

HIV/Std: The Women To Blame? Knowledge And Attitudes Among Std Clinic Attendees In The Second Decade Of HIV/AIDS

Abstract:

We aimed to determine the knowledge and attitudes towards HIV/STDs among women attending an STD clinic by interviewing 520 randomly selected women. Nearly all had heard of HIV/AIDS/STDs, with posters, pamphlets and the radio being the main source of their information. The years of schooling was the only predictive factor of knowing a preventive measure of HIV. Two-thirds thought they were at risk of contracting HIV from their regular partner. Knowledge of the sexual habits of their male partners was low with 260 (50%) of the women distrusting their partner. Only 52 (10%) of respondents admitted to sex in exchange for gifts or money. In the event of a positive HIV test result, the perceived partner response would be to blame the woman for introducing the infection into the relationship. After a positive HIV test result, only 3.5% would resort to using condoms while another 3.7% would try to pass on the disease to other people. The quality of their knowledge of the transmission of HIV was low in spite of the fact that most respondents have heard of HIV/AIDS/STDs. Violence against women was expected in relation to a positive test result. There is a need for better educative effort on the modes of transmission and prevention of HIV, also in 'low risk' populations.