

THE INFLUENCE OF CONDOM USE SOCIALIZATION ON THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF FEMALE COMMERCIAL SEX WORKERS IN THE PREVENTION OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS IN HELVETIA SUBDISTRICT, MEDAN, 2024

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Abstract

Health is a gift that must be recognized and maintained throughout life. One of the conditions that affects health is exposure to health with diseases that are often encountered, namely Sexually Transmitted Infections. Diseases that are mainly spread through sexual intercourse. Sexually transmitted diseases are largely caused by low condom use, especially among female sex workers. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of condom use socialization on the knowledge and attitudes of female commercial sex workers in preventing sexually transmitted infections in Helvetia Distric in year 2024.

This research uses a pre-experimental method with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The sample was selected using the total sampling technique, meaning the entire population was used as the sample, totaling 30 individuals. The data were analyzed using a One-Group T-Test Experimental method.

The results of the study showed a significant impact of condom use socialization on the knowledge of female sex workers in STI prevention, with a T-test result of 0.000. Similarly, the influence on attitudes showed the same result, 0.000, indicating a statistically significant impact.

The conclusion of this study is that there is a significant effect of condom use socialization on the knowledge and attitudes of female commercial sex workers in STI prevention in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, in 2024. Based on these findings, it is recommended that health workers increase the frequency of educational outreach efforts, particularly focusing on STI prevention among female sex workers through consistent condom use.

Keywords: Attitude, Knowledge, Socialization of condom use

Introduction

Health is a gift that must be acknowledged and maintained throughout one's life. Improving health can be achieved by maintaining a healthy diet, lifestyle, and behavior. Health improvement is an integrated, continuous effort carried out to maintain and enhance health status through both disease prevention and treatment. (1)

One common type of disease we often encounter is Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). STIs are illnesses primarily transmitted through sexual contact. STIs are among the top ten causes of morbidity in men and the second leading cause among women in developing countries. (2)

STIs continue to be a global public health concern, affecting both developed (industrialized) and developing countries. The actual incidence and prevalence of STIs in many countries remain unclear. According to data collected by the World Health Organization (WHO), over 1 million STIs are acquired every day worldwide, most of which are asymptomatic. Annually, an estimated 374 million new infections occur from four curable STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and trichomoniasis. More than 500 million people aged 15–49 are estimated to have genital infections with the herpes simplex virus (HSV). (3)

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections are linked to over 311,000 cervical cancer deaths each year. Nearly 1 million pregnant women are infected with syphilis, resulting in over 350,000 adverse birth outcomes. STIs directly impact sexual and reproductive health through stigma, infertility, cancer, pregnancy complications, and can increase the risk of HIV. STIs are defined as diseases that result from unhealthy sexual practices, leading

to the transmission of infectious diseases, including dangerous conditions such as syphilis, gonorrhea, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), and others. These diseases are commonly found in society. Given the high risk of transmission of syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV through sexual contact, having multiple sexual partners is a significant risk factor. Commercial sex has become a major factor in the transmission of gonorrhea, syphilis, and the spread of HIV. (4) According to Indonesian health data, Indonesia, with the fourth largest population in the world, is vulnerable to rapid HIV epidemic growth. Commercial sex, which plays a major role in the spread of syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV, is inseparable from the widespread presence of prostitution in Indonesia. Thus, sex workers and their clients play a critical role in the increase of syphilis, gonorrhea, and AIDS cases, and promoting STI, HIV, and AIDS prevention efforts among these groups is essential for controlling the epidemic. (5)

Sex workers operate in various forms. Some work in registered brothels under medical supervision (direct sex workers), while others are indirect sex workers who find clients on the streets or while working at entertainment venues like nightclubs, massage parlors, discos, cafes, karaoke bars, or regular bars. Some of them are former brothel workers who transitioned to indirect sex work at places they perceive as more upscale. Others choose indirect sex work due to its greater flexibility, as they are not strictly controlled by pimps. Some are drawn by the opportunity to earn extra money while working as karaoke hostesses, beer servers, or club companions. These indirect sex workers are known to have lower condom use rates and higher STI rates compared to brothel-based sex workers. (6)

Reasons cited include difficulty convincing clients to use condoms due to lack of support from management or peers, greater exposure to violence when refusing unsafe sex, limited negotiation skills regarding condom use, and lack of information about syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV.

