

A CASE STUDY OF ADOLESCENT BELIEVES AND INTENTIONS IN THE USE OF CONDOM IN BUKIT BINTANG

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Abstract

In Malaysia, the issue of condom is still considered a taboo. Discussing and promoting the use of condom might be seen as against the culture and religiously sensitive. But with the knowledge that Malaysian adolescents had sexual intercourse for the first time at the early age of 23 (Durex, 2012) it is important to realize that the use of condom could protect human from HIV or others STI during sexual intercourse (Davis & Weller, 1999). This study is to explain and understand adolescents in Bukit Bintang believe towards the availability and intention of using of condom during sexual intercourse. I looked at the adolescent self efficacy, barriers of using condom and perceived benefit from using condom as the factors that influence their belief and intention of using condom. My research participants are selected 60 adolescents aged 14-19 years old at Bukit Bintang District. The data collected from the questionnaire distributed were analyzed using SPSS version 21. My findings reveal that the adolescents have no consistency in using condom during sexual intercourse with only 43.3% would refuse to have sexual intercourse without condom, 38.3% would insist on using condom and 35% would have sexual intercourse if there is no condom available. Analyzing the barriers, more than three quarter of the respondents (76.7%) confessed they would be embarrassed to buy condom while 23.3% disagreed with that statement, even though 66.7% of the respondents agreed that condom is easy to get while 33.3% did not think that way and about 63.3% of the respondents agreed that buying condom is not a crime while 36.7% disagreed with this statement. Looking at the perceived benefit of using condom, majority of the respondents agree that condom is an effective way to prevent unwanted pregnancy (58.3%), protect against HIV (60%) and STIs (58.3%). This positive belief could initiate the use of condom. This study could give the direction in understanding the adolescent belief and intention of using condom, which could help predict adolescent sexual behaviour.

Introduction:

As Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country, premarital sexual behaviour among the adolescents is still considered a sensitive issue to be discussed openly. But with the development of modern media (King, 2012) and Westernization (Lori A. Brotto, 2005), Malaysia is facing the increases of premarital sexual activity and unwanted pregnancies. The need to understand adolescent sexual behaviour, attitudes and conceptive use is important to decrease the rate of sexual activity and risky sexual behaviour among them, which could lead to other social problem such as unwanted pregnancy and Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs) (Wong LP, 2012).

A report by Mymetro (2013) stated that a stastic from the Ministry of Health that the number of people living with HIV is nearly 33,732, and probably contracting HIV at the early age of twenties or early adolescence. In the report, the Chairman of the Malaysian Wahidayah, Norlela Mokhtar, who is also a counselor for the Malaysian AIDS Council, expressed her concern that the biggest threat to the increase of HIV involving teenagers now is the spread of free sex symptoms.

Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Heng Seai Kie said the number of children born out of wedlock or illegitimate for 2008 to 2010 based on the statistics of the National Registration Department (NRD) is of 152,182 people, with the state of Sabah is the highest illegitimate birth record of 41,490 people followed by Maharashtra (18,983 people), Sarawak (17,570 people), Johor (16,298 people) and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur (12,095 people). (Utusan Online, 2013). He also said, among the causes of the onset of symptoms due to several factors including watching videos and porn sites, lack of religious upbringing, want to try, the influence of peers and willing to have sex.

As the issues of condom remained a taboo here in Malaysia, a study by Durex (2012) stated that the adolescents in Malaysia will had their first sexual experience at the age of 23 and received sex education at the age of 15 compared to an average of 12 years in countries like Austria, Germany and Mexico. Comparing to Singaporean and Indonesian, about 54% of them in Malaysia reported that they were more likely to use a condom the first time they have sex.

This study explored the perspectives and beliefs of adolescents aged 14-19 years old, at Bukit Bintang district of their intention in the use of condom during sexual intercourse. 44 male and 16 female respondents among 51 Malays (85%), 6 Chinese (10%) and 3 Indians (5%) were involved in this study.

Literature Review

A research by Wong (2012) indicated that the issue of premarital sexual behaviour should be given serious attention. Beside the finding that premarital sexual activity exist, also the reality that the respondent did not use any type of birth control during their first sexual encounter put them in a risky sexual behaviour. Also reported that the reason behind such refusal were momentary unavailability of contraception, partner refused to use contraception and not wanting to seem as distrusting a partner. Not only that, Wong (2012) also revealed that many school students did not have the accurate knowledge about various aspects of sex, pregnancy and contraception use during sexual intercourse, which put them in the position of not practising safe sex.

Lack of information regarding STIs could be related to the inconsistency use of condom during sexual intercourse. According to Mudassir Anwar et al. (2010) about 12.6% of 1139 students aged between 15 – 20 years had sexual intercourse and 75.7% had their sexual encounter at the age of 15-19 and 38.2% were having more than 3 partners. Beside the fact that they are sexually active, they have moderate level of knowledge about STIs. This is consistent with research by Wong (2012) where the respondents had relatively poor reproduction and pregnancy knowledge.

Research done by Miller et al. (2004) indicated that 48% of 18 million new cases of sexually transmitted infections (STI) reported annually is among people age 15-24. These young adults do not think that they are at risk of chlamydia or gonorrhoea, 24.4% did not use condom in the past 12 months, and those who are currently affected may not change their sexual behaviour or seek testing or treatment. These put more adolescents at risk of such STI.

“Variables under barriers to use were the strongest predictors of condom use. Perceived effectiveness of condoms, and how much respondents worried about acquiring AIDS also independently predicted use.... Factors attributed to non use of contraception on most occasions of sexual intercourse were lack of access, embarrassment, partner refusal and trusting partners.”

