

# Abstracts of Community Medicine Students' Projects of the Academic Year 2000-2001 Faculty of Medicine, Kuwait University

Kuwait Medical Journal 2001, 33 (2): 172-182

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This is a list of abstracts of Community Medicine projects completed by the 6th year medical students in partial fulfillment of their graduation requirements. These projects were tutored by the academic staff of the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine: Professors Zoran Radovanovic, Mohamed AA Moussa, and Nasra Shah, and Drs Salim Adib, Abdulwahab Al-Isa, Layla Al-Jassem, Jaafer Behbehani, Anjum Memon, T. N. Sugathan, and Lukman Thalib. Projects are available for perusal by all interested at the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Jabriya, 5th floor, Tel: (965) 531-9485

## PROJECTS TUTORED BY PROF. NASRA SHAH

### The knowledge and attitudes of male high school students in the Capital governorate towards drug use

Fawaz Al-Refai, Meshal Al-Maskati, Fayeze Al-Zarban, Mohammed Al-Rashidi

**Objectives:** To assess the knowledge and attitudes of high school students towards drug use, and to study the relationship between various socio-demographic factors and drug use.

**Methods:** A self-administered questionnaire was completed by 494 male high school students in the Capital governorate.

**Results:** Students were 91.5% Kuwaitis. Almost 84% of them knew that cocaine and heroin were addictive substances. Seventy-six percent of the participants reported that the problem of drug use in Kuwait is a very serious problem, while 60% of them reported that it was a very serious problem in high schools. About 31% of students knew someone currently using or who had ever-used drugs. About one-fifth of the students reported that they had ever been asked by someone to try drugs.

**Conclusions:** Drug use is one problem in high schools that demands a strong intervention by both the authorities and parents. Schools should participate in campaigns against this increasingly alarming problem.

### Job satisfaction and stress among nurses in Kuwait

Ahmad Al-Qallaf, Anas Al-Youssef, Fatma Khaja, and Sara Al-Dessouky

**Objectives:** To assess the degree of reported job satisfaction and stress, and to examine the association between job stress and job satisfaction among nurses, comparing two general government hospitals, Amiri and Adan.

**Methods:** Self-administered questionnaires were completed by 230 nurses from Amiri Hospital, and 142 from Adan Hospital.

**Results:** Nurses in the two hospitals did not differ on socio-demographic characteristics. About 60%

of nurses in each hospital were moderately or very satisfied. Job satisfaction with job did not differ by gender in either hospital. About 42% of nurses in Amiri and 48% in Adan were very dissatisfied with their salary. About 31% of Amiri nurses and 33% of Adan's agreed or strongly agreed that they frequently thought of quitting their job. Amiri nurses had generally better scores on all aspects of satisfaction compared to those in Adan hospital. In both hospitals, the average level of stress was significantly associated with educational level. Satisfaction with most aspects of the job was significantly and negatively correlated with stress.

**Conclusion:** A substantial percentage of nurses expressed dissatisfaction with their salaries and other aspects of their job. Factors of dissatisfaction should be prevented to protect the depleted pool of nurses in Kuwait.

## Contraception decision-making among Kuwaiti women

Majedah Al-Zanki, Ebtihal Al-Habib, Mastoura Al-Azmi, and Fatma Asiri

**Objectives:** To identify the degree of influence that various individuals and other sources had on Kuwaiti women's decision to start using contraceptive and on the choice of the first and most recent contraceptive method used.

**Methods:** Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 300 married, divorced or widowed Kuwaiti women aged less than 50 years in the general pediatric clinics of four polyclinics (Al-Fahaheel, Al-Dahar, Al-Faiha and Al-Daaiya).

**Results:** Nearly half the women had started using contraceptive methods without consulting their husbands. The husband and the doctor had the greatest amounts of influence in choosing the first contraception method (24.7% and 31.6%, respectively), as well as the last method (32.3% and 30.5%, respectively). The mother-in-law and the pharmacist had a small amount of influence on the choice of the first method (2.7% and 3.8%, respectively), as well as the last (3.0% and 1.8%, respectively).

**Conclusion:** Kuwaiti women appear to have a fair amount of independence in the decision to start using contraception. Husbands and physicians had the greatest influence on the choice of the method used.

### PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. JAAFER BEHBEHANI

## Lifestyle and Diabetes Mellitus patients in Kuwait

Ali M Alanda, Kholoud A Al-Ali, and Sundus M Al-Gabandi

**Objectives:** To assess the quality of life among diabetic patients, to identify the socio-demographic and behavioral factors that affect the quality of life of diabetic patients, and to measure the disease-related correlates that affect the quality of life of diabetic patients.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional sample of 151 consecutive patients (94 males and 57 females) was selected from four diabetic clinics in the Hawally governorate.

**Results:** The mean age of male and female patients was 48.7 years. The mean duration of diabetes was 7.46 years. Out of the total sample 95 depended on oral tablets and 42 on insulin injections. There were no significant differences between type I and type II diabetic patients on any part of the multi-dimensional diabetes questionnaire. The study revealed that people with increased duration of diabetes, people with two or more complications, type I diabetes patients receiving insulin injections, patients with poor glycemic control, female patients, people with less education and low socio-economical class have a worse quality of life.

## Evaluation of postpartum depressive symptoms among women in the Hawalli governorates of Kuwait

May Al-Rushood, Maryam Al-Rajhi, and Salsabeel Al-Ansari

**Objectives:** To study the prevalence of postpartum depression (PPD) using the EPDS, and to identify the socio-demographic, obstetric, and psychological risk factors for PPD.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional sample of 227 women who had a delivery from two months to one year before the survey was selected. Data collection was conducted in four immunization centers in the Hawalli governorate, by means of self-administered questionnaires and face-to-face interviews.

**Results:** The mean age of the participating women was 30 years. Out of the total sample, postpartum depressive mood was diagnosed in 37% of the women. There were significant associations between current marriage, no husband's support after delivery, history of abortion, anxiety during pregnancy, current anxiety, depression or eating disorders, duration of reported current psychological problems, reported past anxiety or depression, and high EPDS scores.

**Conclusion:** The prevalence of PPD in the Hawalli governorate was higher than reported in previous studies. Several socio-demographic and obstetric risk factors did not appear to be associated with postpartum depressive mood. Satisfaction with marriage, level of husband's support, presence or past history of depression and/or anxiety were associated with severity of PPD.

## Effect of anxiety on mothers' satisfaction with pediatric visits

Mariam Al-Awadi, Nesreen Moussa, and Bashayer Al-Shatti

**Objectives:** To study the effect of anxiety and other socio-demographic factors on the degree of the mother's satisfaction with a pediatric visit.

**Methods:** Mothers who visited pediatric outpatient and casualty departments in Sabah and Farwaniya hospitals were chosen as the study population. Questionnaires were self-administered before and after the medical encounter, and included questions regarding anxiety levels (Status and Trait anxiety) and satisfaction with the visit.

**Results:** The response rate among 167 mothers was 95.8%. Data collected from the casualty departments comprised 70% of the sample. The majority was composed of Kuwaiti women (80.6%) currently married (95%). The average age of the index child brought to the visit was three years. Satisfaction correlated significantly with the anxiety status before and after the visits as well as with anxiety traits. The different clinical settings had a significant relation with mother's degree of satisfaction ( $p < 0.01$ ), but no effect on anxiety levels.

**Conclusion:** The dynamics of the medical encounters affect the degree of satisfaction of mothers. The more formal the physicians' conduct, the less satisfied the mothers. It is recommended that pediatricians should be friendly, start the conversation with a social chat and give a clear diagnosis. If a diagnosis (or prognosis) cannot be given, then an explanation of the reasons for not being able to give the information should be provided.

### PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. SALIM M ADIB

## Diabetic patients' attitude toward fasting in Ramadan

Ahmad M Okasha, Abdulmohsen K Al-Anjari, and Qais J Al-Baghli

**Objectives:** To explore the practice, attitudes and beliefs of diabetic patients towards fasting in the holy month of Ramadan, and to explore the psychosocial factors affecting the patients' choice to fast or not.

**Methods:** Adult Arab diabetic patients were interviewed in the four diabetic clinics in the Capital Health District, at randomly selected times during a 5-day period, using a self-administered questionnaire.

**Results:** A total of 244 participants with a median age of 50, completed the questionnaire. A majority intended to fast (67%) and 51% were usually compliant with treatment during Ramadan. Compared to those who did not intend to fast, those intending to do so had a higher proportion of married individual, had more children, and lived in more crowded conditions. A majority believed no harm could come to them for faithfully fasting despite their clinical condition.

**Conclusion:** Evidence for perceived social pressure and some level of denial and misguided religious beliefs was found in association with the intention to fast. Doctors and religious scholars should feel more responsible to take the initiative in dispelling faulty normative perceptions, highlighting potential dangers, and generally helping patients make their decision to fast or not based on solid information rather than on perceptions and opinions.

## Parental smoking and childhood asthma: a case-control study

Abdullah Al-Khalifah, Rashed Al-Dowailah, Hassan Hussein, and Eihab Al-Omani

**Objectives:** To measure the awareness of parents regarding the risk of their smoking on children's health, to analyze the relation of parental smoking and recently diagnosed cases of childhood asthma, and to assess risks associated with a variety of socio-demographic and other known risk factors for asthma.

**Methods:** A case-control study was conducted among children aged 15 years or less in various health care settings. Data were obtained from mothers.

**Results:** Participants were 112 cases and 143 controls. Only 7% of mothers were current smokers, and 88% perceived smoking indoors to be a risk for children' health (versus 77% reported for fathers). Of fathers, 55% were reported as current cigarette smokers, 31% as shisha smokers, of whom, about half smoked it indoors. When smoking shishas, fathers of cases were less likely to smoke indoors (23%) than those of controls (39%). Compared to controls, cases were more likely to be males (OR=2.6 [1.5-4.5]), less likely to have either housewives or retired mothers (OR=0.5 [0.3-0.8]), less likely to report insufficient family incomes (OR=0.3 [0.2-0.6]), more likely to live in crowded households (1.2 persons/room versus 0.9 for controls), and more likely to report carpets as usual floor covering in bedrooms (OR=3.5 [1.7-7.2]).

**Conclusions:** Although a high percentage of parents showed awareness that smoking is a risk factor for their children' health, a lot of them still smoke in the presence of their children.

## Knowledge of health consequences and patterns of tea/coffee consumption in the Kuwaiti population

Yasmeen FM Al-Quraini, Nour AM Al-Khalaf, and Nadia AH Akbar

**Objectives:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted among Kuwaiti women to describe patterns of tea/coffee consumption in Kuwaiti families and to measure the knowledge of mothers regarding potential adverse health effects of tea/coffee consumption on adults and children.

**Methods:** A random sample of 411 Kuwaiti women were selected from 14 primary health care clinics in the three urban districts: Capital, Farwaniya and Hawally. Data were collected using a self-completed questionnaire.

**Results:** The mean age of participants was 33 years, and the median number of children 10 years or less was 2 [range 0-5]. Only 16% of participants reported never drinking tea, and 22% never drinking coffee. Levels of daily consumption were almost similar (62% and 64% respectively) with a median of 3 daily cups of each. Among mothers of children <10 years old, 56% were aware of health dangers

of tea and 70% of those of coffee. Yet, up to 70% allowed children to drink tea, but only 17% allowed them coffee.

**Discussion:** Tea is still perceived as a usual part of the daily diet for children and adults, while coffee tends to be restricted to adult social events. An interesting contradiction appeared between women's perception of adverse effects of tea (mostly anemia) on children and their permissiveness for early consumption. Knowledge and awareness may have to be introduced to help mothers provide alternative hot drinks to their children that do not include tea and coffee.

#### PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. TN SUGATHAN

### Leisure time activities among Kuwaiti intermediate school children

Bassam Al-Bat'he, Seleim Nawaf and Salem Al-Kandari

**Objectives:** To study leisure time activities among Kuwaiti intermediate school children.

**Methods:** Data were collected by self-administered questionnaires based on a random sample of 474 school children (236 boys and 238 girls) from two governorates in Kuwait, using a stratified multistage sampling technique. The study included information on various leisure time activities such as watching TV, playing video games and using computers, physical activities, hobbies, dietary habits and health conditions.

**Results:** About 71% of students, both boys and girls, watched TV with a mean of 3.5 hours per day. Regarding video games, 36% of boys and 19% of girls played them daily. About 64% of the students were using computers. The total time spent per day for the above activities was estimated as 6.5 hours for boys and 5.3 for girls. About 39% of the students were not physically active. Majority of both boys and girls preferred watching TV rather than engaging in physical activities. Also 64% of all students were buying fast foods at least a few days in a week.

**Conclusion:** The sedentary lifestyle among Kuwaiti intermediate school children, especially girls, suggests a potentiality for acquiring several adulthood chronic diseases. In addition, there could be some behavioral problems due to prolonged TV watching. The other risk factor is the habit of eating fast food. These factors should be modified by health education programs to encourage a healthy lifestyle in early life.

### Osteoporosis awareness in Kuwaiti female teachers

Sawsan H Jawhar, Hanan M Taha, Dana H Ahmad, Mona Al-Adwani

**Objectives:** To assess the level of awareness of osteoporosis (OP) among Kuwaiti female teachers.

**Methods:** A cross sectional sample survey of 338 teachers selected through a stratified two-staged cluster sampling frame.

**Results:** Teachers from Hawalli, older teachers, math and science teachers, high school teachers, and those living in villas had better OP awareness as compared to the rest of sample studied. However, certain important aspects of OP such as warning signs and preventive measures, were not recognized by a large number of teachers.

**Conclusion:** Attention needs be directed to increase awareness of OP in Kuwait, especially regarding warning signs, preventive measures, and screening tests. Women should be aware that OP is definitely preventable, and if diagnosed early, could be treated to decrease bone loss.

**PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. ABDULWAHAB AL-ISA****Knowledge regarding environmental issues among high school female students in Kuwait**

Ghadeer Al-Rakakah, Mona Al-Mutairi, and Shurooq Al-Harbi

**Objectives:** To study the level of knowledge related to environmental issues among students in two governorates with different socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study with multi-stage stratified sample scheme comprising of 510 Kuwaiti high school females. Self-administered questionnaires were used for data collection. The questionnaire included three parts: personal information, environmental issues background information and concern with environmental issues.

**Results:** Half of the questions were answered incorrectly by 63.3% of the students. Knowledge among students from Hawally was significantly higher than among students from Ahmadi on most questions. High school subjects and high school grades were significantly related to the level of knowledge as well as level of environmental concern. Other variables were not related.

**Conclusion:** Overall, knowledge of environmental issues among high school students was poor and varied. This study recommends more educational efforts on environmental health.

**Lifestyles of Kuwaiti adult males visiting the ministerial complex**

Arwa Al-Duajj, Mohammed Al-Mulla, Ali HAAl, and Intisar Al-Hindal

**Objectives:** To assess the lifestyles of adult Kuwaiti males with respect to their dietary practice, leisure time and physical activity, and habits.

**Methods:** Adult Kuwaiti males visiting the ministerial complex were targeted to complete anonymous self-administered questionnaires.

**Results:** In a sample of 300 Kuwaiti adult males, it was found that such life style factors as fast food, eating food while lying in bed, drinking caffeinated drinks, going to coffee shops, using the stairs and suffering from chronic diseases differed significantly between non-obese and obese.

