The Impact of Health Education on Fayoum University Students Knowledge and Attitudes about Sexually Transmitted Infections: An Interventional Study

Thesis

Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Medical Doctorate degree in Public Health & Community Medicine

By

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2023

Summary

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections that are transmitted from one person to someone else through sexual contact. The contact is mostly vaginal, oral, and anal sex.

Sexually Transmitted Infections represent a major public health problem especially in developing countries. More than one million have sexually transmitted Infections are found every day worldwide.

Youth (ages 15-24) are at greater risk of sexually transmitted infections because of the higher chances of engaging in risky behaviors. The World Health Organization emphasizes the importance of information and public awareness, as this promotes a reduction in the incidence of STIs and prevalence over time.

In Egypt, there is a lack of studies that have examined the knowledge status, attitudes, and safe sex practices to prevent STIs especially for those experiencing health inequalities in women and adolescents.

The current study aimed to promote Fayoum university students' knowledge and attitude toward sexually transmitted infections.

The present study was an interventional Study. It was done on 189 participants out of them: 94 medical students and 95 non-medical students. A multi-stage stratified cluster random sample was applied to choose the targeted students.

A self-administrated questionnaire for data collection covered the following 3 sections: The first section was socio-demographic variables. The second section of the questionnaire was the sexually transmitted

disease knowledge questionnaire (STDs-KQ), and the third section assessed the STIs related attitudes.

The study's implementation was divided into four stages: Pre-intervention phase (assessment), planning phase, Intervention phase (implementation), and evaluation phase.

The sessions were conducted in Arabic language to be easily comprehended.

The intervention was carried out over the course of 4 sessions. The health education sessions were evaluated immediately after the sessions, and a follow-up evaluation was conducted 4 months later.

The current study revealed that more than two third of participants were females (76.4%) and (29.6%) were males with a mean age of (20.30 ± 0.81) years and most of them were single 181 (95.8%). Additionally, (52.4%) of them were living in rural areas.

There was a significant increase in the knowledge level immediately after the intervention, as (41.3%) and (46.6%) of participants had moderate and high levels of knowledge respectively (p-value <0.001).

After four months later, the student's knowledge of sexually transmitted infections had decreased from its immediate post-intervention peak but remained greater than the pre-intervention level. With (49.2%) and (21.7%) of participants had moderate and high levels of knowledge respectively and (29.1%) had low knowledge levels (p-value <0.001)

The Attitude levels of all participants significantly increased gradually through all phases of the study (positive attitude raised from (19.6%) at

pre-intervention to (53.4%) immediately after the intervention, then to (57.7%) after 4 months from the last session of intervention.

There was a statistically significant association between levels of attitude and involvement in the medical college with the p-value < 0.001; in the pre-intervention phase, (30.9%) of medical students versus (8.4%) of non-medical students had a positive attitude. In the immediate post-intervention, (62.8%) of medical students had a positive attitude versus (44.2%) from other collage. After 4 months, there were 66 (70.2%) medical students had a positive attitude versus 43 (45.3%) non-medical students.

Medical education, mother education and the socioeconomic status were significant predictors to the level of knowledge after 4 months with no predicted effect for other factors.

Level of knowledge after 4 months and the collage type were significant predictors for affecting level of attitude after 4 months with no predicted effect for other factors.

Conclusion

The study found that the educational sessions were effective in improving university students' knowledge levels and assisting them to acquire positive attitudes toward STI prevention. Medical students showed significantly high knowledge and better attitudes than non-medical students after implementation of the health education.

Recommendations

- The primary prevention of STIs must be given top attention, and included or integrated in school curriculum.
- All university students should get health education and orientation sessions about STIs, along with illustrated booklets to preserve awareness of its most important types.
- It is also important to underline the need for mass media education campaigns on these diseases and ways to prevent them, which should be supervised by specialists in the field.
- Use new technologies, such as online e-learning courses and smartphone applications, to improve and maintain a person's level of knowledge and attitude toward sexually transmitted diseases.
- Future studies should focus on adopting various educational interventions to improve adolescents' knowledge and attitudes regarding STIs and evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions.