

Original Research Article

Determining the knowledge level on safe sex and the attitude towards sexual consent among medical students in Malaysia: A cross-sectional study

Abstract

Introduction: Medical students are the future health educators of the public; hence it becomes essential for us to be empowered with accurate and sufficient knowledge on safe sex and sexual consent as the sparsity of the knowledge among the population leads to detrimental implications.

Aim: This study aimed to investigate knowledge regarding safe sex, factors associated with the knowledge on safe sex, as well as to identify the attitude on sexual consent among medical students.

Study design: A cross-sectional analytical study

Methodology: This study was conducted from April 2022 to May 2022 among undergraduate medical students (MBBS) in a private medical university in Malaysia. The respondents were recruited by purposive sampling and self-administered validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The data was analyzed using Epi Info software (version 7.2.5.0). The descriptive statistics was calculated as frequency, percentage, and mean. The Chi-square test was used in inferential statistics.

Results: There were 140 students who agreed to participate in this study. After the data analysis, 61.7% of the students have good knowledge on safe sex, and 72.34% of the students have good attitude towards sexual consent. There were no statistically significant association between age, gender, ethnicity, semester of study, country of origin and the knowledge of safe sex, attitude towards sexual consent, and sources of information of safe sex. Furthermore, the most sourced out for safe sex related information are from schools/ universities followed by health talks/ seminars/ webinars, online sources, friends, and lastly parents and siblings.

Conclusion: Our study has demonstrated societal significance between gender and age against the knowledge level on safe sex and attitude level towards sexual consent. This reinforces that sex education which includes safe sex and sexual consent should be inculcated into the general education syllabus for the betterment of the society as a whole in terms of sexual well-being.

Keywords: Safe Sex, Sex Education, Medical Students, Knowledge on safe sex, Attitude towards sexual consent.

1. INTRODUCTION

Safe sex is a term first used in 1968 to mean “sexual activity and especially sexual intercourse in which various measures (such as the use of latex condoms or the practice of monogamy) are taken to avoid diseases (such as AIDS) transmitted by sexual contact” [1]. Adolescents and young adults are prone to be involved in unsafe sexual practices. Knowledge of safe sex and STIs is very important for adolescents who need to be imbued with a comprehensive awareness of how to avoid unsafe sex, STIs, and teenage pregnancies [2]. Previous studies showed an increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancies were due to lack of knowledge about reproduction and safe sex practices [3]. Much of this knowledge should be grasped by every individual but unfortunately, many schools across Asia don't have a comprehensive curriculum regarding this matter. In Malaysia, there is a curriculum developed but it involves mostly abstinence teaching instead of safe sex practice. They have a curriculum called Reproductive Health and Social Education or Pendidikan Kesihatan Reproduktif dan Sosial (PEERS). However, PEERS have no obligation by the ministry of education to be taught by the teacher and many of them don't fully teach the whole syllabus but only based on their beliefs and understanding [4]. This has led to many unwanted social problems as simple observations have proven that the teenage mind tends to venture into the stuff told to them to be prohibited. The global health agenda stresses on why it's important for the adolescents to have adequate knowledge about sexual health, in order to have a healthy life [5].

The lack of knowledge in school curriculum will impact student's upbringing and their views on, safe sex. Many individuals would go through different sources that may be violent or perverted and inappropriate sources of information. Inaccurate information sources might not be appropriate for medical students especially, since they will be giving information out to patients since there isn't a safe sex course besides theoretical lectures on sexually transmitted diseases and their prevention but mostly treatment and identifiers, they won't be able to truly educate their patients on this topic. Based on a study done **in 2017**, respondents who obtained information from social media happened to practice safer sex [6]. Now this is great news but unfortunately not many will actively seek out this information as they may be oblivious as to what to search with the lack of information provided by their main source of information for surviving in society, school. School being the main source of information and one of the trusted sources of information. As a study mentioned, sex communication with parents provides a very small protective role towards the use of safer sex [7]. Furthermore, a study

was conducted among Italian adolescents showed that there is a need for proper sex education in schools and very few claimed good sex education was provided in school [8]. This further shows how important education is to ensure safer sex among adolescents and adults. If a developed country agrees on the need for such education, this further proves the importance for a developing country to adapt this requirement into our curriculum. Moreover, medical students, the future healthcare professionals, are expected to have proper knowledge about transmission and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases but a study have shown that they lack the knowledge about AIDS [9]. As the years move forward, we should all strive to try and achieve the sustainable development goals (SDG) released by the United Nation. There are three sustainable development goals related to the safe sex: SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 4 (Quality education), and lastly, SDG 5 (Gender equality). These three SDGs happened to be a part of safe sex education to reduce the stigma and taboo of it all to ensure a future with better healthcare and educated individuals [10,11].