**Conclusion:** This study concluded that Kuwaiti adult males lead an unhealthy sedentary life style. It is recommended that a similar study should be conducted with a larger sample size in order to confirm our results and elaborate on other factors so that a well-focused health promotion campaign could be conducted.

**Lifestyle and obesity among high school Kuwaiti girls**

Asmaa Al-Osaimi, Dalia Al-Abdulrazzaq, Refa'a Al-Ajmi, Rawabi Al-Rawdan

**Objectives:** To explore the lifestyle of Kuwaiti high school girls.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study comprised 422 Kuwaiti high school girls. Self-administered questionnaires were used to assess socio-demographic characteristics, physical activity, dietary habits, life habits, and monitoring of health status in relation to the body mass index (BMI).

**Results:** Physical activity levels, reading food labels, milk consumption, avoiding fatty food, soft drink consumption, and amount of television viewing were significantly associated with BMI. Multi-variant analysis showed that the risk of obesity was higher among those who practiced no or light physical activity and those who did not read food labels. The risk of obesity was lower among those who did not diet, and those who consumed butter. Socio-demographic, some physical activity, dietary, life habits, and monitoring of health status were not associated with the level of BMI.

**Conclusion:** Obesity is strongly associated with sedentary lifestyle, lack of physical activity, and unhealthy dietary habits among Kuwaiti high school girls.

**PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. ANJUM MEMON****Desired fertility among Kuwait University students**

Sharifa Al-Awadi, Lubna Al-Safar, and Marwa Al-Babtain

**Objectives:** To determine the desired fertility and gender preference for children among students at Kuwait University.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted among a sample of 334 Kuwaiti students in the faculties of Arts, Science, and Sharia. The data were collected by self-administered questionnaires.

**Results:** On average, both male and female students desired to have five children. Male students preferred to have more boys than girls; whereas females desired equal number of boys and girls. When compared by faculty of study, Sharia students desired the highest number of children, but had no real gender preference. Sharia students were more likely to be older, reside in the peripheral governorates, be of Bedouin affiliation, married, and have parents with relatively lower level of education. The majority of students considered future income, size of the house, education, 50 KD allowance, social, moral, and financial support in the old age, influence of religion, and love for children as important factors when planning their family size. There was general agreement on the use of contraceptive methods to control the family size, and no real difference was observed among students in different faculties on this issue.

**Conclusion:** The findings of this survey suggest that considering the high desired fertility and gender preference, the growth rate is likely to remain high in the near future.

**Lifestyles and behavioral factors among male high school students in Jahra and Capital governorates**

Khalid Al-Najjar, Nasser Tahoos, Shebeeb Al-Zeabi, Abdul-Rahman Al-Shemmeri

**Objectives:** To compare lifestyle and behavioral factors among male high school students in Jahra and Capital governorates in Kuwait.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted in three secondary schools in each of the governorates. Data were collected by anonymous self-administered questionnaires.

**Results:** The study included 191 male students from Jahra and 164 from the Capital governorates. On average, the students in the Capital had significantly higher BMI (24.4 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) compared with those in Jahra (23 kg/m<sup>2</sup>). Overall, the large majority of students in both governorates actively participated in out-of-school physical activity. Students in the capital were significantly more likely to spend more time on such activities. About 50% of the students had ever tried or experimented with cigarettes and the majority had tried at ages 11-15 years (63%). Of those who had ever tried cigarettes, 50% were classified as current smokers; of whom 80% smoked regularly. There was no real difference in smoking patterns among the students in both governorates. About 40% of the students had also experimented with smoking hubble-bubble but the majority of those (78.5%) had tried it at a later age (15-20 years) than for cigarettes. About half (52%) of those who had ever tried hubble-bubble, reported they were currently still smoking it regularly. Of students, 68% had a mobile phone; 82% had driven a car in the past 12 months, although the majority was aged below the legal age of driving, and about half of the students rarely or never used seatbelts while driving or sitting in the front seat of the car.

