

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND AWARENESS OF INDONESIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TRANSITION WITH IMPLIED RISK OF HIV INFECTION: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Background: The HIV/AIDS epidemic has killed over two million people since it was first recognized in 1981. It is estimated that the number of people living with HIV worldwide at about 34 million in 2010. **Purposes:** To determine the knowledge, attitudes, life skills and sexual behavior related to HIV/AIDS among adolescents. **Methods:** This cross sectional study was conducted in seven randomly selected secondary schools in Semarang district (central Java), Indonesian. Data was collected using a standardized pre-tested self-administrated questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 19. **Results:** The response rate was 100%. Majority of the respondents (57.1%) were male. The overall mean age of the 340 respondents was 16.3 years (95% CI 16.2 -16.4; ± 1.1 SD). The mean age of males did not differ significantly as compared to the females ($p > 0.05$). Majority of respondents were Indonesians (69.7.4%) followed by Chinese (30.3%). The overall knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission and life skills was low. Only 165 out of the 340 respondents (48.5%) had sound knowledge. There was a significant association between knowledge and life skills ($p = 0.01$). The overall general life skills were poor and the overall mean life skills score was 60.8 (95% CI = 59.9 - 61.8). The overall attitudes were poor and the overall mean attitude score was 39.9 (95% CI = 39.3 - 40.4). Although the mean attitude score for the females was significantly higher (40.4) as compared to the males (40), the difference was very small. There was a significant relationship between attitude scores related to HIV/AIDS and gender, life skills to avoid smoking, media pornography, drugs abuse, premarital sex, using contraception, pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS ($p < 0.05$). Almost 52 students (15.3%) have had already experienced sexual intercourse and 11.5% oral sex and 11.8% anal sex. The overall mean age at first sexual intercourse was 15 years old (95% CI 14 - 17). The difference in the mean age at first sexual intercourse between males and females was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Only 8.5% of respondents stated that they used condom during last sexual intercourse. Only 6.8% of respondents stated that they had consumed alcohol before having sex. **Conclusions:** Levels of knowledge and life skills relating HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention among adolescents was relatively low and serious misconceptions was exist with regards to prevention. The respondents seem to have unfavorable attitude on the prevention of HIV/AIDS. There is a need for a life skills training sex education and reproductive health in schools which include promotion of safe sexual behavior.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitudes, Life Skills, Sexual Behavior, HIV/AIDS, Adolescents, Indonesian