According to a study done in Vientiane Prefecture, Lao PDR in 2020 on the knowledge of safe sex among 337 high school students (14 – 20 years of age), approximately half of them (50.3%) reported having poor knowledge on safe sex [12]. This just further shows how many of us in Asia happen to have lesser knowledge regarding safe sex which leads to a majority of the social issues associated with it, like sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted teenage pregnancies and more. This shows the requirement of sexual education being needed direly in the school curriculum for future prevention. **In the same study done** in Lao PDR, 51.9% of the respondents knew about sexually transmitted diseases, which further proves the need for comprehensive education regarding the topic proper [12]. Besides, a study by California State University on relationship source of safe sex knowledge & testing for STI revealed that those who had obtained fundamental knowledge on safe-sex practices from a medical professional are more open to the idea of getting tested for STIs whereas those who had received the mentioned knowledge from online resources were comparatively less inclined towards testing for STIs [13].

Unsafe sex has led to the rise in sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies over the years. With many unaware and unwilling for the use of some form of contraception has led to this undesired outcome. In the United Kingdom, a study had shown that sex education reduced the risky sexual behaviours and in turn decreased sexually transmitted diseases [14]. It is important to understand the social context and knowledge regarding safe sex to prevent undesirable consequences. Not to our surprise, scarce literature explored regarding safe sex in

Malaysia. Therefore, there is a need to assess the knowledge level in regard to safe sex among Malaysians, especially medical students. In addition to that, we intend to have sexual consent knowledge and attitudes to be tested, which happen to need light shone upon. It is crucial to investigate on safe sex and consent as many will go unaware of the disaster they would cause and the fact that it could all be prevented with a simple syllabus inculcated into them. Abstinence alone doesn't do much.

This research aimed to investigate the knowledge regarding safe sex and attitude towards sexual consent among medical students. The specific objectives were (1) to investigate the knowledge on safe sex, (2) to determine the factors associated with the knowledge on safe sex, and (3) to identify the attitude towards sexual consent.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1 Study design and Study setting

A cross-sectional study was conducted on the knowledge of safe sex and sexual consent among undergraduate medical students in a private medical university in Malaysia. An online English language questionnaire (google form) was sent out to the students from April 2022 to May 2022. The students from MBBS programs of semester 1 to Semester 4 & semester 7 to semester 10 were recruited for this study.

2.2 Sample size and Sampling method

The sample size for this study was calculated by using the Epi Info sample size calculator. The estimated total population was 800 medical students in the study university. **The minimum sample size required was 126** with an expected frequency of 50.4% , the acceptable margin of error was 8%, confidence level of 95%, and non-response rate of 10%. The final sample size requirement was 140 for this study. The respondents were recruited with the non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria of this study were medical students in semesters 1,2,3,4,7,8,9 and 10 of the MBBS degree programme in the study university. They had to be voluntarily willing to participate and must have completed the entire questionnaire.

2.3 Study instrument and Data collection

The questionnaire consisted of four components. The first being demographics, then source of information regarding safe sex, then knowledge on safe sex, and lastly attitude towards sexual consent. Demographics contained information of their age, gender, ethnicity, semester of study, and country of origin. For questions under source of information [9], it contained yes or no answers, and multiple-choice questions. For questions under knowledge on safe sex [12], it was evaluated with yes, no, and don't know/ unsure. Lastly, questions for attitude towards sexual consent [15], it was evaluated with a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). Reliability analysis was conducted by calculating Cronbach's alpha for the attitude items (0.969, excellent reliability); and coefficient for Kuder-Richardson 20 (KR-20) for the knowledge items (0.512, reasonable reliability). The data was collected through an online English questionnaire (google form); The respondents received the link to the questionnaire in order to complete the survey upon giving written consent. The link was sent to them via college whatsapp group chat and also their student email ID. The students had unlimited time to complete the questionnaire, but the suggested time was 3-5 minutes to which all completed within the timeframe. No participants walked out or left the questionnaire empty. The data collected from the respondents are private and confidential. This study was conducted by the Community Medicine department and was conducted fully by the students in the department. The said data was stored in a password protected file to ensure that it is secure & retrievable.

