

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards Female Condom Use at International Paramedical Institute-Maya, Wakiso District. A Cross-sectional Study.

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Abstract



Background:

Sexually transmitted infections especially HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancy among students in higher institutions and universities is now a problem yet condom offers protection against sexually transmitted infections including HIV and pregnancy. Despite various promotions, female condom use remains relatively low among students, especially girls. This study purposed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice toward female condom use among females of the International Paramedical Institute, Wakiso District Uganda.

Methodology:

A descriptive cross-sectional study was implemented and a cluster sampling method was adopted to obtain the required number of respondents bringing up to 100 respondents which were got from 134 sample sizes.

Results:

The results of this study shows that of 100 respondents majority had the good and proper knowledge of female condom and 69(69%) of the respondents agreed that female condom can protect against HIV/AIDS. Regarding attitude toward the use of female condoms, most respondents have a negative attitude as 66(66%) of the respondents agreed that using female condoms reduces sexual pleasure and 84% agreed that FC makes sex uncomfortable. The level of female condom use was as low as only 11(11%) of the respondents.

Conclusion:

This study, therefore, concludes that the majority of females have does not have a good attitude and does not use female condoms despite having good knowledge of female condom, the level of use is very minimal and irregular.

Recommendation:

This study, therefore, recommends that for consistent and regular use of a female condom, there is a need to provide better information on a female condoms and make female condoms available and easily accessible to students in various places including hospitals. Better information can be achieved by the introduction of sex education in institutions and universities.

Email: watmonerick7@gmail.com Date submitted: 14th/05/2022 Date accepted: 02nd/06/2022

1 Background of the study

Infection by HIV is one of the most serious sexual health problems. The World Health Organization reported a total of 36,700,000 people infected

with HIV in the world; 2.1 million of these people became infected in 2015. (Vallejo-Medina Pablo1, 2019).

In Uganda, a study according to USAID data 2020 showed that 1500000 people were infected of

which 53000 were newly infected and there were 21000 AIDs related deaths in 2019 (USAID, 2020).

Similarly, another study in Uganda shows that in 2016-2017, the prevalence of HIV among adults aged 15 to 64 in Uganda was 6.2%: 7.6% among females and 4.7% among males. This corresponded to approximately 1.2 million people aged 15 to 64 living with HIV in Uganda. HIV prevalence was higher among women living in urban areas (9.8%) than those in rural areas (6.7%). (assessment, 2017)

Male condoms and female condoms are the only dual control device: they reduce the transmission of HIV and other STIs and they also prevent unplanned pregnancies. Therefore, the use of condoms must be promoted to prevent STIs and unplanned pregnancies (Vallejo-Medina Pablo1*, 2019). In the 1980s scientists came up with a female condom innovatively designed to make a woman have full control of HIV and STI infections as a response to male condoms.

The female condom (also known as femidom) is a tool for empowering women for protecting against HIV and STIs as well as unwanted pregnancy (Kayombo2*, 2016)

A study conducted among students at the University of Douala shows that young women account for 64% of young people living with HIV globally and in Cameroon, women are having HIV more than men with a prevalence of 5.6% and 2.9% respectively (Michel Ekono1, 2019)

The female condom (FC) is a polyurethane sheath with a flexible ring at both ends, which fits into the vagina before sexual intercourse, providing the woman with autonomy for protection, both against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV-AIDS (Michel Ekono1, 2019). Consistent and appropriate use of condoms is the most effective way of preventing HIV/AIDS transmission and unwanted pregnancies.

This means that females are having HIV more than males in Uganda and since female condom is very effective in the prevention of HIV and there is no available data on this in Uganda showing that the knowledge attitude and practice of female condom, this study will address the knowledge attitude and practice of female condoms.

2 Methodology

Study design.

A descriptive cross-sectional study that was carried out among females of International Paramedical Institute Maya assessed the knowledge, attitude, and practices of female condoms where questionnaires and focused group discussion were used. This study design was used because very many researchers used it on a similar topic and worked successfully.

Study population

The study population consisted of all female students from the International Paramedical Institute Maya of at least 17 years of age who gave their written consent and are sexually active. We excluded those who were not sexually active.

Eligibility criteria

Inclusion

The study involved and included the following; All-female students were present at the time for collecting data in International Paramedical Institute Maya.

Female students who consented to participate in the study.

Exclusion

This study excluded the following; Female students who were not sexually active Female students were less than 17years.

Sample size determination

By taking the study population size (N) of 134 female students since most of the students are at home because of coronavirus lockdown. Considering the total population (N) which is estimated to be the current number of female students and the marginal error (e), the sample size (n) can be calculated as follows according to the Mugenda formula (1999)

$$n = N / [1 + N(e^2)]$$

Where;

n = sample size

N = total population = 134

e = marginal error = 0.05

$$n = 134 / [1 + 134(0.05^2)]$$

$$n = 134 / 1.335$$

$$n = 100$$

Therefore, the number of participants was 100 female students in this study.

Sampling technique.

A cluster sampling method was used to get the minimum sample size of the study. The students were divided into three clusters; cluster one comprised of students doing diplomas in clinical medicine and students doing a medical records,

cluster two comprised of students doing dentistry and students doing pharmacy, and cluster three comprised of students doing nursing and students doing midwifery. The sample of the study population was selected systematically from each cluster; whereby the list of students from the class was obtained from the class representatives. Every 5th student from each cluster was chosen for study until the intended number was reached. This method was implemented to reduce bias in selecting the respondents.

Purposive sampling was also used to select girls that participated in three focused group discussions making up to 8 girls each that met the criteria of being above 17years and was sexually active.

Data collection methods

Questionnaire and focused group discussion were used in this study

Data collection procedures

Data was collected using a well-structured questionnaire both close and open-ended in English only. Focused group discussion was used by following guided questions.

Quality control

The researcher ascertained quality control of the questionnaire through pre-testing by conducting a pilot study. A pilot study was done in the institute among selected female students doing clinical medicine. A sample of 8 girls was chosen to test the questionnaire and thereafter modified and completed. Still, the quality of the research was assured by having enough time of conducting the study which is a period of 7months. Besides the above measure, the study only included students who met the inclusion above.

Data presentation and analysis

Data were coded to translate the responses to the questions into various categories. The coding reduced data into manageable summaries. The qualitative data from the focus group discussions were analyzed according to themes and patterns of responses that develop across the various respondents on each question. Quantitative data was coded and broken down using the SPSS statistical software version 21, Frequency distributions; percentages, tables, and pie charts were used to present data in form of descriptive statistics.

Ethical consideration

The researcher obtained a letter from the International paramedical institute Maya before undertaking the actual data collection. Written informed

consent was sought from all the respondents and they freely accepted to take part or not to take part in the study without any penalty. The respondents were given the freedom to participate and contribute voluntarily to the study. A comprehensive description of the purpose of the study was given to those involved. Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality in the handling of any information that was provided. All the information obtained from the respondents was used for the sole purpose of this study. No gifts or money was given or promised to respondents for having taken part in the study.

3 Results:

Demographic data

The majority of the respondents 43(43%) were between 20-24years and the a minority of the respondents were 30years and above, majority of the respondent 47(47%) did not fall under the listed religion while a minority of the respondents 8(8%) were SDA, most of the respondents 32(32%) were doing Nursing and the least number 8(8%) were doing Midwifery, the majority of the respondents 46(46%) were in the first year and minority of them 20(20%) were in their third year, 87(87%) were single and 13(13%) were married.

Knowledge of female condoms

Respondents response on ever hearing about FC

71(71%) of these respondents reported to ever heard about a female condom and 29(29%) had never heard about a female condom as shown in figure 1 above.

Respondents' source of information about FC.

Out of the 71 respondents who had ever heard about FC , 23(32.4%) heard from internet, 12(16.9%) from hospital , 15(21.1%) from friends, 10(14.1%) from television, 4(5.6%) from partners and 7(9.9%) from other sources.

