

Abstract

Background and Objectives: Adolescence is a period of physical, social, cultural, and cognitive changes that form the basis of adult life in the future. Many teenagers experience challenges such as poor health in this period. Much of the adolescent's poor health is caused by their high-risk behaviors, while many of these high-risk behaviors are preventable. Among the high-risk behaviors, sexual high-risk behaviors are particularly important because they are associated with the puberty and reproductive health. Various studies have also pointed out the co-occurrence of high-risk sexual behaviors and drug use, especially stimulant drugs and alcohol. The present study aims to analyze policies related to high-risk sexual behaviors and stimulant drugs and alcohol consumption among 15 to 18 years old adolescents in the city of Kerman, Iran.

Methods: The present study is a qualitative study in which using Walt and Gilson's policy making framework for the policy analysis. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants and adolescents, and document review. Policy triangulate framework and Leicester framework were used for contextual factors and the Kingdon's multiple streams was used for analyzing agenda setting. In order to better understand underlying causes of the problem, the causes of these behaviors were studied using systematic review. Also the discourses of policymakers and teenagers were analyzed using the method of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis. The findings of this section were analyzed using the Causal Layer Analysis framework. MAXQDA software version 10 was used to analyze the qualitative data.

Results: The contextual factors influencing policies in this area were classified according to the Leicester model. Total of 26 contextual factors, including the emergence of stimulants, membership in virtual networks, different views of political factions in decision-making, class conflict and feelings of discrimination and anger, sexual behavior taboos, traditional approaches to education, globalization And the AIDS on the Millennium Development Goals was identified. The content of policies in this area has consisted of two periods of denial and acceptance. Acceptance policies included teaching adolescents, fear messages, cultural and promotional activities, parent and school teaching, and mental health services for drugs withdraw. The problem stream includes several factors such as conducting numerous strong scientific studies about high risk behaviors and social harm in Iran, changing Patterns of AIDS Transfer from Injectable Transfer to Transmission through Sex in Iran, poisoning due to alcohol consumption in Rafsanjan and Sirjan, and negative feedback on the education organization's performance at various meetings, including joint meetings with the Ministry of Health and the Social Council. The policy stream includes two periods of denial and acceptance. All of the policies that came up as a solution to the problem did not have succeeded to enter agenda setting. Sex education in schools was introduced as a policy but failed to enter the agenda setting. The political stream includes several factors including global attention to non-communicable diseases and high-risk behaviors and the role of prevention of these behaviors in adolescent age group on community health, Statement by the Supreme Leader on the Issues of Social harms in the Country and determining five priorities in the field of Social harms, and special attention of UNICEF on changing the pattern of transmission of AIDS in Iran. Although the confluence of the problem stream, policy stream, and political stream with the significant role of entrepreneurs get the policies to agenda, the political stream plays a significant

role. Lack of evidence-based policymaking, limited stakeholders' engagement, and the top-down policy making and implementing were the most important barriers to the success of the policies, which are broadly described. Various stakeholders have been identified in the judiciary, executive and legislative bodies, including Ministry of education, the Ministry of Health, the judiciary, and the anti-drug headquarters. Inter and intra sectoral collaboration in policy formulation and implementation was weak. Also, adolescents, as one of the main stockholders, did not participate in the policy making process. Investigating the problem at different layers also showed that, there are many factors contribute to the occurrence of these behaviors, of which the family is one of the most important factor. Policymakers' discourse is an ideological discourse that intends to realize perfect and holy life, while adolescents' discourse is a secular discourse based on humanism. The metaphor that governs policymakers is Islamic realism and for adolescent, it is materialistic civilization.

Conclusion: The policies adopted in this area continue to be influenced by the approach of denial and repression, and there is no uniform view in this area. Despite the importance of this issue from the policymakers' point of view, evidence-based approaches have not been adopted and most of the actions taken in this area have been aimed at reporting and showing off some actions have been taken. Program evaluation has not been properly done and the effectiveness of measures has not been considered. In addition, many stakeholders, especially adolescents, have not been involved in the process of policymaking in this area and their wishes and views have not been taken into account. It is suggested that in the area of high-risk sexual behaviors, stimulants and alcohol abuse in adolescents,

all causes of these behaviors considered. Policies adopt based on the causes of these behaviors and based on scientific evidence. Institutional mapping should also be developed so that stakeholders enter the field based on policy goals rather than on the flow of resources .

Keywords: High-Risk Sexual Behaviors, Stimulant Drugs, Alcohol, Policy Analysis, Causal Layer Analysis, Laclau & Mouffe's Discourse Analysis



**KERMAN UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICAL SCIENCES**

Faculty of Management and Medical Informatics

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirments for the Degree Ph.D

Title

Analysis of Policies Related to High–Risk Sexual Behaviors and Stimulant Drugs

Abuse and Alcohol Consumption in Adolescents: A case study of Kerman city

By

Nadia Oroomiei

Supervisors

1.Dr. MohammadHossein Mehrolhasani 2. Dr. Vahid Yazdi–Feyzabadi

Advisors

1.Prof. AliAkbar Haghdoost 2. Dr. Farzaneh Zolala

Thesis No : (...)

Date: **October 2019**