

Sexual Practices of Undergraduate Students in Tirana, Albania

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Aim. To assess the prevalence of sexual activity among undergraduate students at the University of Tirana, Albania, their age at first sexual intercourse, and the influence of socioeconomic factors on their sexual practices, including condom use.

Methods. An anonymous questionnaire survey was carried out among 720 undergraduate students (77% women) at the University of Tirana in October and November 2002. The questionnaire inquired about their current or previous sexual activity, age at first sexual intercourse, and use of condoms. Socio-demographic data were also collected. Multiple regression analyses were used to assess the associations between socio-demographic factors and the investigated characteristics of sexual practices of Albanian undergraduates.

Results. The prevalence of current and/or previous sexual activity was higher among men than women (65% vs 34%, $p < 0.001$). Also, men engaged in sexual activity at earlier age than women (mean age, 17.9 years; 95% confidence interval [CI] 17.6-18.2 for men vs 18.8 years; 95% CI, 18.6-19.1 for women). After adjustment for covariates, both parental high education and high income level were strongly and significantly associated with students' engagement in sexual activity (odds ratio [OR], 3.46; 95% CI, 1.11-9.80 for education; and OR, 2.11; 95% CI, 1.14-3.92 for income) and the likelihood of consistent condom use by students who reported having current or past sexual relations (OR, 8.4; 95% CI, 3.9-18.3 for education; and OR, 7.0; 95% CI, 1.9-26.4 for income).

Conclusion. Parental education and income level are strongly associated with sexual behavior (engagement in sexual activity and consistent condom use) of Albanian undergraduates in Tirana.

Key words: Albania; coitus; condoms; knowledge, attitude, practice; safe sex; sex behavior; socioeconomic factors; students