Respondents who saw female condom.

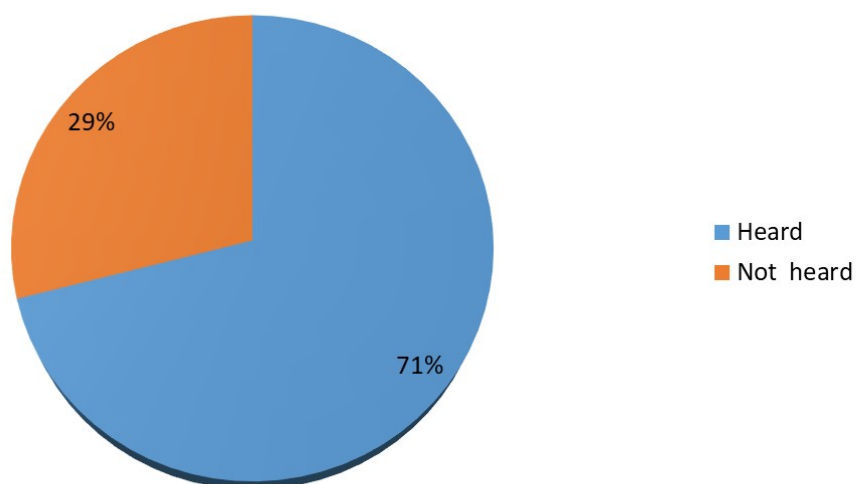
In the above figure 3, 57(57%) had ever seen FC of which 39(%) saw it physically and 18(18%) saw the picture while 52(52%) had never seen a female condom.

Knowledge on how to use female condom

As noted in the above table 2, the study found that most of the students (81%) do not know how

Table 1. shows demographic data of respondents

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
AGE		
15-19	33	33
20-24	43	43
25-29	17	17
30 and above	7	7
RELIGION		
Catholic	21	21
Muslim	11	11
Protestant	13	13
SDA	8	8
Others	47	47
COURSE		
DCM	19	19
Medical records	11	11
Medical laboratory	16	16
Pharmacy	14	14
Nursing	32	32
Midwifery	08	08
YEAR OF STUDY		
First year	46	46
Second year	34	34
Third year	20	20
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	87	87
Married	13	13

**Figure 1.** Show respondents who had heard about FC

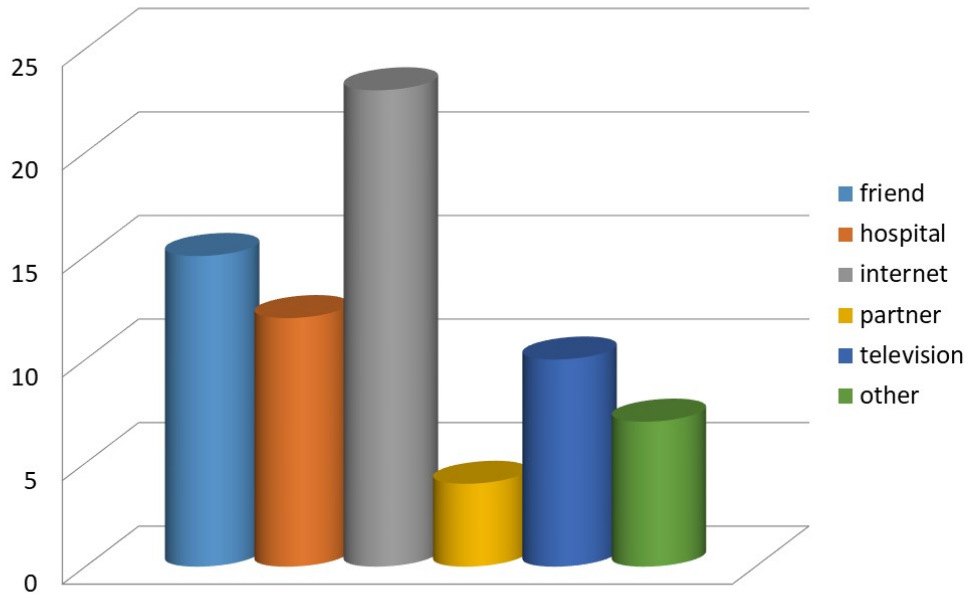


Figure 2. Shows respondents sources of information about FC.

