



Morbidity Survey (Malaysia), showed that 7.3% of the re-

Syphilis (66.7%; $n = 40$), Gonorrhoea (43.3%; $n = 26$), Genital Herpes (30.0%; $n = 18$) and Chlamydia (26.7%; n

Knowledge level of sexually transmitted disease

Overall, the level of knowledge of participants on sexually transmitted diseases were classified into three groups; 'high knowledge' (33.3%), 'medium knowledge' (35.0%) and 'low knowledge' (31.7%) as showed in (Table 2). The mean score of knowledge was 10.9. The lowest score was 5 and highest was 15 out of total 16 scores. When comes to the knowledge on types of sexually transmitted diseases (Table 3), the highest identified STD was AIDS which is 95% ($n = 57$) whereas only 3.3% ($n = 2$) managed to identify Trichomoniasis as STD. Meanwhile, the other STD were identified as following;

34% practice using it during sexual intercourse [8]. Contraceptive will prevent STDs and arrest unintended pregnancies [29]. Unprotected sexual activity predisposes the adolescents to serious consequences later in life [30]. Apart from that, about 88.3% in this study showed their attitude of opposing premarital sex, but their practice was contrary because 100% of the participants in this study were single and had sexual experience before this.

Limitation

The result obtained in this study only represent the small community ($n = 60$) in two selected shelter homes and not the real scenario in the whole community of youth women staying at shelter homes in Malaysia. Although it was a guided questionnaire, but it was self-filled up by the participants. Therefore, there might be under-reporting on some questions related to sexual behaviours since sex is a taboo topic in Malaysia. The possibility of recall bias was also present due to the close-ended questions and multiple choice of answers. There might be some assuming answers took place.

This study described the knowledge, attitude and practice of sexually transmitted diseases among women at shelter homes. Based on our findings, although HIV/AIDS are most identified STD but other types of it remain obscure. Therefore, there is a need to educate public especially the youth regarding the other types of STDs apart from HIV/AIDS and as well as about contraceptive use. Besides that, a good collaboration between family, school and government agency should be created. Family and schools should be the main source of information regarding sexual health. Thus, Ministry of Education may consider review current sex education especially adding STDs in the syllabus. In addition, Ministry of Health also may consider improving health promotion about the other types of STDs as HIV/AIDS, equal amount of importance should be given. Besides that, a regular health screening on STDs and their treatments should be made more available. Adequate correct information is essential for the youth before they commence in sexual activity. This study also found that, although they have high level of knowledge and attitude, but their practice still contradicts. Hence, a future study may need to discover a better way to improve their practice level or to identify the barriers for them to practice their knowledge and attitude. Since all of the correspondence are Muslim and 88.3% of them are opposed to premarital sex, the status of their religion faith should be strengthened, monitored and evaluated. Furthermore, this is a cross-sectional study and the results can be descriptive only. Hence, exploratory study should be carried in future for better understanding on knowledge, attitude and practice of STD among these women.

Abbreviations

AIDS: Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; HIV: Human immunodeficiency virus; STD: Sexual transmitted disease; χ^2 : Chi-square

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Availability of data and materials

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to confidential agreement with participants, as stated in the information sheet given to them but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Authors' contributions

