

ABSTRACT

In the age of information, more and more adolescents access information through electronic media (television, video and internet). Moreover, for the development of the nation, attitudes of adolescents towards health risk behaviors such as smoking, alcohol drinking and sexuality are important. But most adolescents do not want to provide the information. Recognizing the importance of these issues, this study was conducted with the objectives to identify electronic media exposure and attitudes towards smoking, alcohol drinking and sexual behavior among school going adolescents. A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted among school going adolescents who are attending at private academic classes in Bago during September-October 2010. Consecutive sampling was applied to recruit 200 adolescents and self-administered interviews were carried out by using structured pre-tested questionnaires. This study identified the exposure to electronic media, attitudes towards smoking, alcohol drinking and sexual behavior among adolescents and their associations. TV and video were most popular among adolescents and about 90% watched TV and video. Fifty-four percent of male adolescents and only 19% of female adolescents could have accessed to Internet. Overall, the exposure to electronic media is a little higher for males than for females. Concerning attitudes towards smoking, alcohol drinking and sexual behavior, majority of adolescents showed negative attitudes, i.e., 79% male and 91% female for smoking; 52% male and 75% female for strong alcohol drinking; and 84% male and 95% female for sexual behavior, apart from beer drinking in which 67% male and 57% female had positive attitude. Significant association was detected between video watching and smoking attitude. Although, there was no significant association between electronic media exposure and beer drinking attitude, larger proportion of adolescents who have electronic media exposure (63%) showed positive attitude towards beer drinking. According to the findings from current study, majority of adolescents have exposure to electronic media. So it is recommended to strengthen and encourage dissemination of health education and ways of healthy life style through electronic mass media.