

ABSTRACT

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in 2010 to assess the awareness, attitudes and behaviours related to HIV/AIDS among workers and workplace HIV prevention activities in Polypropylene woven bag factory in Hlaing Tharyar Township in Yangon Division. A total of 120 workers with 50 males and 70 females workers were interviewed by using pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire. Key informant interviews were done with the responsible persons in the factory who were general manager, store manager and supervisor. The majority of the respondents were under twenty five (25) years of age and educated up to middle and high school level.

Regarding knowledge on HIV/AIDS, television was the main source of information. Majority i.e. 82.5 percent knew that unprotected sex as the commonest mode of transmission followed by contaminated syringe and needles and blood and blood product. Very few respondents (11.7 percent) knew that HIV infected mother can transmit to her unborn child.

About 41.7 percent of the workers had negative attitude towards HIV infected co-workers. On studying their behaviours, extramarital sex was negligible which was reported by only one respondent. Premarital sex was found in 15 percent of the respondents. Among the 15 workers who engaged in sexual activities, 10 workers (66.67 percent) used the condom. So it can be said that the condom usage was not satisfactory among the workers. The respondents who used condom during their sexual activities stated that they did not want to get the disease (60 percent, 6/10) or not to get child (40 percent, 4/10) respectively.

Since there was no workplace clinic in the factory, their source of knowledge in workplace were mainly from co-workers in the factory (46.7 percent) and others got from health education activities by health personals. Findings from key informant interviews showed that there were health education activities in workplace. But only 27 workers (22.5 percent) said they attended health education activities. Even health education was given at the workplace, not all the workers could get the health message since the workers are assigned in day and night alternately. The workers in this study had good knowledge scores related to mode of transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS especially when they had high education levels.

The findings highlighted that although basic knowledge about HIV was high among the workers, about half of them had negative attitudes towards PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS). Although there were few health education activities on HIV in the factory by some NGO, majority of workers did not attend.

Based on the research findings, the following are recommended to strengthen the health education activities through existing NGOs in collaboration with National AIDS Programme and Social Welfare Department, to arranged all workers including management level staffs could attend health education activities in the factory and promotion of Peer education program among the workers in the factory to increase the knowledge, attitude and behaviour towards HIV/AIDS.