

Condom Attitudes and Self-Efficacy: Unwrapping Safer Sex Practices among Heterosexual Bahamian Men

Authors : Theresa Adderley

Abstract : Background: Aside from abstinence, correct and consistent use of latex condoms is the best known effective method to reduce HIV transmission among sexually active heterosexual individuals. When condoms are correctly used, the risk of HIV transmission is reduced by approximately 85%, relative to risk when not protected during sexual intercourse. The literature provides evidence that heterosexual young adults continue to be the group among whom STI rates are highest and the group that engages in more sexual risk-taking behaviors such as inconsistent or no condom usage. This study examines condom attitudes, condom use self-efficacy and their contributions to safer sex behaviors among heterosexual men living in The Bahamas. Methods: Guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, and a convenience sample of 185 heterosexual males (Mage= 31.95, SD = 11.35), three standardized instruments were used to assess behaviors that may not only place heterosexual males at risk for HIV infection but also their female partners. Results: The results of this study suggest that condom attitudes, and condom use self-efficacy are important in explaining 24% variance in safer sex behaviors among Bahamian men. Income ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .01$); condom attitudes, ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$), and condom use self-efficacy ($\beta = .1$, $p < .01$) were significantly associated with safer sex behaviors. Conclusion: Rather than focusing only on the use of safer sex behaviors, an effective HIV prevention strategy must consider condom attitudes and condom use self-efficacy as specific variables that may contribute to perpetuating the transmission of HIV.

Keywords : condom attitudes, safer sex behaviors, HIV, condom self-efficacy

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