Original article

Prevalence of Smoking among the Students resided at Dormitories in Golestan University of Medical Sciences, Iran

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Abstract:

Introduction: Cigarette smoking leads to harmful physical and emotional problems and also is a predisposed factor for the addiction. The aim of this study was an attempt to determine the rate of prevalence and causes of smoking among the students of Golestan University of Medical Sciences who resided in the dormitories. ***Material & Methods:*** A cross-sectional analytical study conducted among the resident students of dormitories in 2010. The sample size consisted of all the university dormitory students. The data gathered using a validated and reliable questionnaire. The data analyzed using SPSS software and statistical tests including Chi-square, Logistic regression and Independent t-test. ***Results:*** Of 669 students, 538 (80%) of them filled out the questionnaires completely. 67.3% (362 subjects) were female. 6.1% (33 students) were smoker and 83.5% of them had experiences of cigarette smoking. The most important reasons for the smoking tendency were "having a smoker friend in 33%, a personal interest 27% and as hobby in 24% of the cases". There were significant relation between "age, sex, region and year of education" with smoking (P<0.05). However, we couldn't find any significant relation between major and marital status with cigarette smoking (P>0.05). ***Conclusion:*** The results indicated low prevalence of cigarette smoking among the students. However, preventive measures should be taken to conduit youth toward healthier behaviors. It seems parental control and monitoring children's friend finding are crucial issue.

Keywords: cigarette smoking; prevalence; university student; dormitory; tendency; Iran

Introduction:

Smoking is considered a major preventable cause of morbidity and mortality, causing over four million deaths a year[1]. This figure is forecast to increase to 10 million deaths per annum by 2030; 70 % of which will be in developing countries[2]. Cigarette smoking is well known as risk factor for many of health problems such as lung cancer, cardiovascular diseases, intrauterine growth retardation, spontaneous abortion, antepartum hemorrahage, female infertility, peptic ulcer disease, chronic obstructive lung disease, sexual dysfunction in men, and so on. Passive smokers can also acquire diseases associated with cigarette smoking[3-7]. Beside harmful physical and emotional problems, smoking is a predispose factor

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for the addiction. When people want to quit, they also have a psychological habit to break. That is why we must emphasis on prevention and preventive measure [8].

The World Health Organization estimates that 1.3 billion people smoke and more than 80 percent of these people live in countries with low or middle income levels[9]. Numerous studies indicated that both in developed and developing countries the prevalence of smoking is increasing in youths, while the age of smoking initiation is decreasing[10]. One of the main reasons that young people smoke is to be like their friends and gain excitement. This may become very soon a part of their behaviors[11]. Twenty eghit point seven percent of smokers are between the ages 18-24 years[12]. Studentship is a period that many of behavioral patterns are forming and establishing, so smoking among the students should be considered carefully[13].

The youth including medical students are the main part of Iran's population. Therefore we cannot ignore their influence on health system of the country. Medical students may be considered as a role model for other young people. The students studied in governmental university while pay no cost, then the society expects to have healthy educated doctors and nurses for a healthy community. The aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence and causes of smoking among Golestan University of Medical Sciences students.

Material & Methods:

A cross-sectional analytical study conducted among the students residing in dormitories of Golestan University of medical sciences, Gorgan, located in Northern Iran, in 2010. The sample size consisted all of the university dormitories' students. A 25-item self-administered questionnaire incuding demographic characteristics and needed factors was designed and validated in a pilot study. The content validity was verified by a panel of experts, and the reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 80 percent obtained in a pilot study on 15 cases. A team of expert students, especially trained for this study distributed the anonymous questionnaires among the participants, while giving adequate explanation and reassurance. Of 669 male and female residents in four dormitories, 538(80.4%) participants filled out the questionnaires confidentially. The obtained data were analyzed by SPSS software package version 16.0 using t-test for comparison of mean values and Chi square test for comparing the frequencies between smokers and non-smokers. Logistic regression analysis was fitted to the data to calculate odds ratio and 95% confidence interval (95% CI) were employed to evaluate the gender-specific associations of starting to smoke with possible associated factors such as socioeconomic factors, smoking of relatives and friends, parents' marital status. The P-Value less than 0.05 was considered as statically significant.

Results:

Of 538 students, 67.3% (362 subjects) were female and 92.4% (497) single. The mean age of smokers were 22.18 ±2.35 years (age range: 18 to 39) (Table 1). 17.3 % of them had smoker fathers, 1.3% smoker mothers and 9.5% had smoker siblings. The average starting age of smoking was 20.65± 1.98 years. 47.8% of the students stated at least once a day exposed to someone else's smoke. Prevalence of smoking was 6.1% while, 83.5% of student had experiences of cigarette smoking atleast for once.

Table 1 : Demographic characteristics of the subjects studied

Variable		Number	Percent
Ethnicity	Fars	342	63.6
	Turkmen	110	20.4
	Azeri	33	6.1
	Others	53	9.9
	Total	538	100
sex	Male	90.9%	28.5%
	Female	9.1	71.5
Marital status	Single	497	92.4
	Married	41	7.6
Major	Medicine	190	35.3
	Nursing	123	23.8
	Health	67	12.5
	Midwifery	62	11.5
	Anesthesiology	40	7.4
	Others	56	9.5
Gender	Female	362	67.3
	Male	176	32.7