

ABSTRACT

A cross sectional comparative study was carried out during July 1994 to Aug 1995 between a population with high risk sexual behaviour in the tourist trade at Hikkaduwa and a matched working group. The study group (SG) consisted of 452 males with high risk sexual behaviour. The control group (CG) was matched for age, marital status, and occupation. A similar number of respondents was interviewed from the control group which came for pre-employment medical examination to the Central STD Clinic, Colombo.

The objectives of the study were to compare the knowledge on STD/AIDS, to measure some priority prevention indicators, to measure 4 predictor variables in the sexual risk reduction behaviour model, and to assess attitudes towards condom use. Interviewer administered structured questionnaire was used to collect information.

Three interviewers, males who were students from the department of Sociology, Sri Jayawardenapura University were recruited and given adequate training on the questionnaire. They interviewed both groups. Data was processed and analysed using the software package Epiinfor-5.

The four predictor variables of the model of sexual risk reduction behaviour i.e., perceived personal vulnerability, worry, homophobia and high risk sexual behaviour were significantly higher in the study group than in the control group. Sexual risk reduction behaviour was also significantly higher in the study group. The number of non-regular sexual

partners during the previous 12 months was significantly higher in the study group group. The use of drugs especially the injectable type was more in the SG.

Nearly 100% in both groups had heard of AIDS but more detailed knowledge was better among the SG. The knowledge on the use of a condom both for prevention of pregnancy and AIDS was significantly higher in the study group. The sexual activity based on number of persons having ever had one or more sexual encounters and the number of sexual acts with the most recent casual sexual partner was more among the control group than the study group. But the number of casual sexual partners during previous 12 months was higher in the SG.

In conclusion, the study population has been identified to have significantly higher sexual risk reduction behaviour.