

ABSTRACT

A community based cross-sectional descriptive study of health risk behaviors such as smoking, betel chewing and alcohol/beer drinking among male youth 15 to 24 years of age in 2014, was carried out in urban area of Magway Township. In this study, 230 male youth were face to face interviewed with pre-tested structured questionnaire, to determine the risk behaviors and related health knowledge among the community youth. Chi square test and 95% CI were used to examine associated factors with risk behaviors. The results showed that most of them were single and students. Majority of them received low income level (up to 300000 kyats). The prevalence of risk behaviors were smoking (48.3%), betel chewing (55.7%), beer drinking (48.7%) and alcohol drinking (38.7%). Among the study population, (45.2%) of respondents were in good knowledge score level of all risk behaviors. Presence of risk behaviors in friends and peer pressure were associated in risk behaviors among respondents. Presence of drinking status in family was associated the respondents drinking status. Presence of tobacco and betel chewing in family was not associated with respondents' use. There was no association between knowledge level and risk behaviors. Beer and alcohol drinking were (1.8) and (2.3) times higher among students. Respondents who have friends drinking beer were 25 times more likely to drink beer. Having friends drink alcohol were 16 times more likely to drink alcohol. Moreover tobacco, betel quid, beer and alcohol were easily bought everywhere by under 18 years of age. We found that these risk behaviors were correlated with each other. The study conducted that smoking, betel chewing and beer and alcohol drinking among male youth shows no sign of decreasing. To reduce these risk behaviors, evaluation of actual circumstances, behavior corrections and specific preventive measures compatible with existing culture and changing lifestyles should be undertaken. Therefore the data from this study will provide sufficient and valuable information for public health intervention programs. The results are projected to develop promotion of healthy life style and create effective health education plan.