

KNOWLEDGE AND VIEWS REGARDING CONDOM USE AMONG FEMALE GARMENT FACTORY WORKERS IN CAMBODIA

Gail Webber¹, Nancy Edwards², Carol Amaratunga³, Ian D Graham⁴,
Vincent Keane⁵ and Socheat Ros⁶

¹Department of Family Medicine, University of Ottawa, Lancaster Medical Clinic;
²Department of Epidemiology, Faculty of Health Sciences, Nursing, University of Ottawa and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Institute of Population and Public Health; ³Applied Health Research, Justice Institute of British Columbia;
⁴School of Nursing, University of Ottawa and Knowledge Translation, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canada; ⁵International Organization for Migration Cambodia and Drug and Alcohol Office, Health Department of Western Australia;
⁶International Organization for Migration, Phnomh Penh, Cambodia

Abstract. Cambodia is experiencing a generalized HIV epidemic; there is evidence some populations within Cambodia are particularly vulnerable to infection. A mixed methods study was conducted in 2006 on the vulnerability to contract HIV of rural-to-urban migrant Cambodian garment factory workers. This paper reports the views of these female migrant workers regarding the use of condoms in their sexual relationships. Semi-structured interviews were conducted among 20 workers about their knowledge and experiences regarding condom use. Both married and single women were knowledgeable about HIV transmission, but there was a spectrum of perspectives about condom use with their current or future partners. Some women insisted partners use condoms, while others did not expect partner compliance, and a third group avoided discussing condom use with their partners. HIV prevention programs should include male partners. For many of these migrant women, interventions focussing on education about HIV transmission and condom negotiation skills are insufficient since implementation requires male cooperation.

Key word: condom use, female garment factory workers, HIV transmission, Cambodia

Correspondence: Gail Webber, Department of Family Medicine, University of Ottawa, 2450 Lancaster Road, Units 11 and 12, Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1B 5N3.
Tel: (613) 738-9119, Fax: (613) 738-2736
E-mail: gwebb035@uottawa.ca