BEHAVIOR AMONG ADOLESCENT MALES IN THE ROYAL THAI ARMY

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Abstract

Risky sexual behaviors, including having sexual intercourse at young age, having multiple sexual partners, or not using a condom during the intercourse, all increased high risk of sexually transmitted diseases. This study aimed to examine factors associated with risky sexual behaviors and Sexually transmitted diseases among adolescent males in The Royal Thai Army. The conceptual framework was derived from the problem behavior theory highlighting on personal factors, personality factors, environmental perceptions, socialization factors and drug abuse. 235 adolescent males on duty in The Royal Thai Army completed self-administered questionnaires, as well as, gave information about their drug use and sexually transmitted diseases (via Methamphetamine urine test, Blood test and Physical Examination). Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square test, Fisher's exact test, Mann-Whitney U Test, and Binary logistic regression.

The results showed that the participants with high and low risk of sexual behavior were accounted for 79.6 % and 20.4 %, respectively. The prevalence rate of sexually transmitted diseases based on the blood test result was 1.3 %. The prevalence rate of urine methamphetamine was 29.8 %. The factors that were significantly and positively associated with risky sexual behaviors were marital status, alcohol used, attitude of personality factor, attitude of perceived environment and socialization factor, family, and drug abuse history ($p < 0.05$). Regarding the sexual risk behavior aspect among the participants, no differences were found among those who used or did not use drugs ($p = 0.356$). Moreover, it was found that the marital status, alcohol used, attitude of personality factor and drug abuse history could enhance the ability to predict risky sexual behaviors by 18.0 %.

Alcohol use and drug abuse should be prevented. In addition, there should be a guidance to prevent individuals from sexual behavior and sexually transmitted diseases.

KEY WORDS: RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOR; ADOLESCENT MALES; THE ROYAL THAI ARMY, DRUG ABUSE

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Table 1. Risky sexual behavior among adolescent males in the Royal Thai Army

Sexual Behavior	(n)	(%)
Sexuality		
Yes	224	95.3
No	11	4.7
Had sex in the past year		
Yes	201	89.7
No	23	10.3
Age at first sex		
< 15 years	61	27.2
≥ 15 years or above	163	72.8
Type of sexual Partner		
Wife or Girlfriend	220	98.2
Casual Partner	73	32.6
Women Sex worker	48	21.4
Male	9	4.0
Number of sexual partners (n=224)		
Long lifetime		
1	72	32.1
≥ 2	152	67.9
Past six months		
Non had sex	88	39.3
1	102	45.5
≥ 2	34	15.2
Past three months		
None	122	54.5
1	80	35.7
≥ 2	22	9.8
Condom use		
Wife or Girlfriend		
Never	54	24.5
Sometimes	129	58.6
Always	37	16.5

Table 1. Risky sexual behavior among adolescent males in the Royal Thai Army (Cont.)

Sexual Behavior	(n)	(%)
Casual Partner		
Never	1	1.4
Sometimes	25	34.2
Always	47	64.4
Female sex worker		
Never	1	2.1
Sometimes	2	14.6
Always	40	83.3
Male		
Never	2	22.2
Sometimes	3	33.3
Always	4	44.4
Ever drunk alcohol before sex		
Yes	181	80.8
No	43	19.2
Ever use Illicit drug before sex		
Yes	117	52.2
No	107	47.8
Buy condom		
Yes	176	78.6
No	48	21.4

Table 2 Association between demographic data, characteristic, attitude of personality, attitude of environmental perception (family, friend and socialization), drug abuse and risky sexual behavior among adolescent males in the Royal Thai Army