2.4 Data processing and Data analysis

The data was analysed using Epi Info version 7.2.5.0. software by the students under the Community Medicine department. The results are presented through frequency counts and mean. Inferences and association between the independent variables and knowledge on safe sex and attitude towards sexual consent was assessed to see their significance. Chi-square test and Fisher exact test were utilised to perform data analysis. The significant level (p value) is set up at 0.05 with 95% confidence interval.

3. RESULTS

A total of 141 students responded to the survey. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. With reference to the sociodemographic variables, the majority of the respondents were aged less than 22 years (66.67%). 69.5% of the respondents were females and 30.5% were males. Based on ethnicities, 46.1% were Indians, followed by

34.75%, Chinese, 9.93%, Others, ending with 9.22%, Malays. This study included some international students (14.18%) of which 7.8%, Sri Lankan and 6.38%, India Indians. Majority of our respondents were from the clinical years (51.77%) and the rest pre-clinical years (48.23%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of respondents (n=141)

Variable	Frequency (%)
Age	
≤ 22 years	66.67%
>22 years	33.33%
Gender	
Male	30.5%
Female	69.5%
Ethnicity	
Malay	9.22%
Chinese	34.75
Indian	46.10
Others	9.93
Nationality	
Malaysian	85.82%
Sri Lankan	7.8%
India Indians	6.38%
Study year	
Pre-clinical year	48.23%
Clinical year	51.77%

As a whole, 61.7% of the respondents had good knowledge level on safe sex while 38.3% of them did not. Besides that, 72.34% of them had good attitude towards sexual consent while 27.66% did not (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Respondents' knowledge level on safe sex and attitude towards sexual consent (n=141)

A majority of the sample responded that their source of information on safe sex was through school/university (108 students) & health talks/seminar/webinars (91 students). A proportion of the sample acquired information on safe sex through online resources searched by themselves (79 students) and from their friends (68 students). The results also reflected that in the sample, information on safe sex is rarely discussed by parents (35 students) and siblings (26 students) (Figure 2).

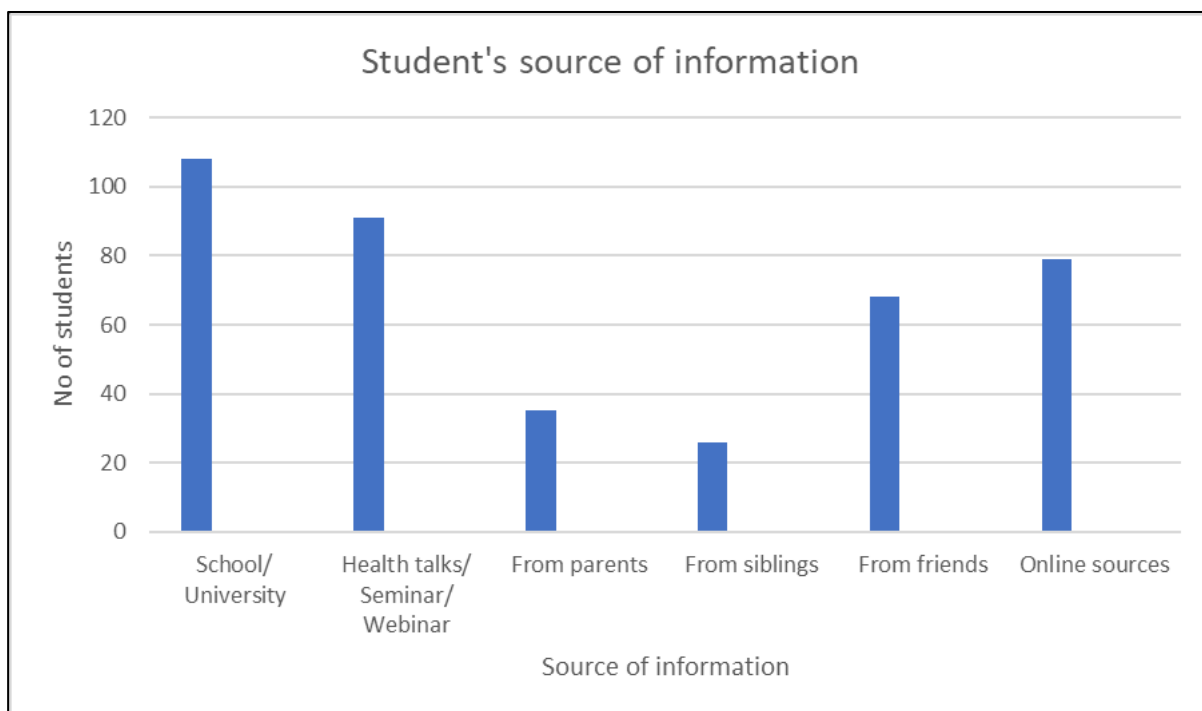


Figure 2. Source of information on safe sex among the respondents (n=141)

