

Seat Belt Use and Its Related Factors in Female High School Students in Gorgan, Iran

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Dear Editor,

In many countries road accident is one of the most important causes of death, approximately 1.2 million people die and over than 50 million people injury from nonfatal occur as a result of road traffic crashes every year all over the world (1). In Iran, traffic injuries is one of the most important causes of unintentional injuries that cause 70 deaths in every day and the use of mandatory seat belt is efficient in reducing the intensity and crude number of road traffic injuries (2). An estimated, appropriate seat belt use decrease deaths of road accident is about 40% (3). Unfortunately in spite of importance of seat belt use; the study showed that 13.8% of Iranian people don't use seat belt and use of seat belt by female is less than male so that odds of using seat belt in male is 4.86 times of women (4). Studies showed that 20-33.62 % of female high school degree didn't use seat belt (5-7). Moreover, each countries and population has a unique socioeconomic and cultural condition, so determinant seat belt use in each population is necessary. On the other hand, adolescent females have an important role in behavior change of next generation as future mothers, so the current study was designed and done with the aim of investigating seat belt using and its related factors in female high school in Gorgan, Iran. This is a cross-sectional study with descriptive-analytical approach that was done in 2012. In this study 300 female high school students were selected through multi-stage sampling method (random and cluster) in Gorgan so that each high school were considered as a cluster and 4 high school were selected by using simple random sampling and then female high school students in each high school were selected using simple random sampling. The students who had debilitating disease or

disability and unwillingness to participate in the study were excluded. Data were collected by using the valid and reliable questionnaire via interview and then were analyzed by using SPSS 18 and chi-square test. Many student Parents Educational level were diploma (34.3% their fathers and 32% their mothers). Most of their fathers were self-employed (42.3%) and also most of their mothers' were housewives (72%). From 300 students under study, 17% always used seat belts, 19.7% often used seat belts and 63.3% didn't used seat belts. There was a significant relationship between some socio-economic characteristic with seat belt use rate such as family income and father's education so that seat belt use in families with high income and low income was significantly more than middle income families ($P = 0.005$ $\chi^2 = 21.97$). Seat belt use was significantly higher than among students whose their fathers had higher education ($P = 0.009$ $\chi^2 = 20.26$). There wasn't significant relationship between seat belt use for mother's education, job and father's job.

A large percent of students under studied didn't use seat belts that are in contrast with other studies (5-7) that represent difference between different population in regard to seat belt use. In current study, there was significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics and seat belt use that was consistent with other studies (5-7) so we concluded that for promoting seat belt use, appropriate intervention should be done based on socio-economical status of the target population. Moreover, now female students are future mothers and their behaviors have important role in their future children so we recommended appropriate intervention, especially educational intervention for increasing seat belt use in female high school students as one of the most important high risk group.

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Authors' Contribution

Study design: Hashem Heshmati, Data collecting: Sahar Aidbmoghaddam, Analysis and interpretation: Hashem Heshmati, Drafting the manuscript: Samane Khajavi, revision: Hamideh Meshkati

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