Perceptions of Severity and Risk of Acquiring Sexually Transmitted Diseases among Thai Female Adolescents

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Abstract

Purpose: To compare the perceptions of severity and risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases among Thai female adolescents with and without sexual experiences.

Design: Descriptive research.

Methods: The sample comprised 442 vocational students from southern Thailand who were randomly selected. Two questionnaires were used to collect data: sexual behaviors, and perceptions of severity and risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases. Descriptive statistics and t-test were used to analyze data.

Main findings: The mean age of the participants was 17.33 years old (SD = 1.29), whereby 55.45 percent had sexual experiences with the first sexual intercourse at 13-20 years old (M=16.13, SD =1.51). 41.88% of them had more than one sexual partner while 10.26 % experienced pregnancy. Regarding contraceptive methods used, most participants asked partners to ejaculate outside the vagina (54.27%), followed by using condoms (47.01%), contraceptives (20.09%) and no prevention (18.38%) respectively. Statistically, adolescents with sexual experience were found to have higher average scores of severity perception and risk for contracting sexually transmitted diseases than those without sexual experience (p < .05).

Conclusion and recommendations: Adolescents exposed to contracting sexually transmitted diseases should be evaluated and prioritized to try to prevent adverse effects in addition to reducing the risks while providing treatment to patients during the initial stages of illness.

Keywords: perceived severity, perceived risks, sexually transmitted disease, females adolescent

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