**Conclusions:** Our findings suggest that there is a great need to educate the youth in Kuwait about healthy habits, the hazards of tobacco smoking, and the risks involved in driving without a license and not wearing seatbelts.

## Lifestyle and behavioral factors among students at Health Science Center and the Faculty of Art at Kuwait University

Ali Al-Musawi, Shakir Bahzad, and Mohammed Al-Shatti

**Objectives:** To compare the lifestyle and behavioral factors among students at the Health Science Center and the Faculty of Art at Kuwait University.

**Methods:** Factors studied included: dietary habits, physical activity, smoking, use of drugs and substances, and use of seat-belts and mobile phones. The information was collected using a self-administered questionnaire from students of both genders currently registered in the 3-6 years of the respective faculties.

**Results:** The study included 171 medical students (42.8%) and 213 Arts students (57.2%). Arts students were more likely to be engaged in an extra-academic job compared to the medical students (14.6% vs 2.3%). There was no difference in Body Mass Index (BMI) between the two groups. Asthma was the most prevalent chronic disease (8.6%) followed by hypertension (2.9%), rheumatoid arthritis (2.3%) and disability (1.6%). Among all students, chicken was the most popular food item, consumed by 85% of students on almost daily basis. High consumption of white bread (82.6%), rice (75.3%), soft drinks (68.5%), chocolate and sweets (64.1%), fresh juice (59.6%), fresh fruits (54.4%), lamb meat (54.4%), fast food (51.6%), and eggs (40.9%) were also reported in both groups. Walking was the most popular form of physical activity practiced by about 70% of all students, followed by home care (50%) and cycling or jogging (30%). The prevalence of smoking was significantly higher among Arts than medical students (19.2% vs 7%), as was the practice of shisha smoking (25% vs 10%). Regular use of seat belts was more common among medical students compared to Arts' (79% vs 54.4%). About 97% of all students had a mobile phone and the time spent on phones per day was significantly longer among Arts compared to medical students.

### PROJECTS TUTORED BY PROF. MOHAMMED AA MOUSSA

## Preference of doctor's gender in obstetrics and gynecology among Kuwaiti women

Mohamed Al-Qenai, Issa Al-Mashmoom, Abdul-Mohsen Al-Kandari, and Mohammed Al-Humaidan

**Objectives:** To assess the preference of Kuwaiti women for their doctor's gender in obstetrics and gynecology and to study the factors which may affect their preference.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional sampling survey including 300 Kuwaiti women, age 15 years or above, who could read and write. Women were reporting to obstetrics and gynecology units in three primary health care centers and three outpatients obstetrics and gynecology clinics of the three general hospitals: Maternity, Adan, and Farwania. Data were collected by self-administered questionnaires.

**Results:** Out of 300 Kuwaiti women who participated in the study, 20.3% reported preference for male obstetricians and gynecologists, 54.4% for female doctors, and 25.3% were indifferent. Socio-demographic characteristics or clinical settings did not affect preference, which was affected by medical conditions involved. Preference for a male doctor was more often reported in serious obstetric or gynecology conditions and in major surgery, while female preference was more reported in breast problems and internal examination. Reasons for preferring female doctors included religious and personal factors like shyness and husband's disagreement to be seen by a male doctor. Those who preferred male doctors believed them to be more reliable, skillful, knowledgeable, and spend more time with the patient.

**Conclusions:** Our data support the study hypothesis, namely a higher proportion of women reported preference for male obstetrician and gynecologist in serious conditions.

## Prevalence and associated factors with low back pain among female nurses

Mona Al-Hindi, Abeer Al-Tararwa, and Ghadeer Akbar

**Objectives:** To determine the prevalence and characteristics of low back pain (LBP) among female nursing staff in Kuwait, and investigate associated factors.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional sampling survey including 250 female nurses in one general hospital and two primary health care centers randomly selected from two governorates (Hawally and Farwania). The questionnaire used to collect data through personal interviews included four sections: personal data, medical history before developing LBP, work-related LBP and social factors.

