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PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PERFORMANCE REGARDING NITRATE POLLUTION IN NITRATE-POLLUTED AREA OF TEHRAN, IRAN

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Abstract

The main aim of this study is to evaluate the residents public awareness from water-polluted areas in Tehran city, in terms of water quality (in particular nitrate pollution), and to measure their different performance and approaches to this environmental problem. For this purpose, district 18 (Yaft Abad, southwest of Tehran) was selected as a case study. A questionnaire was prepared and distributed randomly among residents of the selected area in May 2011. The data were analyzed statistically with SPSS software. The collected data showed that about 74% of the individuals were aware of the low quality of their drinking water, although 71% and 78% of the people were completely unaware of nitrate pollutant and its health hazards, respectively. Approximately 55% of questioned persons knew that their drinking water would threaten their health since it is non-potable. However, more than 66% of the people used directly tap water as drinking water. The people with higher education have a better understanding regarding the poor quality and nitrate pollution of their drinking water and the health hazards resulting from nitrate contamination. According to the statistical analyses, there is no statistical correlation between people's gender, age, educational field, occupations, their parents' educational level and 1) qualitative characteristics of drinking water, 2) people's awareness about contaminants in drinking water, 3) people's knowledge about nitrate contamination, 4) people's knowledge about health hazards related to nitrate pollution.

Key words: drinking water, nitrate pollutant, public awareness, public performance, Tehran

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