Table 2 presents the association between the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their knowledge on safe sex. Based on our results, there is a negative association between age and the knowledge on safe sex as the Odds Ratio (OR) is 0.76 (<1). Those aged less than 22 years are less likely to have good knowledge on safe sex compared to those who are older than 22 years. However, there is no statistical significance between age and the knowledge on safe sex in regards to the 95% Confidence Interval (CI) ranges from 0.37 to 1.58 in which the null value of '1' is included, hence making it not statistically significant.

There is positive association between gender and the knowledge on safe sex as the OR is 1.08. Females are 1.08 times more likely to have good knowledge on safe sex in comparison to Males. However, there is no statistical significance between gender and knowledge on safe sex. This can be inferred from the 95% CI ranging from 0.52 - 2.25.

There is negative association between ethnicity and the knowledge on safe sex. With Malay as the reference, the OR are 0.52 for Chinese, 0.37 for Indians, and lastly, 0.75 for Others. All ethnicities were less likely to have good knowledge on safe sex than Malays. There is no significance statistically between ethnicity and the knowledge of safe sex as the 95% CI

proves that as well, all with the inclusion of the null value of '1'. Chinese - 0.13-2.13, Indians - 0.09-1.48, Others - 0.13-4.25.

There is positive association between nationality and the knowledge on safe sex. With Indians as the reference, the OR are 9 for Sri Lankans, and 3.26 for Malaysians. Sri Lankans are 9 times more likely to have good knowledge on safe sex than India Indians. Malaysians are 3.26 times more likely to have good knowledge on safe sex than India Indians. There is statistical significance in regards to nationality and good knowledge as the 95% CI is between 1.14-71.04, in which the null value of '1' is not included. However, for Malaysians there isn't any statistical significance as the 95% CI is between 0.78-13.68, which is inclusive of the null value '1'.

Finally, there is positive association between the study year and the knowledge on safe sex as the OR is 1.27. Those in clinical years are 1.27 times more likely to have good knowledge than those in pre-clinical years. There is no statistically significant association between the study year and good knowledge as the 95% CI including the null value, 0.64 - 2.50 (Table 2).

Table 2. Association between demographic characteristics and knowledge on safe sex among the respondents (n= 141)

Variable	Good Knowledge n (%)	Poor knowledge n (%)	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval (CI)	P value
Age					
>22 years	31 (65.96)	16 (34.04)	reference		
≤ 22 years	56 (59.57)	38 (40.43)	0.76	0.37 - 1.58	0.462
Gender					
Male	26 (60.47)	17 (39.53)	reference		
Female	61 (62.24)	37 (37.76)	1.08	0.52 - 2.25	0.841
Ethnicity					
Malay	10 (76.92)	3 (23.08)	reference		
Chinese	31 (63.27)	18 (36.73)	0.52	0.13 - 2.13	0.513*
Indian	36 (55.38)	29 (44.62)	0.37	0.09 - 1.48	0.150
Others	10 (71.43)	4 (28.57)	0.75	0.13 - 4.25	1.00*
Nationality					
India Indians	3 (33.33)	6 (66.67)	reference		
Malaysian	75 (61.98)	46 (38.02)	3.26	0.78 - 13.68	0.155*
Sri Lankan	9 (81.82)	2 (18.18)	9.00	1.14 - 71.04	0.064*
Study year					
Pre-clinical year	40 (58.82)	28 (41.18)	reference		
Clinical year	47 (64.38)	26 (35.62)	1.27	0.64 - 2.50	0.497

*Fisher Exact test

Table 3 presents the association between the demographic characteristics and attitude towards sexual consent among the respondents. There is positive association between age and attitude on sexual consent as the Odds Ratio (OR) is 1.39 (>1). Those aged less than 22 years are 1.39 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent compared to those who are more than 22 years. There is no statistical significance between age and the attitude towards sexual consent as the 95% Confidence Interval (CI) ranges from 0.62 - 3.11 in which null value of "1" is included explaining the statistically non-significant association.

