

Autumn European Testing Week 2021 in a Middle-income Country-Implications for Education of Females about Condom Use: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

Background: Since 2002, Serbia has seen a rise in newly diagnosed HIV cases, especially among young adults. **Objectives:** To examine condom use and interest in education about condoms among clients who came for voluntary and confidential counseling and testing (VCCT) for HIV during the autumn European testing week in Belgrade, Serbia. **Materials and Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted using anonymous questionnaires. VCCT for HIV was organized in 5 student dormitories in Belgrade, Serbia, in November 2021. Clients who presented for testing and counseling were invited to participate in this study. Descriptive statistics were used to present the study sample. The adjusted logistic regression model was used to test factors associated with having an interest in education about condom use. **Results:** Slightly over one-half of sexually active study participants reported condom use at last sexual intercourse. Approximately 15% of participants expressed interest in education about condom use. The adjusted logistic regression model showed that being female was an independent predictor of having an interest in education about condom use. Being in a committed relationship, the perception that condom use reduces pleasure, and feeling that condom use causes discomfort during sexual intercourse were independent factors associated with less frequent condom use in the past year. **Conclusion:** Condom handling skills should be part of reproductive health education, particularly for young women.

Key words: Condom use, European testing week, human immunodeficiency virus