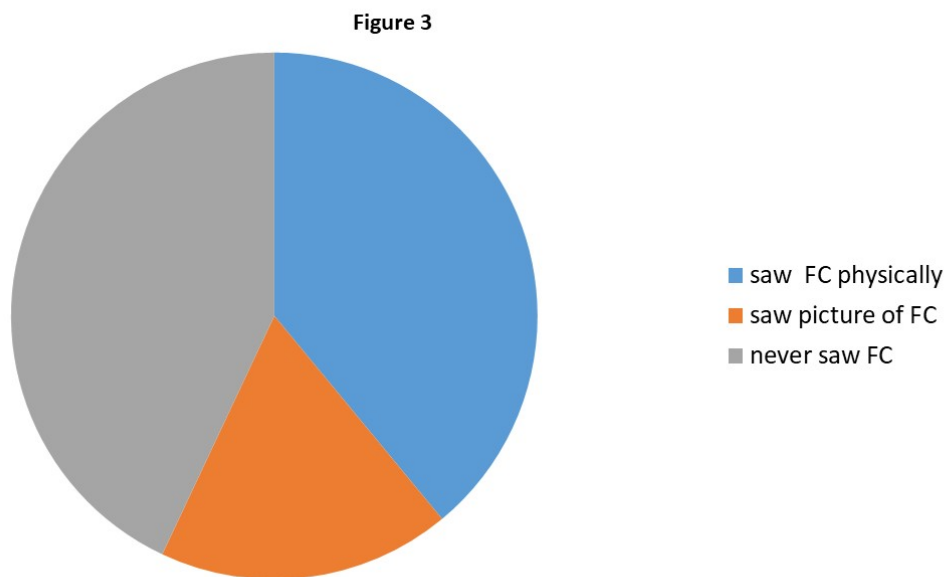


Figure 3. shows respondents results about seeing female condom

Table 2. Knowledge on how to use female condom

	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Knows how to use FC	19	19%
Does not know how to use FC	81	81%

to use a female condom meanwhile few of the students know how to use a female condom.

Respondents' response on whether female condoms protect against HIV.

In the study carried out, 69(69%) agreed that female condoms can protect against HIV, 22(22%) didn't know whether they can protect and 9(9%) reported that FC doesn't protect against HIV.

Knowledge on whether female condom prevents unwanted pregnancy

In addition to protection against HIV, an assessment on its protection against unwanted pregnancy show that 76(76%) agreed that it does prevent unwanted pregnancy while 24(24%) disagreed that it prevents unwanted pregnancy.

The attitude of respondents towards FC

The results of respondents' attitude towards female condom are displayed in table below showing the various degree of agreement and disagreement with the statement that measure attitude.

Respondents attitude about FC reducing sexual pleasure

Out of 100 respondents, 57(57%) agreed that using a female condom can reduce sexual pleasure meanwhile 43(43%) disagreed that using a female condom reduces sexual pleasure.

Respondents attitude toward FC in making sex uncomfortable

Figure 4: shows respondents attitude about FC reducing sexual pleasure

In the above figure 5, it shows that 67% of respondents agreed that female condoms reduce sexual pleasure meanwhile 33% of respondents disagreed with the statement.

Results in Table show that the majority of the respondents 84(84%) agreed that using a female condom during sex may make sexual intercourse uncomfortable meanwhile 26(26%) disagreed with the statement.

Practice

Respondents who have ever used female condom

In this study, the majority of the respondents 89(89%) have never used a female condom and 11(11%) of the respondents reported to have ever used a female condom as shown in table 3 above.