There is positive association between gender and the attitude on sexual consent as the OR is 1.65. Females are 1.65 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than Males. There is no statistically significant association between gender and the attitude on sexual consent. This can be inferred from the 95% CI, 0.76 - 3.60 in which null value of "1" is included.

There is negative association between ethnicity and attitude on sexual consent. With Malay as the reference, the OR are 0.38 for Chinese, and 0.44 for Indians. Both Chinese and Indians are less likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than Malays. However there is a positive association between Other ethnicities and Malay as the OR is 1.09. Other ethnicities are 1.09 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than Malays. There is no statistical significance of attitude towards sexual consent between races as the 95% CI as well as it includes the null value of '1' in its ranges. Chinese - 0.07-1.90, Indians - 0.09-2.18, and Others - 0.13-9.12.

There is positive association between nationality and the attitude towards sexual consent. With India Indians as the reference, the OR are 5 for Sri Lankans and 1.23 for Malaysians. Sri Lankans are 5 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than India Indians. Malaysians are 1.23 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than India Indians. There is no statistically significant association between the nationalities and attitude towards sexual consent as the 95% CI includes the null value of '1', Malaysian - 0.29-5.19, and Sri Lankan - 0.42-59.66

There is positive association between study year and the attitude towards sexual consent as the OR is 1.58. Those in clinical years are 1.58 times more likely to have good attitude towards sexual consent than pre-clinical years. There is no statistically significant association between study year and the attitude towards sexual consent as the 95% CI ranges from 0.75 - 3.31 in which the null value of "1" is included (Table 3).

Table 3. Association between demographic characteristics and attitude towards sexual consent among the respondents (n= 141)

Variable	Good Attitude n (%)	Poor Attitude n (%)	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Interval (CI)	P value
Age					
>22 years	36 (76.60)	11 (23.40)	reference		
≤ 22 years	66 (70.21)	28 (29.79)	1.39	0.62 - 3.11	0.424
Gender					
Male	28 (65.12)	15 (34.88)	reference		
Female	74 (75.51)	24 (24.49)	1.65	0.76 - 3.60	0.204
Ethnicity					
Malay	11 (84.62)	2 (15.38)	reference		
Chinese	33 (67.35)	16 (32.65)	0.38	0.07 - 1.90	0.312*
Indian	46 (70.77)	19 (29.23)	0.44	0.09 - 2.18	0.495*
Others	12 (85.71)	2 (14.29)	1.09	0.13 - 9.12	1.000*
Nationality					
India Indians	6 (66.67)	3 (33.33)	reference		
Malaysian	86 (71.07)	35 (28.93)	1.23	0.29 - 5.19	0.720*
Sri Lankan	10 (90.91)	1 (9.09)	5.00	0.42 - 59.66	0.285*
Study year					
Pre-clinical year	46 (67.65)	22 (32.35)	reference		
Clinical year	56 (76.71)	17 (23.29)	1.58	0.75 - 3.31	0.229

*Fisher Exact test

4. DISCUSSION

This cross-sectional study was done to investigate the knowledge of safe sex and the attitudes towards sexual consent among medical students in a private medical college in Malaysia. Based on our study, we found that around 61.7% of the respondents had good knowledge, of which includes both males and females more than 22 years old, females, Malay ethnicities, Sri Lankan nationals, and Clinical years students, from the independent variables. Our study was set to determine the association between the independent variables: age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and semester of study, and the dependent variables: knowledge level and attitude level. To our dismay, we did not manage to get any statistically significant relation between both our independent and dependent variables. However, with further analysis, we have concluded that some factors are indeed socially significant.

As per our results, females have the highest knowledge and attitude levels due to the centuries worth of patriarchal destruction of self-worth and understanding. This can be proven by the fact that women get blamed for everything that happens onto themselves including any unwanted sexual action. Furthermore, it has been statistically proven that every woman has been harassed in some form of way at least once in their life [16]. Many, if not all women have to be well informed on the practice of safe sex to protect themselves from societal ostracism and the burden of an unwanted pregnancy. Women are often blamed for inviting sexual harassment and rape in spite of being victims, while the man seems to get away with little. Due to this, women may have imbibed knowledge towards safe sex as a protective mechanism over the years. Moreover, older and clinical year students that participated had better knowledge because they had more experience in said topic.

