

## A STUDY OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CONDOM AMONGST MARGINALIZED WOMEN

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### Abstract :

#### Research Question :

(1) What is level of knowledge about condom amongst marginalized women.

**Objectives :** To assess the Knowledge of marginalized women.

- Whether they have just heard about condom or have seen it.
- Whether used by male/female.
- Proper use prevents HIV/AIDS/STI.
- Free govt. supply of condom.

**Design :-** Cross sectional community based study.

**Study period :** Sept 2003 to Feb 2004.

**Setting :** Slums of Kanpur city.

**Material and method :** 10% of all the slums of Kanpur city having population less than 3000. (i.e. 160) were selected. All available females of 13-25 years age group were interviewed by house to house survey using predesigned and pretested questionnaire.

**Results :** Knowledge is poor in younger age group than in older age group. only 52.4% married women have seen condom and know that it is used by males. Except illiterate and primary educated women, other groups have good knowledge about condom. Overall knowledge about its free govt. supply was just 24.5%.

**Conclusion :** Over all knowledge about condom is poor among marginalized women and need further education.

### Introduction :

HIV/AIDS/STI is the major pandemic affecting Indian population as well and about 5.1 million people are estimated to be infected with it till the end of year 2004. There is no treatment as well as vaccine for HIV/AIDS/STI. Awareness about the disease and preventive measures is the only way to reduce the transmission. Hetero-sexual route is the major mode of transmission and condom is the major preventive measure.

Women of age group 13-25 yrs. age group are primary stake holder and that too living in slums are really marginalized They have very less access to health services and awareness campaigns. Thus this study is done, taking the marginalized women as respondents.

### Material and Method :

The sample population was selected according to the feasibility and hence 10% of all the slums of Kanpur city having population less than 3000 (i.e. 160) were selected. Out of 160

slums 10% slums(i.e.16) slums were selected by systematic sampling. All available females of 13-25 years age group were interviewed by house to house survey using predesigned and

pretested questionnaire. Therefore total of 1284 marginalized women of 13-25 yrs. age group residing in slums were interviewed.

**Observations :**

**TABLE-1**  
Condom related responses according to age of the respondents

(Multiple Responses)

S.No.	Responses	13-18 Yrs. n=722	19-25 Yrs. n=562	Total n=1284
1.	Heard about condom	556 (77.0)	402 (71.5)	958 (74.6)
*2.	Have seen	103 (14.3)	294 (52.3)	397 (30.9)
**3.	Know that used by males	188 (26.0)	302 (53.7)	490 (38.2)
4.	Know that proper use Prevents HIV/AIDS/STI	198 (27.4)	271 (48.2)	469 (36.5)
5.	Know about free Govt. supply	181 (25.0)	134 (23.8)	315 (24.5)

**TABLE-2**  
Condom related responses according to marital status of the respondents

S. No.	Responses	Unmarried n=607	Married n=524	Widow n=49	Separated n=104	Total n=1284
1.	Heard about condom	502 (82.7)	378 (72.1)	36 (73.4)	42 (40.3)	958 (74.6)
2.	Have seen	61 (10.0)	275 (52.4)	30 (61.2)	31 (29.8)	397 (30.9)
3.	Know that used by males	157 (25.8)	275 (52.4)	29 (59.1)	29 (27.8)	490 (38.2)
4.	Know that proper use Prevents HIV/AIDS/STI	269 (44.3)	172 (32.8)	24 (48.9)	13 (12.5)	469 (36.5)
5.	Know about free Govt. supply	184 (30.3)	105 (20.0)	17 (34.6)	9 (8.6)	315 (24.5)

TABLE-3

Condom Related responses According to Literacy status of the respondents

(Multiple Responses)

S.No.	Responses	Illiterate n=401	Primary n=298	Jr. High School n=196	High School n=180	Interme diate n=128	Graduate &above n=81	Total n=1284
1.	Heard about condom	211 (52.6)	216 (72.4)	181 (92.3)	159 (88.3)	110 (85.9)	81 (100.0)	958 (74.6)
2.	Have seen	72 (17.9)	51 (17.1)	71 (36.2)	71 (39.4)	61 (47.6)	71 (87.6)	397 (30.9)
3.	Know that used by males	77 (19.2)	59 (19.7)	93 (47.4)	99 (55.0)	81 (63.2)	81 (100.0)	490 (38.2)
4.	Know that proper use prevents HIV/AIDS/STI	41 (10.2)	32 (10.7)	84 (42.9)	123 (68.3)	121 (94.5)	68 (83.9)	469 (36.5)
5.	Know about free Govt. supply	51 (12.7)	30 (10.0)	36 (18.3)	52 (28.8)	67 (52.3)	79 (97.5)	315 (24.5)

Percentage in parenthesis

**Result & Discussion :**

Condom related responses and knowledge observations show 74.6% respondents have heard about condom while only 30.9% have seen it. 38.2% knew that it is used by males and only 24.5% knew the supply is available from Govt. agencies free of cost<sup>1</sup>.

Comparatively 52.3% old age groups of respondents have seen the condom where as only 14.3% in younger age group of 13 - 18 yrs.

had knowledge that condoms are used by males. Its protective valve against AIDS and free availability from Govt.. institution was almost equally known to all the groups (Table-1)

Fairly large no. of unmarried respondents i.e. 82.7% have heard about the condom but nearly 10% have seen it, which is explainable due to their unmarried status. They also knew that condoms protects from HIV / AIDS / STI and is freely available Govt. supply in better proportion than married group<sup>2</sup>. Free availability

of condoms and its protective value against HIV was poorly known to separated group of women (8.6% & 12.5% respectively). This calls for better dissemination of condom related knowledge among slum women<sup>3</sup>. \*(Table2)

Except illiterate in whom only 52.6% had heard about condom, all other respondents of varying literacy level have heard about condom in better proportion<sup>4</sup>. Its protective value against AIDS is fairly known to junior high school level and above educated level ranging from 42.9% to 94.5% Only 52.3% intermediate level 97.5% graduate and above respondents knew about provision of free Govt. supply<sup>5</sup>. This indicates poor level of condom related awareness among illiterate or less educated females and call for action accordingly (Table-3).

**Conclusion** - Over all knowledge about condom is very poor and needs to be increased by awareness campaign. Publicity of free govt. supply of condom should be done extensively.

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