**Results:** The reported lifetime prevalence of LBP among female nurses was 76.4% and was higher in hospital nurses than in primary care nurses. The rate of LBP experienced in the last 12 months was 73.6%, while the prevalence of current LBP was 66%. Inpatient ward nurses reported the highest rate of LBP. Coronary care unit (CCU) nurses reported higher rate of severe acute and daily episodes of LBP. Higher proportion of hospital nurses reported that their LBP was triggered by accidents compared to primary care nurses. A good proportion of nurses changed their work setting due to LBP (48.7%). Arab nurses reported lower rate of LBP, while Kuwaiti nurses were the highest to seek a physician's advice for their LBP. There was a significant decrease in the rate of reported LBP as body mass index (BMI) or nursing experience increased. Also, there was an inverse relation between the level of physical activity and reported LBP. Overall, Arab nurses and primary care nurses reported higher rates of current job satisfaction.

**Conclusion:** The prevalence of LBP is higher among hospital female nurses than primary care nurses. Individual factors like age, years of experience, and BMI as well as behavioral factors like physical activity, and work environment are related to LBP. Preventive programs for alleviation of LBP among nurses are recommended.

## The attitudes and practice of Kuwaiti medical doctors toward continuing medical education (CME)

Asma Al-Furaih, Bibi Al-Amiri, Nagham Al-Safy, and Haya Al-Halabi

**Objectives:** To study the attitude and practice of Kuwaiti doctors toward CME in relation to gender and rank.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study comprising 200 Kuwaiti doctors, working in Amiri, Mubarak, Sabah and Farwania hospitals. The research instrument was a self-administered questionnaire consisting of three sections (socio-demographic characteristics, attitudes toward CME, and practice of CME).

**Results:** Most of the participating doctors were married, graduated from Kuwait, with male to female ratio 1.2:1. The majority was motivated to engage in CME to improve patient care and high-graded the effectiveness of CME in promoting professional competence. They low-graded the role of KIMS in promoting CME and its adopted points credit system, and reported not being fully aware of the CME activities organized by KIMS. High rank doctors and males were more actively involved in CME, than lower rank ones and females.

**Conclusion:** Kuwaiti medical graduates are motivated to continue their medical education and postgraduate training.

**PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. LAYLA AL-JASSEM****The physicians' attitudes toward the application of medical fees in Kuwait**

Tarek Al-Kandari, Fahad Al-Essa, Nael Al-Shammari, and Feras Al-Shammari

The main purpose of this cross-sectional survey was to assess the attitudes of physicians toward the application of medical fees on non-Kuwaiti patients and possibly on Kuwaiti patients, and physicians' expectation regarding the application of partial health insurance. It also examined the expected improvements in the quality of the health services, doctor's time spent with patients, and the utilization of expensive diagnostic procedures, and if the number of visits would change. The study was conducted in one hospital, and two polyclinics from each of the five governorates. A total of 253 physicians completed a face-to-face interview. Regarding the application of the medical fees on non-Kuwaiti patients about 79% of physicians agreed. About 85% of physicians agreed that the number of visits was reduced as a result of the fee requirement. About 55% of physicians agreed that their consultation time with patients increased. About 79% of the physicians did not believe the fee increased the quality of the health services. About 72% of the physicians agreed that the utilization of expensive diagnostic procedures was reduced. About 71% agreed to apply medical fees on Kuwaiti patients. These opinions were found to be strongly related to the demographics, nationality, and the administrative position of doctors.

**Attitudes and satisfaction of the disabled with the public services in Kuwait**

Bashaer Abdullah, Shatha Al-Najdi, and Hanouf Rawdhan

**Objectives:** To overview the attitudes of Kuwaiti disabled persons toward medical, educational and social services provided by the government.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey of registered 260 Kuwaiti disabled persons aged more than 14 years (response rate: 92%).