In Indonesia, especially in Medan City, a 100% Condom Use Program was launched. However, the program has not been optimally effective, as condom use as an STI, HIV, and AIDS prevention measure remains at around 30%. (7)

Based on data from Helvetia Subdistrict in Medan, the high number of commercial sex workers correlates with a high number of clients, contributing to rising STI cases. This is due to low awareness of STI prevention, weak religious norms, and a general disregard for cultural rules, all of which lead to risky behaviors. (8)

Several previous studies indicate that sex workers outside registered brothels have higher STI rates and lower condom use. Many interventions have targeted brothel-based sex workers, resulting in nearly 100% condom use and a reduction in STI and HIV cases. On the other hand, HIV prevention programs are lacking for indirect sex workers due to challenges in identifying this mobile and often illegal population. This lack of targeted programming results in poor STI and HIV prevention behavior, increasing their potential to transmit HIV and other STIs. This issue requires serious attention, especially since the number of female sex workers is expected to rise annually. (9)

According to data from the Helvetia Subdistrict Health Center (Puskesmas) in 2022, 69 sex workers were reported to have STIs. In 2023, that number increased to 80, with most suffering from syphilis (63 cases), gonorrhea (10 cases), and HIV/AIDS (7 cases). The rise in STI cases is attributed to the growing number of sex workers, an increasing number of locations that facilitate unprotected sex, and a lack of condom use.

In a preliminary survey conducted by the researcher, interviews with two informants revealed the following: The first informant stated that commercial sex workers rarely use condoms because many clients are dissatisfied with condom use, leading sex workers to forgo protection to satisfy clients, which results in frequent STI infections. The second informant was more difficult to interview but expressed that condom use outreach is not actively promoted, and many sex workers are unaware of its importance, prioritizing client satisfaction over their own health. (8)

Based on the above background, the researcher is interested in studying: "The Influence of Condom Use Outreach on the Knowledge and Attitudes of Female Commercial Sex Workers in the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024."

The objective of this study is to determine the influence of condom use outreach on the knowledge and attitudes of female commercial sex workers in preventing sexually transmitted infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, in 2024.

Methods

This study was conducted using a pre-experimental method with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. According to Sugiyono (2019:109), “In pre-experimental research, the results observed in the dependent variable are not solely influenced by the independent variable.” This may occur due to the absence of a control variable and the fact that the sample is not selected randomly.(10)

A research design is a framework outlining how the study is to be conducted. The design used in this research is the one-group pre-test post-test design. In this design, the sample is given a pre-test (initial test) before the intervention, and a post-test (final test) is administered after the outreach session.

This design was chosen to align with the objective of the study, which is to examine the influence of condom use outreach on the knowledge and attitudes of female commercial sex workers in the prevention of sexually transmitted infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, in 2024

Research Location

This study was conducted in the Helvetia Subdistrict of Medan, chosen due to the persistently high incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) within the working area of the Helvetia Public Health Center (Puskesmas). This study began from June to December 2024.

Population

The population is defined as the entire group of research subjects, encompassing all elements within the study area. In this study, the population consisted of all female commercial sex workers in Helvetia Subdistrict, totaling 30 individuals.

Sample

A sample refers to a portion or representative of the population being studied. (11)The sampling method used in this study was total population sampling, meaning the entire population was used as the sample 30 female commercial sex workers.

Data Collection Techniques

1. Primary Data – Information collected directly from respondents using questionnaires or surveys.
2. Secondary Data – Data that has been previously collected and documented by other parties.
3. Tertiary Data – Officially published research data such as journals and research reports.

Instruments / Data Collection Tools

Researchers act as data collection tools that go directly to the field, conduct interviews, observations, and document analysis. In addition, supporting instruments such as interview guides, distribution of questionnaires (survey forms), and other forms related to recording and documentation.

