

**HIV/AIDS PREVENTIVE BEHAVIOR AMONG THE
HOUSEWIVES OF MAE TAENG DISTRICT
IN CHIANG MAI, THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted with a quantitative design in village settings. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 200 subjects in 10 villages of three Tambols of Mae Taeng District in Chiang-Mai, Thailand during the period 10-25 February 2005 to determine the socio-demographic and economic characteristics, level of knowledge, perception and preventive behavior, regarding HIV/AIDS among house-wives. The study considered adaptive behavior such as faithfulness and condom use, and investigated the relationship between various independent and dependent variables on one another. Chi-square test was used for analysis of the factors associated with knowledge, perception, and HIV/AIDS preventive behavior.

The results of this study revealed that nearly half of the housewives were within the cohort group 35-45 years of age. There was a significant statistical association (p value- $<.004$) between the respondents' age and their knowledge of HIV/AIDS. The majority of housewives attended primary school (74.5 %); while the average monthly family income (for 61.5%) was equal to or less than 5000 baht. Most of them (72.2%) had a Fair knowledge concerning HIV/AIDS, while only a small number (15.5%) had a low perception of the severity and risks associated with HIV/AIDS. Most housewives (71.0%) indicated that their husbands never or very rarely used a condom while engaging sexual intercourse with them. Since the respondents' HIV/AIDS preventive behavior was only measured by determining condom use, the HIV/AIDS preventive behavior of this cohort of housewives was considered "poor" (84.5%), or that they were potentially at risk to an HIV/AIDS infection from their husbands. In terms of choosing the most important source of HIV/AIDS information, 84.0% of the housewives selected health personnel, illustrating a significant association with the respondents' level of perception (p value- $<.035$). The respondents' level of knowledge also had a highest significant statistical relationship with perception about HIV/AIDS (p value- $<.001$), and there was also a significant association between the level of perception and the respondents' preventive behavior against HIV/AIDS (p value- $.042$).

It is recommended that in order to improve the HIV/AIDS preventive behavior among housewives in rural northern Thailand, condoms should be promoted as part of a dual contraceptive service delivery strategy [with other FP methods currently used by rural women], as well as an important barrier method to prevent HIV/AIDS and STDs.

KEY WORDS: HIV/AIDS/PREVENTIVE BEHAVIOR/HOUSEWIVES

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