

Knowledge and Attitude of Undergraduate Students towards Sexually Transmitted Infections in Tirana, Albania

Genc Burazeri, Enver Roshi, Nertila Tavanxhi¹, Llukan Rrumbullaku², Erion Dasho³
Department of Public Health, Tirana University Faculty of Medicine; ¹World Health Organization – Emergency and Humanitarian Assistance Office; ²Department of Family Medicine, Tirana University Faculty of Medicine; and ³Institute of Public Health, Tirana, Albania

Aim. To assess the knowledge and attitude of undergraduate students in Tirana, Albania, towards sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Methods. A sample of 729 students (76% women) at the University of Tirana were surveyed by the use of an anonymous questionnaire with 10 multiple-choice questions testing their knowledge and 27 statements testing their attitude towards STI (adapted to a 1-5 Likert scale, with a low score indicating poor attitude). Socio-demographic data were also collected. The survey was carried out in October and November 2002. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the associations between socio-demographic factors on the one hand and attitude towards and knowledge about sexually transmitted infections, on the other.

Results. Men had poorer knowledge and attitude toward STI than women ($b = -4.59$, $p < 0.001$ for attitude, and $\hat{\alpha} = -0.38$, $p = 0.006$ for knowledge). Higher parental education and urban origin were strongly associated with better STI knowledge. After adjustment for age, sex, marital status, religion, income, and number of siblings, students whose parents had low and middle education level had a mean STI knowledge score of < 1.16 (95% confidence interval [CI], 0.85-1.47) and < 0.98 (95% CI, 0.74-1.23), respectively, which was significantly lower than the score of students with highly educated parents ($p < 0.001$ for linear trend). Also, students born in rural areas had significantly lower mean STI knowledge score (< 0.70 , $p = 0.003$) than students born in urban areas.

Conclusion. Parental education and origin are strongly associated with knowledge and attitude of undergraduate students in Tirana towards sexually transmitted infections.

Key words: Albania; attitude; knowledge; sexually transmitted infections; students