Reasons for always using a condom during sexual intercourse

The results in table 4 above show that the biggest number of the respondents 28(34%) reported that

the reason for always using a condom is to prevent HIV, then 17(21.0%) of the respondents say it's to prevent pregnancy and the least number of respondents 4(4.9%) reported that its lack of trust that make people always use condoms.

4 Discussion:

Knowledge of female condom

A female condom (FC) is a polyurethane sheath with a flexible ring at both ends, which fits into the vagina before sexual intercourse, providing the woman with self-sufficiency for protection, both against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV-AIDS (Michel Ekono1, 2019).

According to this study, the majority (71%) of the respondents had ever heard of the female condom. This is because the respondents are medical students and they learn about contraceptive measures including female condoms. Pertaining knowledge on how to use a female condom, the study found out that most of the students (81%) did not know how to use a female condom meanwhile a few of the students (19%) know how to use a female condom.

A study which was conducted at the University of Dar-Es-Salaam and published in 2015 revealed that 96.6% of the respondents reported having heard of the female condom. (Kayombo *et al*, 2016).

Again the findings of this study show that 57(57%) had ever seen FC of which 39(%) saw it physically and 18(18%) saw it in pictures, this is almost in correlation with a study done in 2015 that reported that 59% of the respondents know how female condom looks like. (Mathew *et al*, 2015). This high percentage of having seen FC could be based on the fact that the respondents are medical students hence further study could be done on nonmedical respondents.

On the source of information about FC, the internet and friends were selected by many respondents (32.4% and 21.1% respectively) out of many sources outlined. This finding concurred with a study published in 2019 that shows media 54(29.3%) being the main source of information about FC (Michel Ekono1, 2019).

The finding of this study also showed that the majority of the respondents (69%) know that FC protects against HIV which is consistent with a study

Figure 4

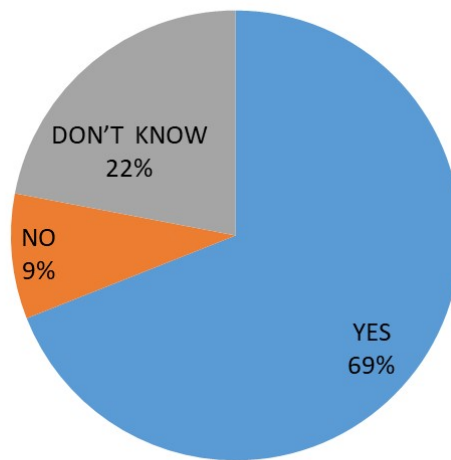


Figure 4. shows response of respondents on whether female condoms protect against HIV.

Table 3. results of respondents' attitude towards females' condom

Questions	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Using female condom mean I don't trust my partner	15	15%	18	18%	40	40%	27	27%
Do you think female condom make sex uncomfortable?	41	41%	18	18%	27	27%	13	13%
Do you think female condom don't prevent HIV/AIDS so there is no point in using them	14	14%	11	11%	13	13%	62	62%
Do you think sex with female condom feels good as without condom	17	17%	10	10%	28	28%	45	45%
Do you think because of female condom people are not faithful to their partner?	15	15%	21	21%	25	25%	39	39%
I would refuse to have sex if my partner refused to use female condom	39	39%	21	21%	18	18%	22	22%
Do you think if someone find me with a female condom think I have loose morals	29	29%	26	26%	25	25%	20	20%
Do you think female condom reduce pleasure during sex	41	41%	16	16%	18	18%	25	25%
Would you accept to use female condom with your sexual partner	12	12%	8	8%	32	32%	11	11%

Table 4. shows respondents attitude toward FC in making sex uncomfortable

Belief	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	84	84
Disagree	26	26

Table 5. Respondents response on using female condom

Parameters	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Use female condom	11	11%
Never use female condom	89	89%

Table 6. show reasons for always using a condom

Reasons for using condom	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Family planning	11	13.6%
Prevent pregnancy	17	21.0%
Lack of trust	04	4.9%
Partner insisted	07	8.6%
Prevent HIV	28	34.6%
Other	14	17.3%

done in 2019 that reported 77.2% were aware of FC's protective role against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). (Michel Ekono *et al*, 2019)

