



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Association between the number of sexual partners and alcohol consumption among schoolchildren^{☆,☆☆}

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KEYWORDS

Adolescent;
Binge drinking;
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Abstract

Objective: To determine the association between the number of sexual partners and alcohol consumption in adolescents and young schoolchildren.

Methods: The sample consisted of students from public schools aged 12–24 years who answered the Brazilian version of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey questionnaire. The analysis was performed by multinomial logistic regression model.

Results: 1275 students were analyzed. For females, having two to five partners was associated with age ≥ 15 years (OR 14.58) and maternal education up to incomplete high school or lower educational level (OR 3.37). No consumption of alcohol decreased the chances of having more partners by 96%. For males, the associated variables were: age ≥ 15 years (OR 18.15); having no religion (OR 3.55); age at first dose ≤ 14 years (OR 3.48). Binge drinking increases the chances of having a higher number of sexual partners.

Conclusion: Regardless of the number of partners, binge drinking and age of alcohol consumption onset are risk factors for vulnerable sexual behavior.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Adolescente;
Bebedeira;
Comportamento
sexual

Associação entre número de parceiros sexuais e consumo de bebida alcoólica em escolares**Resumo**

Objetivo: Determinar a associação entre número de parceiros sexuais e consumo de bebida alcoólica em adolescentes e jovens escolares.

Métodos: A amostra foi composta por estudantes da rede estadual com idade entre 12 e 24 anos, que responderam a versão brasileira do questionário *Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. A análise foi realizada por modelo de regressão logística multinomial.

Resultados: Foram analisados 1.275 estudantes. Para o sexo feminino ter entre dois a cinco parceiros esteve associado com idade ≥ 15 anos (OR 14,58) e escolaridade materna com ensino médio incompleto ou inferior (OR 3,37). Não fazer uso de bebida alcoólica diminuiu em 96% as chances de ter maior número de parceiros. Para o sexo masculino as variáveis associadas foram: idade ≥ 15 anos (OR 18,15); ausência de religião (OR 3,55); idade da primeira dose ≤ 14 anos (OR 3,48). O envolvimento em bebedeira demonstrou mais chances de ter maior número de parceiros sexuais.

Conclusão: Independente do número de parceiros, a bebedeira e a idade de iniciação alcoólica são fatores de risco para comportamento sexual vulnerável.

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Introduction

Sexual risk behavior is a consequence of practicing unprotected sex¹ and of having a higher number of sexual partners, contributing to a greater risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and the occurrence of unwanted pregnancy.^{2,3}

The first adolescent sexual intercourse is often not planned, being referred to as "it simply happened."^{4,5} Early sexual initiation is a concern, as it may be accompanied by STD exposure factors due to the increased number of partners and failure to use condoms.⁶

Sexual risk behavior does not occur in isolation, as it is associated with alcohol consumption, which acts as a sexual risk indicator.⁷ Drinking alcohol negatively influences adolescent behavior, resulting in decreased perception and control of the sexual experience.⁸

In Brazil, studies^{9,10} have verified that regular alcohol consumption is higher among students who have had sexual intercourse, due to the disinhibition effects caused by its consumption.¹⁰ In addition, the use of alcohol in the month and before the last sexual intercourse increase the chances of having multiple sexual partners.¹¹ In this sense, these data demonstrate that alcohol consumption is a matter of concern in this population group. However, studies that address this context are carried out mostly in large cities,¹²⁻¹⁴ representing a scarcely assessed topic in population of the countryside.

Therefore, information covering other regions can help identify risk groups and patterns, thus allowing the monitoring of adolescent health levels aiming at creating programs and promoting health-oriented policies.

Based on the several negative effects these behaviors can have on adolescents' lives and on the lack of results on the subject, especially in the assessed area, it was appropriate to carry out the present study, which aimed at establishing

the association between the number of sexual partners and alcohol consumption among adolescent students.

Methods

An epidemiological, cross-sectional, descriptive, analytical, and school-based study was conducted in public (state) elementary and high school institutions in the city of Petrolina, state of Pernambuco, Brazil, from March to July 2014.

Adolescents that met the following criteria participated in the study: adolescent or young individual (according to the WHO definition) of both genders; able to read and write in the Portuguese language; appropriately enrolled in institutions located in the urban area of Petrolina. Subjects that had a medical diagnosis of neurological disorders or physical condition abnormalities that prevented completion of the tool, those who did not report gender or age, and those who did not adequately fill out the questionnaire were excluded.

The WinPepi program (Calculator Programs for the Health Sciences. Oxford University, USA) was used to quantify the minimum sample size, considering a population of 25,635 students, confidence interval of 95%; maximum tolerable error of 4 percentage points, and sample loss of 20%; and, as this study dealt with different risk behaviors, the prevalence used was 50%, totaling 474 adolescents. A sampling design effect of 2.0 was considered, totaling 948 adolescents; however, 1275 adolescents were evaluated.

All 29 public schools in the urban area were considered eligible; of these, nine were selected, representing 31.03% of the schools. School distribution was carried out by size, after they were classified as small (less than 200 students), medium (200-499 students), or large (500 or more students).¹⁵

The schoolchildren and at least one parent or legal guardian (if the individual was aged <18 years) who agreed

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