. Therefore, public health policies aimed at reducing such activity would have health benefits. Community and school based sexual health promotion programs among adolescents is recommended.

Adolescents, sexual, female, risk behavior

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