

GENDER DIFFERENCE IN HARMFUL ALCOHOL USE AND ADVERSE DRINKING CONSEQUENCES AMONG TAIWANESE ABORIGINES

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Introduction: Alcohol consumption is a part of the aboriginal culture. It was found that is a predominant health problem in aboriginal community. There was little research describing whether gender differences in harmful drinking and adverse drinking consequence among aborigines. Thus, it is important to evaluate such differences in order to provide evidence for developing interventions in problem drinking.

Aims: The aim of the study is to examine the gender differences in the prevalence, correlates, and adverse drinking consequences among harmful alcohol users in Taiwanese aborigines.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted. 449 study participants, aged 18-60, were recruited into the study from community-dwelling aborigines in southern Taiwan. Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) was used to collect information regarding harmful alcohol drinking. Personal characteristics, related risk factors and adverse drinking consequences were assessed by questionnaire.

Results: The result revealed that the prevalence of harmful drinking in male users was 71.6%, female users were 49.2%. The results showed that female harmful alcohol users were more likely to have poor mental health, 58% of them with suicidal ideation, 50% with depression, more inactive in religious practice, and unemployed. It was also found that more than half of the male harmful alcohol users have adverse drinking consequence, including accidental injury, quarreled with others, and unable to work.

Conclusions: Harmful drinking was a predominant health problem in aborigines. This finding suggested that depression and suicidal ideation should be routinely evaluated for female harmful alcohol users by the professional of primary care.