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Prevalence of Alcohol Problem Drinking Among the Indigenous Population in Colombia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Some studies have reported a high prevalence of alcohol drinking problem among indigenous populations in Latin America. However, there is no available information on some of the variables associated with alcohol problem drinking.

Objective: To determine the prevalence and some factors associated with alcohol problem drinking among a sample of Colombian indigenous population in Bogotá, Colombia.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted using a Colombian indigenous population sample over 15 years old living in the community. Alcohol problem drinking was quantified with the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) (Cut-off point of 8). Non conditional logistic regression was computed to adjust associated variables.

Results: A total of 184 subjects from the indigenous population participated in this research. The mean age was 32.0 ± 14.0 years and educated for 6.0 ± 3.7 years. A total of 84 participants (45.7%) reported alcohol problem drinking. The AUDIT showed Cronbach alpha of 0.877. Male sex (OR=4.2; 95%CI, 2.2-7.6), and longer time living in Bogotá (OR=1.8; 95%CI, 1.0-3.2) were associated with alcohol problem drinking.

Conclusions: Almost 50% of the Colombian indigenous population living in Bogotá meet criteria for alcohol problem drinking. Male gender and longer time living in Bogotá are related to alcohol problem drinking. Further studies are needed to formally identify alcohol abuse or dependence.

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Prevalencia del consumo problemático de alcohol entre los indígenas colombianos

R E S U M E N

Palabras clave:

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Antecedentes: Algunos investigadores informan de alta prevalencia de consumo problemático de alcohol entre los indígenas de América Latina. Sin embargo, no hay información disponible acerca de algunas variables asociadas al consumo problemático de alcohol.

Objetivo: Estudiar la prevalencia y algunos factores asociados al consumo problemático de alcohol en una muestra de una comunidad indígena en Bogotá, Colombia.

Método: Se llevó a cabo un estudio transversal. Participó una muestra de indígenas mayores de 15 años. El consumo problemático de alcohol se cuantificó con el test de identificación de trastornos del alcohol (AUDIT) (punto de corte, 8). Se realizó un modelo de regresión logística no condicional para ajustar las variables asociadas.

Resultados: Un total de 184 indígenas participaron en este estudio. La media de edad fue de $32,0 \pm 14,0$ años y el tiempo de escolarización, $6,0 \pm 3,7$ años. Un total de 84 participantes (45,7%) informaron de consumo problemático de alcohol. El AUDIT mostró una consistencia interna de 0,877. El sexo masculino (odds ratio = 4,2; intervalo de confianza del 95%, 2,2-7,6) y mayor permanencia en Bogotá (odds ratio = 1,1; intervalo de confianza del 95%, 1,0-3,2) se asociaron al consumo problemático de alcohol.

Conclusiones: En Bogotá, cerca del 50% de los indígenas colombianos hacen un consumo de alcohol problemático. El sexo masculino y vivir en Bogotá están relacionados con el consumo problemático de alcohol. Se necesitan más investigaciones en que se realicen diagnósticos formales de abuso o dependencia de alcohol.

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Background

Colombia is a South American country inhabited by approximately 47 million people. Most of the population is mixed people descended of Caucasians, African Americans and indigenous. Today, around 87 indigenous groups account for less than 3.3% of the Colombian population. Most of these groups live in the jungle or in indian reservations and few in the city.¹

In Colombia, there are no studies reporting the frequency of disorders related to alcohol drinking by the questionnaire Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT). However, the prevalence of alcohol problem drinking reached 5.7% (1.4% in women and 10.0% in men) of the general population, according to the CAGE questionnaire.²

Some studies with non-indigenous populations from other South American countries with the AUDIT show different prevalence of alcohol problem drinking. For example, in Brazil's urban population, Mendoza-Sassi et al³ reported a prevalence of alcohol problem drinking of 7.9% (14.5% in men and 2.4% in women).

On the other hand, Venezuela's indigenous residents in mountain villages, Seale et al⁴ observed that 46.6% of participants reported alcohol problem drinking (86.5% in men and 7.5% in women), quantified on the AUDIT. Subsequently, Seale et al found in a sample of indigenous dwelling in urban area of Venezuela showed 55.4% alcohol problem drinking (88.5% in men and 17.3% in women).⁵

Weisner et al⁶ observed that the pattern of drinking and attitude toward alcohol were related to the tribe of origin, age and socioeconomic status. Seale et al⁷ and Yu et al⁸ suggested that the high prevalence of alcohol problem drinking in indigenous is explained by cultural change or transition. Also, Beal et al⁹ concluded that increased consumption of alcohol in American Indians living in reservations is due to the lack of reinforcements from everyday life such as employment, housing, education and health care.

In general, studies show that indigenous population has an increased risk of alcohol abuse or dependence.¹⁰⁻¹⁴ Disorders related to alcohol drinking are the main cause of global morbidity due to chronic diseases, injuries and violent deaths.¹⁵⁻¹⁸ Similarly, disorders related to alcohol consumption account for a significant number of potential years of life lost because of disability and death.^{19,20}

The objective of this study was to determine the prevalence of alcohol problem drinking and explore some associated variables in a sample of indigenous residents in the urban area of Bogotá, Colombia.

Method

It was designed a cross-sectional study. Written permission was requested to the senior authority of an indigenous community living in Bogotá, Colombia, according to Colombian law. Participants gave verbal consent after learning objectives and that investigation posed no risk to

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