**Results:** The disabled rated the educational services as better than the medical and social ones. They thought the salary for the disabled was not enough, and modifications such as parking places were not available for them in the public buildings. The disabled employees thought that the social insurance and houses were not suitable for them. The blind thought that requirements for work were not suitable for them and jobs not available, while the deaf thought that they received less attention than other disabled people. Generally, the majority of the disabled thought that they were productive people in the society.

**Conclusion:** There is a need to reconsider the job requirements for the blind, and more attention should be paid to the needs of the deaf. There is a need to maximize the social services and improve the availability of higher education, scholarships and jobs for the disabled.

**PROJECTS TUTORED BY DR. LUKMAN THALIB****Internet usage among public hospital based physicians in Kuwait**

Abdulla Al-Sanei, Abdulla Shuaib, Ali Al-Kuwaied, and Thamer Al-Enezi

**Objectives:** To obtain the rate of Internet usage among physicians in Kuwait, to understand their main purposes of use and attitudes towards Internet, and to examine the relationship between the

usage and socio-demographic variables.

**Methods:** The study was a cross sectional survey using a self-administered questionnaire with a sample size of 252 public hospital-based physicians.

**Results:** The Internet usage rate among physicians in Kuwait was about 79%, and about 81% would like to send and receive lab results via the Net. About 70% also projected that they would communicate with their parents via the Net in the future. The main purposes of Internet usage were for E-mail and research, followed by expanding medical knowledge. Although, about 89% thought the medical information on the Net were reliable, only 79% would approve their patients seeking health information through the Net. Occupational status, nationality, specialty and hospital were related to some aspects of Net usage.

**Conclusion:** Most physicians in Kuwait use Internet at rates comparable to the developed world. Most physicians agreed that their patients could seek medical information on the Net. It is interesting to note that our physicians are catching up with the race for the Internet.

## First aid knowledge among high school students in Kuwait

Amna Al-Youssef, Dalia Al-Sane'a and Haneen Al-Raqum

**Objectives:** To evaluate the level of knowledge related to first aid practices among high school students, to understand how do they deal with emergencies, and to explore the differences in first aid knowledge by gender, geographic regions and socio-economic background.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study with multi-stage cluster sampling scheme comprised of 416 Kuwaiti high school students of both genders. The data were collected using questionnaires consisting of three main parts: personal information, general information about first aid and knowledge about medical emergencies.

**Results:** About 68% of the students answered less than half of the question correctly. Knowledge among the female students was significantly higher than among males for most areas of first aid knowledge and the overall score. Family income was also related to knowledge level. All other socio-economic variables did not have any impact on first aid knowledge of students.

**Conclusion:** Overall first aid knowledge among the Kuwaiti high school students was poor and varied. There were major misconceptions in dealing with some critical emergency situations. The research pointed to the importance of an educational campaign on first aid knowledge and skills.

### PROJECT TUTORED BY PROF. ZORAN RADOVANOVIC

## Prevalence and attitude of Kuwaiti males towards consanguinity

Bader Al-Kandary, Mohammed Al-Otaibi, Bashar Al-Khaldi, and Mohammed Al-Othman

**Objectives:** To assess the overall frequency and degree of consanguinity among Kuwaiti males, to study the trend of consanguinity by comparing younger and older respondents, as well as their parents, and to assess attitudes toward consanguineous marriages.

**Methods:** A total of 310 Kuwaiti males filled a self-administered questionnaire.

**Results:** The overall consanguinity of respondents was found to be 42.5%, while it was 39.6% for their parents. Consanguinity was inversely related to the educational level, nearly 64.4% of highly educated couples are not related. Favorable attitude of the respondents towards consanguineous marriage was inversely related to the educational level, and directly related to age. Respondents who married a relative had much more favorable attitude towards consanguinity. There was a significant association between consanguinity of respondents and their parents'. Among the reasons against consanguineous marriage, inherited diseases were most frequently selected.

**Conclusions:** Inverse relationship between consanguinity on one hand, and age and educational level, on the other hand, indicates that consanguinity in Kuwait will decrease.