Data Processing

Data processing in this study was carried out using a computerized method, with the following steps, namely collecting data obtained from the questionnaire, checking the data, providing data coding, entering data, and processing data in the SPSS system to determine the level of data validity

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out through correlational analysis, namely by examining the percentage of data collected and presenting it in the form of a frequency table, then interpretation was carried out based on existing theories and literature. The analysis was carried out using SPSS to determine the Effect Of Condom Use Socialization On The Knowledge And Attitudes Of Female Commercial Sex Workers In Sti Prevention using T-Test Analysis - One Group Experiment.(12)

Results

Table 1.

Pre-test frequency distribution based on knowledge of Female Commercial Sex Workers in Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024

Knowledge	f	%
Enough	0	0
Less	30	100
Good	0	0
Total	30	100

Based on table 1, it can be seen that from 30 respondents before the socialization regarding the socialization of condom use, it was found that the majority of respondents had poor knowledge, namely 30 people (100%) and the minority of respondents had good knowledge, namely 0 (0%)

Table 2.

Post-test frequency distribution based on knowledge of Female Commercial Sex Workers in Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024

Knowledge	f	%
Enough	10	33.3
Less	0	0
Good	20	66.7
Total	30	100.0

Based on table 2, it can be seen that from 30 respondents after socialization, it was found that the majority of respondents had good knowledge, namely 20 people (66.7%) and the minority of respondents had sufficient knowledge, namely 10 people (33.3%).

Table 3.

Pre-test frequency distribution based on knowledge of Female Commercial Sex Workers in Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024

Attitude	F	%
Positive	3	10
Negative	27	90
Total	30	100

Based on table 3, it can be seen that from 30 respondents before the socialization, it was found that the majority had a negative attitude of 27 people (90%) and the minority had a positive attitude of 3 people (10%).

Table 4.

Post-test frequency distribution based on knowledge of Female Commercial Sex Workers in Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024

Attitude	f	%
Positive	30	100
Negative	0	0
Total	30	100

Based on table 4, it can be seen that from 30 respondents after socialization, it was found that the majority had a positive attitude of 30 people (100%) and the minority had a negative attitude of 0 (0%).

Table 5.

Results of T-Test Analysis – One Group Experiment The Effect of Condom Use Outreach on the Attitudes of Female Commercial Sex Workers in the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024

Knowledge	Mean	p-Value
Before	3,57	<0,001
After	6,63	

Results of T-Test Analysis – One Group Experiment The Effect of Condom Use Outreach on the Knowledge of Female Commercial Sex Workers in the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024. The findings from the One Group T-Test Experiment reveal the following the average knowledge score of female commercial sex workers (FCSWs) before the condom use outreach was 3.57. After the outreach, the average knowledge score increased significantly to 6.63. The p-value obtained was 0.00, which is less than the significance level of 0.05.

It can be seen based on the results of the study that before being given education, female commercial sex workers did not understand the importance of maintaining health, did not understand the rapid transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and did not care about sexually transmitted diseases. However, after being given education, the mindset of commercial sex workers began to change and accept the use of condoms as an early prevention of being somewhat less infected with sexually transmitted diseases. So from this study it can be proven that knowledge can be treated if given the right education. Likewise with attitudes. Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that attitudes before receiving education were still very negative. However, after being given education, they became positive. This is related to knowledge. The better a person's level of knowledge, the more positive their attitude.

Conclusion

Following the research titled "The Effect of Condom Use Outreach on the Knowledge and Attitudes of Female Commercial Sex Workers in the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Helvetia Subdistrict, Medan, 2024," the results indicate that the **significance value (Sig. 2-tailed)** for **knowledge** was **0.00 < 0.05**, and for **attitude**, it was also **0.00 < 0.05**. These findings confirm that there is a **statistically significant effect** of condom use outreach on both the **knowledge and attitudes** of female commercial sex workers regarding the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Recommendations:

The results of this study are expected to provide information for health workers to make efforts to prevent sexually transmitted infections by providing comprehensive information about the signs, symptoms, and prevention of STIs.

and it is expected that

Health service workers are encouraged to be more proactive in providing health education and counseling programs. They must build closer relationships with the community, especially male sex workers' clients and female sex workers themselves, to ensure that the information conveyed is well received and implemented.

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