

New instrument in measuring alcohol consumption during pregnancy and postpartum

Authors: Mas Ayu Said, Nurul Ain Sharuddin, Ahmad Hatim Sulaiman and Amer Siddiq Amer Nordin

Introduction: The prevalence of alcohol consumption among pregnant women varies between countries, leading to high incidence of foetal alcohol syndrome in Western countries. Many alcohol screening tools were developed to assess and quantify alcohol intake such as CAGE-assessment of alcohol abuse, The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), T-ACE screening tool and TWEAK, however each of them has its own limitation, not suitable for measuring the unit of alcohol intake among pregnant women and during postpartum.

Objective: The aim of this study is to construct and validate a questionnaire in assessing alcohol consumption among pregnant women and during postpartum. This newly designed instrument the Assessment of Alcohol Consumption during Pregnancy and Postpartum (ACAPP) is suitable to measure the accurate percentage of alcohol intake for commercial and homemade beverages.

Methods: The stages of this study encompass four distinct phases: planning, construction, quantitative analysis, and validation. The instrument planning and construction phases consist of the collection of relevant information which includes reviewing and understanding the information requirements of the problem. All possible sources such as literature review, review of validated existing instruments and questionnaires, expert opinion and informers were used before constructing a new questionnaire. ACAPP consists of a questionnaire and mini album categorizing various types of commercial and non-commercial alcohol beverages.

It can be used for a prevalence study, to measure the percentage of alcohol consumption and to calculate the exact standard drinks of alcohol intake during a certain period of pregnancy. It can also calculate cumulative percentage of alcohol consumption and cumulative standard drinks of alcohol intake throughout pregnancy and postpartum for a longitudinal study. The derived standard drink calculated from ACAPP can categorized drinking behaviours into binge, light, moderate and heavy drinking.

Conclusion: This is a valid instrument to assess the percentage of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and postpartum.