

ABSTRACT

To assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices related to HIV/AIDS among cheroot production farm female workers in Bago, a cross sectional study was conducted in 2009. A total of 147 female workers were interviewed by using a pre- tested semistructured questionnaire. Majority of the respondents were under twenty four years of age and educated up to high school and university level. Regarding the knowledge on HIV/AIDS, television and magazines were the main sources of information. About two third of respondents knew transmission via blood products and vertical transmission. Only one third knew transmission from HIV infected person and via contaminated syringes and needles. Most of the respondents agreed to eat together with HIV infected person and not agreed to separate AIDS patients from others. But concerning about willing to buy food from known HIV infected person, the answers were nearly equal between agree and not agree. Extramarital sex was reported only by one out of 22 married women. Their reported age of first sex was ranged between 16-30 years. Frequency of condom use during sex was low. The main reason for not using condom was “not necessary” and some said because of “trust between spouses”. There was a gap between knowledge, attitude and behaviors towards HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Although knowledge levels were high, the practice for condom use was weak and the perception towards ever used was not to conceive pregnancy rather than to prevent STIs. Cultural barriers in Myanmar society and stigma were challenges for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Young female workers in this study had good knowledge scores related to modes of transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STIs especially when they had high education levels and exposure to available multi-media. In this study, high knowledge and attitude scores did not have any relationship with condom use at every sex. It was vital to improve their awareness related to VCCT and PMCT services and the importance of partner notification when suffering from symptoms of STI.