Based on the research done in Lao PDR (2020) that inspired this research, both their results and ours showed a majority of respondents having good knowledge [12]. Even with the difference in population type, theirs being high school students while ours being medical students, it just shows that as the years go by, many of the new generations are grasping more knowledge towards safe sex. We managed to find a rather similar study done in 2013 by University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) regarding knowledge and attitude on sex among medical students. Their results showed that 54.9% of respondents had a satisfactory knowledge level [17]. However, for our research, 61.7% of respondents had good knowledge. Judging by the 9-year difference between the two researches, medical students have garnered a better understanding on safe sex. Although it represents a small increase, it is an important marker of a trend which may increase as years go by.

A study done in Nigeria among medical students established that many of their respondents got their sources of information regarding safe sex from school followed by friends, and lastly, family members [9]. In contrast, our study also found that majority gained insights regarding safe sex through schools and universities, but it was followed by health talks, online resources, and lastly friends and family members. Sources of information may not be

easily available, and the curriculum may not incorporate knowledge on sexual education, especially in societies where the topic of safe sex is a huge taboo. For generations, sex has been disregarded as embarrassing or weird to be discussed. This can be seen from a study done way back in 2008 among college students in the United States. Parents happened to be the least sought out source of information on this matter while media and self-resourcing turned out to be the highest [18]. This study has shown that little progress has happened over the years. This further proves the need for parents to be more open and well-versed in safe sex so the children of tomorrow don't get lost in the sea of information.

Sex being a topic, not freely discussed, we wanted to explore attitudes towards sexual consent. Sexual consent is a basic human right and must be expressed by everyone regardless and it has the potential to be protective legally as well. We all deserve to have a say in what we want for our body. Moving on, a study done in 2015 among college-going women showed that there were higher positive attitudes towards sexual consent [19]. So did our research. We found that around 73% of our respondents had good attitudes towards sexual consent. With that being said, the majority of them happened to be females, which reinforces the point of how women have to constantly be on their feet in order to be as safe as they could in regard to themselves.

5. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, we have to understand that for this topic which happens to be a huge taboo in our country, we have to take into account cultural and societal views. Our study has shown significance in society between gender and age against the knowledge level on safe sex and attitude level towards sexual consent. It is not brand-new news to hear about females being ostracised for simply existing at this point of time. With these results, we can conclude that sex education which includes safe sex and sexual consent should be inculcated into the general education syllabus so that the future generations are more educated on this matter. Only then will it reduce the unfairness among gender by a huge chunk.

Limitations

For our research, we could only sample from medical students. This might be a limitation as medical students tend to have more knowledge due to the syllabus that they have to consume.

Recommendation

The college should provide small courses on knowledge regarding safe sex to medical students. Promotion of safe sex should be done like giving out free condoms. Said topic should be discussed more instead of hiding it behind a rock.

Ethical consideration and Consent:

Informed consent was obtained from the respondents. The confidentiality was maintained throughout the research and after the research. The way we maintained the confidentiality was through not collecting any identifiable information such as names or roll numbers. The respondents had full autonomy and willingness to participate in this research. Ethical approval was granted from the Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Medicine, Manipal University College Malaysia (MUCM), Malaysia.

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Appendix

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(for adult subjects)

1. **Title of study:** Knowledge regarding safe sex and sexual consent amongst medical students
2. **Name of sponsor:** No external funding
3. **Introduction:** It is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read through and consider this information carefully before you decide if you are willing to participate. Ask the study staff if anything is unclear or if you would like more information. After you are properly satisfied that you understand this study, and that you wish to participate, you must sign this informed consent form.
4. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw from it at any time. If you withdraw, any data collected from you up to your withdrawal will still be used for the study. Your refusal to participate or withdrawal will not affect any medical or health benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Medicine, Manipal University College Malaysia (MUCM).
5. **What is the purpose of the study?**
The purpose of this study is to identify the lack of knowledge regarding safe sex and sexual consent amongst medical students. We would like to find out if there is a knowledge gap in this topic amongst medical students and what are the associations with it. This research will be conducted from April 2022 till May 2022. The expected number of respondents is 140 individuals.
6. **What are my responsibilities when taking part in this study?**
It is important that you answer all of the questions in the questionnaire honestly and completely which will take about 10 minutes of your time. The google form contains 4 sections to it which will enquire about basic demographics, source of information for safe sex and sexual consent, knowledge of safe sex, and lastly, knowledge of sexual consent.
7. **What are the potential risks and side effects of being in this study?**
None
8. **What are the benefits of being in this study?**
It will help you understand your knowledge level on this topic and maybe strive to close the knowledge gap for your future self and the future of society.
9. **Who is funding the research?**
This study does not receive any external funding. You will not be paid for participating in this study.