In addition to its HIV protection, an assessment on its protection of unwanted pregnancy show that 76(76%) agreed that it does prevent unwanted pregnancy while 24(24%) disagreed that it prevents unwanted pregnancy. This is correlating with a study published in 2019 at the University of Douala whereby the biggest number of respondents (53%) agreed that FC protects against unwanted pregnancy (Michel Ekono *et al*, 2019)

Attitude toward the use of a female condom

This study sort to stumble on the attitude of the respondent toward female condoms. From the study 59(59%) of the respondents agreed that female condoms make sex uncomfortable and 73(73%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that "sex with a female condom feels good as without a condom". This shows that the respondents had a negative attitude toward female condoms.

A certain study was done in Dar Salaam by Regina Mtayangulwa and Edward J. reveals that the majority of them had a negative attitude with only 46% having a positive attitude toward female condoms. (Kayombo *et al*, 2016). The negative attitude towards female condoms could be because the knowledge of female condoms is not to the maximum as there is still some doubt about it.

Still in this study conducted, it was agreed by 33(33%) respondents that using a female condom

means I don't trust my partner meanwhile 67(67%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

On addition to the above results of this study, the majority 57(57%) of the respondents agreed that female condoms reduce sexual pleasure and 43% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This finding is consistence with a study published in 2015 conducted in Kumba, Cameroon which revealed that 64.1% of their respondents believe that female condom decreases sexual satisfaction (Bain *et al*, 2015)

In the acceptability of female condoms to be used with a sexual partner, only 20% of the respondents agreed that they can use them, 43% of the respondents disagreed to use female condoms with their partner and 37% did not answer the question. This finding is contradicting a certain study done in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe which shows that the majority of the respondents (38%) noted that they will agree to use a female condom with their partner while only 22% disagreed with the statement of accepting the use FC. (Mathew *et al*, 2015). Similarly, a study conducted at the University of Douala published in 2019 shows that 48% of the respondent accepted the idea of using a female condom. (Michel Ekono *et al*, 2019)

From a focused group discussion, the majority express a negative attitude toward female condom use as many said that pleasure in sex is felt when a partner does it skin to skin contact and releases directly into the woman's body and they also said that sex with a condom on makes the partner to

only stay on for few minutes and does not reach the climax.

Practices of the female condom

Regarding female condom use, the study revealed that only 11(11%) of the respondents had used them meanwhile 89(89%) of the respondents had not used FC. This is because students had moderate knowledge about female condoms. The findings in this aspect are in correlation with a study done at the University of Douala that shows that the female condom use rate was 8.4% with a satisfaction rate of 7.4% (Michel Ekono *et al*, 2019). Similarly, another study from the University of Dar Es Salaam revealed that 4.31% admitted to having to use a condom once. (Kayombo *et al*, 2016)

The study revealed that the majority (34%) of the respondents reported that the reason why condom is always used is to prevent HIV followed by 21% of the respondents reporting their use in preventing pregnancy. This finding is in correlation with a study from the University of Dar Es Salaam revealed that 26.7% prefer female condoms as a means of HIV and STIs prevention (Kayombo *et al*, 2016)

The small utilization of female condoms is because the female condom is not easily accessible on the school premises as many students have seen and also there is a strict rule for students on moving out of school since students are not allowed to move out without permission. This can limit a student to engage in sexual intercourse and getting a female condom

The study has shown that knowing female condoms does not always result in their use as most of the students report having good knowledge of female condoms yet their utilization is very minimal. This finding is consistent with a study done in Cameroon that reported that there was no statistically significant association between respondent's knowledge of female condom and their use of a female condom, at the level of 0.05

5 Conclusion:

The finding reveals that most of the female student at the International Paramedical Institute has good and correct knowledge about female condom this means that students at this school are being involved in activities that provide information on reproductive health. Conversely, there are some misunderstanding and false beliefs about female

condom reported during a focused group discussion that needs to be clarified.

Attitude towards female condom use is negative as most of the respondents agreed that female condom makes sexual intercourse uncomfortable and reduces sexual pleasure despite their agreement about female condom protecting against sexually transmitted infections (e.g. HIV) and unwanted pregnancy. The finding also showed that most of the respondents think that if someone is found with a female condom, they think you have loose morals.

About female condom use, its level of use remains low as the majority of the respondent reported not having used a female condom at all. The study also concludes that knowing FC does not always result in its use. Strategies targeting behaviors and attitude change should be promoted to find ways of encouraging female condom use, especially among people at risk of getting STD (e.g. HIV) and unwanted pregnancy.

Recommendation:

To ensure that the misconceptions that discourage the use of female condoms are alleviated, interventions that promote the use of female condoms should be targeted and other dynamics related to non-use.

HIV prevention programs for the youth should aim at directing the young adolescent girls before their first sexual encounter to increase their risk perception and empower them to use protection during their first sexual intercourse with a partner of unknown HIV status.

There should be the formation of programs that impart and encourage the parents to familiarize themselves with and discuss with their adolescent's appropriate information concerning reproductive health and sexual matters since the study revealed that information about female condoms is from the internet not from parents

To realize the consistent use and uptake of condom use, there is a need for reinforcement of positive behavior among adolescent girls and young women. The introduction of sex education amongst out-of-school girls should be emphasized.

There is a need to address attitudes and practices towards women by educating men about responsible sexual behaviors through community-based involvement if consequences related to risky sexual behaviors are to be dealt with.

There is a need for sensitization and awareness to be done in regards to female condoms as from the findings of this research most girls reported having not used the female-male condom as well as reporting limited knowledge about it.

Study limitations

Unreliable information and not willing to open up on issues dealing with private life and professional ethics. However, this was overcome by continuous reassurance about the confidentiality of information, proper phrasing of questions, and informing the respondents in advance about the rationales and projected benefits of the study.

Limited time to carry out research. However, this was overcome by closely following the guide on the work plan.

Limited funds to facilitate the research which was overcome by making a budget and borrowing from friends before commencing data collection.

Acknowledge

Specially I want that Almighty God for allowing me to come this far, it's entirely because of Him that can do all this work. Besides, I would like to send my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Kiwu Joseph who was able to supervise me through my research. I want to acknowledge the effort of my parents who were able to support me financially through my academics.

I can't forget to acknowledge the support of the staff of the International paramedical institute in the Department of Clinical Medicine and Community Health for example Mr. Kato Joel, Mr. Victor, Mr. Lubega, and others

Abbreviation

FC: Female Condom

STI: Sexually Transmitted Infection

AIDS: Acquire Immunodeficiency Syndrome

WHO: World Health Organization

IPI: International Paramedical Institute

UAHEB: Uganda Allied Health Examination Board

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

DCM: Diploma in Clinical Medicine and Community Health

SDA: Seven Day Adventist

IPI: International Paramedical Institute

Definition of operational terms

Attitude: This is the way you feel about something or a settled way of feeling about something.

Female condom: This is a polyurethane sheath with a flexible ring at both ends, which fits into

the vagina before sexual intercourse, providing the woman with autonomy for protection, both against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

Knowledge: This is the fact of knowing about something or having general understanding or familiarity with someone or something.

Practice: The act of applying or using ideas, believe or method.

STIs: These are infections that are commonly spread by sex, especially vaginal intercourse, anal sex and oral sex.

Pregnancy: This is the time through which one or more offspring develop inside a woman.

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS): is a condition of reduced immunity as a result of infection with the Human Immunodeficiency virus.

A Publisher details:

Publisher: Student's Journal of Health Research (SJHR)
(ISSN 2709-9997) Online
Category: Non-Governmental & Non-profit Organization
Email: studentsjournal2020@gmail.com
WhatsApp: +256775434261
Location: Wisdom Centre, P.O.BOX. 148, Uganda, East Africa.



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