



Involving Female Sex Workers as Peer Educators for Increasing the Use of Female Condom: What are the Challenges?

Komang Ayu Kartika Sari; Ni Luh Putu Lila Wulandari;
Dinar SM Lubis; Lorraine Yap

Background

- Based on the number of HIV& AIDS reported cases, Bali is at the sixth place.
- HIV&AIDS epidemic in Bali is still concentrated in high risk groups
- In 2000, most reported cases were MSM and IDUs, but since 2004 the number of heterosexually transmitted cases has increased significantly
- Data of 2011 *Integrated Biological and Behavioral Survey* (IBBS) shows that the rate of condom use is still very low (35-36% among female sex workers)

Continued.....Background

- The use of FC is one of the alternatives for the constantly low rates of male condom use in sex industry.
- FC has been promoted to FSWs through a regular supply, training, and peer education programs.
- However, PEP have somewhat failed in involving and sustaining FSWs as peer educators & FC use among FSWs is still very low.
- **This study explored the social and individual factors that impede the involvement of FSWs in PEP.**

Methods

- A qualitative study was conducted from June to September 2012 in Bali.
- Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with FSWs who had attended training on FC
- Two FGDs conducted with those who had never attended the training, but had been familiar with FC.
- Two FSWs who use FC routinely were also interviewed.

Results

- FSWs generally accept the idea of PEP and are willing to promote FC to their peers
- Most FSWs mentioned that they feel unconfident to train their peers to use FC
- They worry if they cannot answer questions from their peers.
- **Assistance from outreach workers, therefore, is still needed particularly during the initial works of PE.**

Continued...Results

- Refusal of clients and difficulties in using FC have made many FSWs still reluctant to use it and PE feel “hopeless” to promote FC
- *“I tried to use it twice with clients but it takes time, so my clients complained....”*
- *“My client was not familiar with it, he said that it looks weird..”*
- They agreed that personal and direct training to use FC (without a pelvic model) is important

Continued....Results

- However, it can be an uncomfortable and embarrassing moment both for them and for their peers
- Quality of relationship with their peers becomes another factor that influences PEP
- “...I asked my friends to try FC by themselves...because directly trying to use it with friends is embarrassing even though we are females”
- These emphasize the importance of defining “peers” to be a suitable person to educate other FSWs personally

Continued.....Results

- Some FSWs concerned about the acceptance of pimps regarding the works of PE in their locations
- “...*there are pimps who complained every time outreach workers come to promote condom, so I feel a bit worried...*”
- **Support from pimps is also required**

Conclusion

- There are several challenges in involving FSWs in PEP from both social and individual factors.

To enable PE to promote FC to their peers, we need:

- Assistance from outreach workers
- Recruiting those who have a close relationship with other FSWs
- Support from pimps



Thank you

Acknowledgement :

This study is funded by Kirby Institute, UNSW,
Australia