(Hingson et. al, 1990)

Hogben et al. (2006) reported that 51.2% of the respondents intended to use condoms every time they had sex, but they had weaker intentions where consistent use and correct use were both lower. So, the correlation between the number of vaginal sex and condom use consistency is negatively correlated. Sales et al. (2012) conclude that partner communication frequency increase the use of condom in STI and HIV prevention among young women. Exavery et al. (2012) research on the acceptance of condom promotion and distribution among 10-19 adolescents, reported that 37% of the adolescents agree on the promotion and distribution of condom, and the majority of them (62.7%) perceived that they are too young to be given condoms and condom promotions. Also, about 16.7% of the respondents convey their concern that the act of distributing and promoting condom might not only increase the sexual intercourse among the sexual active adolescents, but also might influence those who never had sex would be trigger to experiment the use of condom and this will lead to the early initiation of sexual intercourse, which might put them in the risk of STIs or HIV.

Research Objective

This study is to explain and understand adolescents believe towards the availability and intention of using of condom during sexual intercourse.

Research Question

- 1) What is adolescent belief regarding the use of condom?
- 2) What is adolescent intention in using condom during sexual intercourse?

Methodology

The design of this study was descriptive in nature. Quantitative methods used in this study. All measurements of variables are based on responses to all statements contained in the questionnaire. A set of questionnaire was prepared to collect information and data. Data obtained by using a questionnaire that was distributed to the selected 60 respondents of adolescents' age 14-19 years old at Bukit Bintang District. The method of stratifies random sampling was used. The target sample consisted of adolescents' age 14-19 years old at Bukit Bintang district.

Result:

The findings in Table 1 shows 66.7% of the respondents agreed that condom is easy to get while 33.3% did not think that way. About 63.3% of the respondents agreed that buying condom is not a crime while 36.7% disagreed with this statement. The results of the study show more than three quarter of the respondents (76.7%) confessed they would be embarrassed to buy condom while 23.3% disagreed with that statement. Approximately 70% of the respondents disagreed that condom triggers their curiosity to have sexual intercourse. Meanwhile more than half of the respondents disagreed with this statement "*It is okay to have sexual intercourse as long as I used condom*". Descriptive statistics also show that more than half of the respondents (58.3%) agreed that condoms are an effective method of preventing pregnancy while 41.7% of the respondents did not think that way. The results of the study show about 60% of the respondents agreed that condoms are an effective way of protecting against HIV/AIDS while 40% disagreed with it. The results of the study revealed about 58.3% of the respondents agreed that condoms are an effective way of protecting against sexual transmitted diseases while 41.7% disagreed with it.

Table 1: Proportion of Adolescents' Perception Regarding Used of Condom

NO	Statement	Agree		Disagree	
		n	%	n	%
E1	Condom is easy to get.	40	66.7	20	33.3
E2	Buying condom is not a crime	38	63.3	22	36.7
E3	I would be embarrassed to buy condom.	46	76.7	14	23.3
E4	Condom triggers my curiosity to have sexual intercourse.	18	30.0	42	70.0
E5	It is okay to have sexual intercourse as long as I used condom.	27	45.0	33	55.0
E6	Condoms are an effective method of preventing pregnancy	35	58.3	25	41.7
E7	Condoms are an effective way of protecting against HIV/AIDS	36	60.0	24	40.0
E8	Condoms are an effective way of protecting against sexual transmitted diseases.	35	58.3	25	41.7

The results of the study in Table 2 disclosed about 56.7% of the respondents definitely would not refuse to have sexual intercourse without condom while 43.3% would refuse it. Approximately 61.7% definitely would not insist on using a condom while 38.3% definitely would insist on using a condom even if their partner didn't want to. Approximately 65% of the respondents would not have sexual intercourse if there is no condom available.



Table 2: Proportion of Adolescent Intention in Using Condom During Sexual Intercourse

NO	Statement	Definetely would		Definetely would not	
		n	%	n	%
E9	I would refuse to have sexual intercourse without a condom.	26	43.3	34	56.7
E10	I would insist on using a condom even if my partner didn't want to.	23	38.3	37	61.7
E11	If I didn't have a condom, I would have sexual intercourse anyway.	21	35	39	65

Discussion

In general, the study revealed the lack of consistency in the used of condom during sexual intercourse among the respondents. Looking at the adolescent self-efficacy, only about 43.3% would refuse to have sexual intercourse without condom, 38.3% would insist on using condom and 35% would have sexual intercourse if there is no condom available. This is consistent with the finding of Hogben et al. (2006) where the respondents had weaker intentions in using condom during sexual intercourse. A lot of factors contribute to such behaviour such as perception of partner expectancy beliefs (partner acceptability, partner trust, pleasure and with guilt)

This could be related to the barrier to use condom, which the respondents would be embarrassed to buy condom, beside the fact of availability of condom that 66.7% agree that condom is easy to get and it is not against the law to purchase it (63.3%). This could be related to the finding of Wong (2012) that the respondents' less liberal attitudes against accessibility of condom among the adolescents form a strong barrier of contraceptive use among the adolescents. This problem could be solved with adequate knowledge through the suitable channel like proper sex education at school, courteous parental guidance and competent health policies.

Looking at the perceived benefit of using condom, majority of the respondents agree that condom is an effective way to prevent unwanted pregnancy (58.3%), protect against HIV (60%) and STIs (58.3%). This positive belief could initiate the use of condom.

Limitation of study

This study will only be conducted in the Bukit Bintang District only. The findings of this study can not be generalized elsewhere. This study only focused on adolescents believes towards availability and using condom during sexual intercourse. The study also did not measure the level of understanding in understanding the instrument.

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