Variable	Risky sexual behavior		χ^2	p-value
	High risk n(%)	Moderate to Low risk n(%)		
Age				
≤ 21 years	111 (79.3)	29 (20.7)	0.018	0.894
≥ 22 years and over	76 (80.8)	19 (20.0)		
Previous level of education				
Primary school (Grade 1-6)	47 (73.4)	17 (26.2)	2.342	0.310
Secondary school (Grade 7-12)	116 (81.1)	27 (18.9)		
Certificate/ Bachelor's degree and over	24 (85.7)	4 (14.3)		
Marital Status	124 (75.6)	40 (24.4)	5.250	0.022
Single	63 (88.7)	8 (11.3)		
Married/ Separate/ Widowed				
Occupation				
None	118 (80.3)	29 (19.7)	1.852	0.396
Non formal occupation	40 (78.4)	11 (21.6)		
Formal occupation	29 (78.4)	8 (21.6)		
Income				
None	42 (80.8)	10 (19.2)	5.778	0.056
≤10,000 bath	64 (71.9)	25 (28.1)		
≥ 10,001 bath above	81 (86.2)	13 (24.5)		
Part of residence				
Central region	64 (84.8)	12 (15.2)	2.331	0.127
Eastern region	99 (76.7)	30 (23.3)		
Northeastern region	21 (77.8)	6 (12.5)		
Ordination				
Yes	37 (82.2)	8 (17.8)	0.240	0.624
No	150 (78.9)	40 (21.1)		

Table 2 Association between demographic data, characteristic, attitude of personality, attitude of environmental perception (family, friend and socialization), drug abuse and risky sexual behavior among adolescent males in the Royal Thai Army (Cont.)

Variable	Risky sexual behavior		χ^2	p-value
	High risk n(%)	Moderate to Low risk n(%)		
Live with				
Parent/ wife/ Cousin	145 (77.5)	42 (22.5)	2.331	0.127
Girlfriend/ Friend/Other (alone)	42 (87.5)	6 (12.5)		
Smoking				
Yes	165 (80.9)	39 (19.1)	1.628	0.202
No	22 (71.0)	9 (29.0)		
Alcohol				
Yes	180 (81.8)	40 (18.2)	10.675	0.004†
No	7 (46.7)	8 (53.3)		
History of Illness				
Yes	67 (82.7)	14 (17.3)	0.751	0.386
No	120 (77.9)	34 (22.1)		
Attitude level of personality				
Low to Moderate	113 (85.6)	19 (14.4)	6.741	0.009
High	74 (71.8)	29 (28.2)		
Attitude level of environmental perception				
Family				
Low to Moderate	139 (83.2)	28 (16.8)	4.754	0.029
High	48 (70.6)	20 (29.4)		
Friend				
Low to Moderate	42 (79.2)	28 (16.8)	0.005	0.946
High	145 (79.7)	37 (20.3)		
Socialization				
Low to Moderate	77 (81.9)	17 (18.1)	0.528	0.467
High	110 (78.0)	31 (22.0)		

Table 2 Association between demographic data, characteristic, attitude of personality, attitude of environmental perception (family, friend and socialization), drug abuse and risky sexual behavior among adolescent males in the Royal Thai Army (Cont.)

Variable	Risky sexual behavior		χ^2	p-value
	High risk n(%)	Moderate to Low risk n(%)		
History of drug abuse				
Yes	143 (84.1)	27 (15.9)	7.805	0.005
No	44 (67.7)	21 (32.3)		
Urine Methamphetamine				
Positive	56 (80.0)	14 (20.0)	0.011	0.916
Negative	131 (68.0)	34 (20.6)		

χ^2 = ค่าสถิติทดสอบไคสแควร์ † Fisher's exact test

Table 3 Distribution of risky sexual behavior between using drug abuse by urine methamphetamine test

Using Drug Abuse	(n)	Mean Rank	p-value
Urine Methamphetamine Test			
Positive	70	124.21	0.356
Negative	165	115.37	

Table 4 Factor for predicting risky sexual behavior (binary logistic regression)

Factors	OR_{adj}	P-value	95% CI for Exp (B)	
			Lower	Upper
Status				
Single	1.00			
Married/ Separated/ Widowed	2.36	0.048	1.006	5.533
Alcohol				
No	1.00			
Yes	1.72	0.005	1.702	18.376
Attitude of personality				
High	1.00			
Low to Moderate	2.20	0.036	1.053	4.628
Attitude of environmental perception :Family				
High	1.00			
Low to Moderate	1.69	0.171	0.797	3.585
History of Drug abuse				
No	1.00			
Yes	2.26	0.025	1.108	4.610
Nagelkerke R Square 0.018				

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