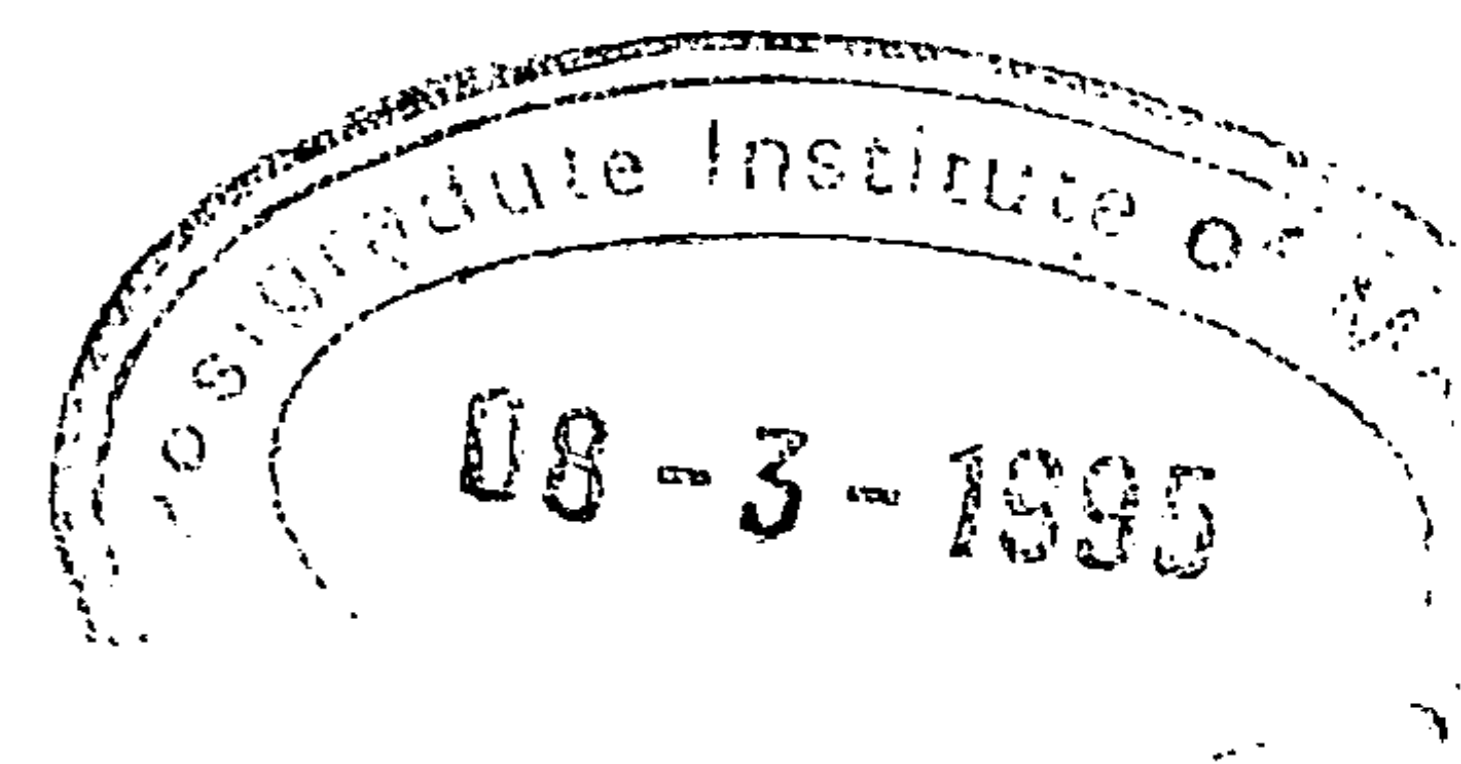


2011



ABSTRACT

This study was designed to assess the prevalence of condom use and factors affecting condom use among FSWW attending STD clinic, Colombo such as socio-demographic characteristics, factors related to their occupation, knowledge, attitude and skills in the use of condoms.

The necessary data regarding FSWW was collected by means of an interviewer administered questionnaire. In addition a model was used to identify condom use skills among FSWW.

The study was carried out from 16th of May to 16th of August, 1993 and 199 FSWW were interviewed during this period.

The majority of 199 FSWW originally came from outside Colombo city limits (82.4%). The youngest was 16 years old and oldest was 46 years with an average age of 27.2. The majority 86.4% of the interviewees had family members solely dependant on their earnings; with an average of 2.3 dependants per FSW. Very few had husbands (17.6%). Number of clients during previous week ranged from 1-45 (mean - 8.45) 56.3% of the study sample were street workers.

Out of 199, 152 (76.3%) have used condoms with clients at least once during the previous week for penetrative sexual intercourse. However, only 23.8% used condoms always with each client during this period.

Several factors were found to be related to condom use. A statistically significant larger proportion of non/rare condom users were new to the profession. (less than 6 months in prostitution) ( $0.001 > P$ ). Condom use was significantly higher among FSW who spent more than one hour with a client usually ( $0.05 > p > 0.01$ ). Significantly larger proportion of frequent/always condom users charged more than Rs. 100/- per client ( $P < 0.05$ ).

In addition the FSW who had higher number of clients per week ( $0.05 > P > 0.01$ ) and who had attended STD clinic previously showed more frequent condom use ( $0.05 > P > 0.01$ ).

Failure to use condoms was mainly due to client refusal (54.8%). Other reasons worth considering were lack of perception of condom as a prophylactic against STD by FSW (23.6%) and familiarity of the client to the FSW (18%).

Out of 152 condom users only 44.7% had developed skills to put a condom correctly on the model. 53.9% had experienced problems while using condoms like breakage, slipping off. A significant association was seen among incorrect condom use and breakage. ( $0.01 > P > 0.001$ ).

Out of 152 condom users only 25% could identify an unusable condom. 52.6% identified health personnel at STD clinic as their main source of knowledge regarding condoms. Peer groups (36.1%), clients (21.1%)

and brothel and hotel owners (10.5%) were also found to be playing an important role in safer sex education. Main source of supply of condoms was pharmacy (69.7%).

Among 199 FSWW, 79 had stable partners; out of whom 67.1% were substance abusers. Condom was used by only 11 FSWW out of 79 who had stable partners. In addition 12.7% of FSWW who had stable partners were found to be more exposed to STD/HIV infection through unprotected anal sex (10/79).

In spite of behaviour change in some, there are still many FSWW working in and around Colombo who remain seriously at risk of STD/HIV infection. Information obtained from this study confirms the need to strengthen FSWW's negotiation skills, increase client's and partner's motivation in the use of condoms and increase public recognition of the value of condom in protecting the entire community. At the same time it is evident that STD clinics can play a major role in changing behaviour of FSWW and clients.