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RAVI SUBBIAH: PROXIMATE DETERMINANTS OF HIGH-RISK SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AND ITS EFFECT ON SEXUAL MORBIDITY AMONG MARRIED MEN OF UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA. THESIS ADVISORS ASSOC. PROF. AMARA SOONTHORNDHADA, M.A., ASST. PROF. WASSANA IM-EM, Ph.D., 54 P. ISBN 974-662-925-5

In this study an attempt was made to identify some of the proximate determinants of high-risk sexual behaviour and its impact on the sexual morbidity among the married men of Uttar Pradesh, India. The data used for this study comes from the Male Reproductive Health Survey conducted in 1995-96 in five districts of Uttar Pradesh, representing five regions of the State. The survey questions included various factors of premarital and extramarital sexual relations. The sample included 6705 married men in the age group 15-59 years.

The findings suggest that higher numbers of rural men report premarital sex than do urban men. Men with primary or middle level education were more likely to report having had premarital sex and with more than one woman than the men with no education. There was no significant relationship between the knowledge of the men with their current sexual morbidity. Findings suggest that men who have had past experience of sexual morbidity were more likely to suffer from current sexual morbidity. A majority of men reported not having used condoms in both premarital and extramarital sexual intercourses. Men who reported having sought treatment for any STDs were found to be suffering from current sexual morbidity more than those who had never sought any treatment for STDs. This suggests that men who have had high-risk sexual behaviour still may have similar behaviour which puts them at risk of contracting an infection. The current rate of reported symptoms of STDs is quite high (9 per cent) as compared to five per cent estimated by the government. This clearly indicates the prevalence of STDs among the general population which is highly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infection.

It is evident from this study that the use of condoms was negligible despite the alarming HIV/AIDS situation in India. Rural youth in particular, should be educated on reproductive health issues, and on how they can protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections. The community health workers at the village level could be oriented to identify symptomatic STD patients and provide treatment accordingly.

It is recommended that necessary steps should be taken to check the spread of STDs among the general population, which is a major vector in the spread of HIV/AIDS.