

METHAMPHETAMINE USE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS IN IRAN

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Background:

Methamphetamine use is a pressing public health concern among people who inject drugs (PWID) worldwide. We aimed to estimate the prevalence of methamphetamine use and its correlates in a nationwide survey among PWID in Iran.

Methods:

We recruited 2,684 PWID in 11 major cities from July 2019 to March 2020 using respondent-driven sampling (RDS). Eligibility criteria were: ≥ 18 years old; self-reported drug injection in the last 12 months; residing in the city of the study; and a valid RDS coupon. Behavioral data was collected using a standard questionnaire via face-to-face interviews. 2,259 PWID (84.2%) with valid responses to the primary outcome (i.e., last 3-month methamphetamine use and/or injection) were included in the analysis. We used RDS-Gile's SS weighted analysis for descriptive statistics and a survey package (svy) using linearized variance estimations for bivariable and multivariable logistic regression analyses.

Results:

Last 3-month prevalence of methamphetamine use among PWID was 47.0% (95% CI: 44.9, 49.1). Methamphetamine use in the last three months was associated with history of homelessness in the last 12 months (aOR = 1.57; 1.77, 2.10), drug use onset before 18 (aOR = 1.40; 1.05, 1.87), injecting drug for >10 years (aOR = 1.47; 1.11, 1.95), using non-injection (aOR = 7.18; 4.93, 10.47) and injecting illicit opioids (aOR = 2.98; 2.03, 4.36) in the last three months, as well as having multiple sex partners in the last 12 months (aOR = 1.60; 1.50, 2.73) and region (north: aOR = 5.42; 2.92, 10.03; south: aOR = 2.95; 2.04, 4.27; east: aOR = 24.43; 15.62, 38.22).

Conclusion:

Our findings underscore the importance of implementing tailored comprehensive harm reduction services for this sub-population of PWID. They also emphasize the urgent need for evidence-based interventions to address the harms associated with the increasing co-use of opioids and methamphetamine among PWID in Iran.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *See example below:*

The authors declare no competing interests.