Abstract

The scope of this paper is to assess the attitudes and behaviors regarding alcohol use and analyze associated factors among schoolchildren in public schools of Campina Grande in the state of Paraíba. A cross-sectional study was carried out involving 574 adolescents, with the application of a semi-structured questionnaire. The chi-square test and Fisher’s exact test were used (5% level of significance). Among the adolescents 54.5% had drunk alcohol and 6.7% of them were heavy drinkers. The majority of them drank alcohol between 11 and 14 years of age (42.8%); 26.3% of the adolescents purchased alcoholic beverages; and beer was the most drink most consumed (43.8%). The risk of alcohol drinking was higher between 16 and 19 years of age (OR = 4.44; p < 0.001), among those without religious affiliation (OR = 4.36; p = 0.002), among those who worked (OR = 2.13; p = 0.012) and among those who had a fair to poor relationship with their father (OR = 2.18; p = 0.010). The results of this study underscore the complexity of this issue and the need to pay particular attention to the adolescent population. Public policies alone are not sufficient. Support from family, school and society is essential to curtail early alcohol use and its consequences.

Keywords

Adolescent, Alcoholism, Risk factors, Students.