10. Will my medical information be kept private?

All your information obtained in this study will be kept and handled in a confidential manner, in accordance with applicable laws and/or regulations. When publishing or presenting the study results, your identity will not be revealed without your expressed consent. Individuals involved in this study, qualified monitors and auditors, and governmental or regulatory authorities may inspect the study data, where appropriate and necessary.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study: Knowledge regarding safe sex and sexual consent amongst medical students

By signing below I confirm the following:

- I have been given oral and written information for the above study and have read and understood the information given.
- I have had sufficient time to consider participation in the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions and all my questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can at anytime free withdraw from the study without giving a reason and this will in no way affect my future treatment. I am not taking part in any other research study at this time. I understand the risks and benefits, and I freely give my informed consent to participate under the conditions stated. I understand that I must follow the study doctor's (investigator's) instructions related to my participation in the study.
- I understand that study staff, qualified monitors and auditors, the sponsor or its affiliates, and governmental or regulatory authorities, have direct access to my medical record in order to make sure that the study is conducted correctly and the data are recorded correctly. All personal details will be treated as STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
- I will receive a copy of this subject information/informed consent form signed and dated to bring home.
- I agree/disagree* for my family doctor to be informed of my participation in this study.
(*delete which is not applicable)

Subject:

Signature: I/C number:

Name: Date:

Investigator conducting informed consent:

Signature: I/C number:

Name: Date:

Impartial witness:

Signature: I/C number:

Name: Date:

Questionnaire
Demographics

1. Age (years)

2. Gender
Male
Female
3. Ethnicity
Malay
Chinese
Indian
Others (please specify)
4. Semester of study
Sem 1
Sem 2
Sem 3
Sem 4
Sem 7
Sem 8
Sem 9
Sem 10
5. Country of origin
Malaysia
Sri Lanka
Others..... (please specify)

Source of information

1. Have you heard about safe sex?
 - Yes
 - No
2. If yes, where did you hear about safe sex? (Please select all that apply)
 - School/ University
 - Health talks, Seminars, Webinar
 - From your parents
 - From your siblings
 - From your friends
 - Online information searching (by yourself)
3. Did your parents discuss the importance of safe sex with you?
 - Yes
 - No

4. Which of the following best describe the safe sex? (Please select only one option)

- Safe sex is the use of contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancies
- Safe sex is the use of condom to prevent STIs
- Safe sex is the use of protective measures like condom to prevent STIs and unwanted pregnancies
- Safe sex is the use of protective measures like condom to prevent STIs and unwanted pregnancies after getting consent from the partner
- Safe sex is the use of protective measures like condom to prevent STIs and unwanted pregnancies regardless of getting consent from the partner
- Safe sex is the use of protective measures like condom to prevent teenage pregnancy

5. What is the age of legal sexual consent in Malaysia?

- 14 years
- 16 years
- 18 years
- 20 years

Knowledge on safe sex

1. It is better to only have one partner for a sexual relationship
2. A condom should be used correctly and consistently for a safe sex purpose
3. A condom can prevent STIs
4. Sex during menstrual cycle cannot protect from pregnancy
5. Even first time unprotected heterosexual sexual intercourse can cause pregnancy
6. Safe sex is free from the risk of STIs/AIDS and unwanted pregnancy
7. Condoms can help prevent pregnancy
8. Birth control injections can help prevent pregnancy
9. Abstinence (refraining from sex) can help prevent pregnancy
10. Intrauterine device (IUD) can help prevent pregnancy

Attitude towards sexual consent

1. Asking for sexual consent is in the best interest because it reduces any misinterpretation that might rise
2. Verbally asking for sexual consent should occur before proceeding with any sexual activity
3. It is the responsibility of both partners to make sure sexual consent is established before sexual activity begins
4. Consent should be asked before any kind of sexual behavior, including kissing or petting
5. When initiating sexual activity, i believe that one should always assume they do not have sexual consent until obtained