

# Knowledge and Utilization of Condom among Gay, Bisexual and Transgender of Nepal

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community in Nepal are still stigmatized and regarded as vulnerable population. Since, male having sex with male are high risk population for various Sexually Transmitted Infections including Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the knowledge and utilization of condom plays an important role in reducing the risk of Sexually Transmitted Infections. The main purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge and utilization of condom among Gay, Bisexual and Transgender of Nepal.

**Methods:** This was a cross-sectional descriptive quantitative study, carried out in Kathmandu valley. Samples were collected from various LGBT related organizations through snowball sampling techniques, recruiting 59 respondents of age 18 and above. Semi structured questionnaire were developed and direct interview with the respondent was taken whose consent was taken before interview.

**Results:** Among 59 respondents, 90% of gay people had enough knowledge regarding condom, 77% of bisexual people had enough knowledge and 52% transgender had enough knowledge regarding condom. Similarly, 68% of gay people had followed good utilization practice of condom, all bisexual people had followed good utilization practice and 78% transgender had followed good utilization practice. Out of total respondent, 80% were found to be using condom consistently during sexual contact in last 12 months. There was found to be significant association between alcohol consumption during sexual contact and utilization of condom.

**Conclusions:** Gay, bisexual and transgender in Nepal are key population for HIV/AIDS transmission. Therefore, more efforts should be made for addressing this issue with proper prioritization, planning and implementation on condom programs.

**Keywords:** *bisexual; gay; knowledge; condom; utilization.*

## INTRODUCTION

Gay, bisexual and transgender people are marginalized, hidden and underserved population of Nepal<sup>1</sup>. They are vulnerable to HIV/AIDS which is one of the major public health problems. Condom plays vital role for minimizing the risk of most STIs including HIV/AIDS and thus continues to be important public health effort to reduce new cases of HIV/AIDS in country<sup>2</sup>.

Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge and utilization of condom among Gay, Bisexual and Transgender of Nepal. This study also aimed to find out various factors associated with use and non use of condom.

## METHODS

Descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among gay, bisexual and transgender in Kathmandu valley. Quantitative research type was used. Data was collected from May to June in 2018. Ethical approval was taken from Nepal Health

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Gay, bisexual and transgender people was taken as study population. Those participants who had sexual contact within last 12 months were taken into consideration. Non probability snowball sampling technique was used. The study population was identified through referral system done by one among the respondent and further other respondent were identified.

The tool used for data collection was semi-structure questionnaire. Questionnaire was developed based on the objectives and variables used for this study. Similarly, pretesting was done taking 10% of total sample for further modification and necessary changes were made. Since, it was non probability snowball sampling, the total sample collected at the end was 59.

Direct face to face interview of the respondent was taken for data collection from participants. After the collection of data, it was reviewed to ensure the completion. After that, the data was entered in SPSS 16 for data analysis. Finally, data was interpreted in terms of table. Various statistical method was used for analysis of data and to find significance association between the variables.

## RESULTS

Table no. 1 shows cross tabulation of sex of the respondent and knowledge. All the knowledge related questions were added and median was taken which was 6 and further it was divided into enough knowledge and poor knowledge if median was 6 or less than 6 and above 6 respectively. Among 59 respondents, 90% people from gay community, 77% from bisexual community 52% from transgender community had enough knowledge regarding condom.

**Table 1. Cross Tabulation of Sex of Respondent\* Knowledge Regarding Condom (n=59)**

Sex of respondent	Knowledge		Total
	Enough knowledge	Poor knowledge	
Gay	17 (90%)	2 (10%)	19 (100%)
Bisexual	10 (77%)	3 (23%)	13 (100%)
Transgender	14 (52%)	13 (48%)	27 (100%)

Table no. 2 shows cross tabulation of sex of the respondent and utilization of condom. All the knowledge related questions were added and median was taken which was 6 and further it was divided into good utilization and poor utilization if median was 6 or less than 6 and above 6 respectively. Among 59 respondents, two third (68%) from the gay community and 78% from transgender community had done good utilization of condom. Similarly, all bisexual had done good utilization of condom.

**Table 2. Cross Tabulation of Sex of Respondent\* Utilization of Condom (n=59)**

Sex of respondent	Utilization		Total
	Good utilization	Poor utilization	
Gay	13 (68%)	6 (31%)	19(100%)
Bisexual	13 (100%)	0 (0%)	13(100%)
Transgender	21 (78%)	6 (22%)	27 (100%)

Table no.3 shows utilization of condom during sexual contact in past 12 months. All of the respondent have had sexual contact in past 12 months and had been using condom. Among them, 80% had been using condom consistently.

**Table 3. Utilization of Condom During Sexual Contact in Past 12 Years (n=59)**

Utilization	Frequency	Percentage
Had sexual contact in last 12 months	59	100
<b>Use of condom during sexual contact in last 12 month</b>		
Used condom	59	100
<b>Frequency of condom use during sexual contact in last 12 month (n=56)</b>		
Consistently	47	80
Sometimes	12	20

Table no. 4 shows utilization of condom during sexual contact with CSW. Almost one third of the respondent i.e 63% said that they had sexual contact with CSW and all of them had used condom during sexual contact with CSW. Likewise, almost all of them had used condom consistently i.e 95% had used condom consistently.

**Table 4. Utilization of Condom Among CSW (n=59)**

Utilization	Frequency	Percentage
Had sexual contact with CSW	22	37
<b>Use of condom during sexual contact with CSW (n=22)</b>		
Used condom	22	100
<b>Frequency of condom used during sexual contact with Commercial Sex Worker (n=22)</b>		
Consistently	21	95
Sometimes	1	5

Table no. 5 shows the association of utilization of condom with different variables. The p-value at confidence level of 95% was calculated for various variables. The p-value at confidence level of 95% is 0.050 for alcohol consumption during sexual intercourse which is 0.05. Thus, the factor is significantly associated with utilization of condom.

No association of utilization of condom with age of respondent, association / membership with LGBTI related organization, education, attitude towards condom, socio-economic status, participation in SRH programs, marital status and support for sexual preference by family. as p value is more than 0.05 according to chi-square test and fisher's exact test.

**Table 5. Association of Utilization of Condom With Various Variables (n=59)**

Variables	Utilization of condom			P-value
		Good utilization	Poor utilization	
Age	30 and below	26 (55%)	9 (75%)	0.326(fisher's exact test)
	Above 30	21 (45%)	3 (25%)	
Association/membership with LGBTI related organization	Yes	45 (96%)	10 (83 %)	0.181(fisher's exact test)
	No	2 (4%)	2 (17%)	
Education	Literate	44 (94%)	12 (100%)	1.000(fisher's exact test)
	Illiterate	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	
Participation in sexual and reproductive health programs	Yes	41 (87%)	9 (75%)	0.369 (fisher's exact test)
	No	6 (13%)	3 (25%)	
Attitude towards condom	Bad attitude	25 (53%)	9 (75%)	0.207 (fisher's exact test)
	Good attitude	22 (47%)	3 (25%)	
Socio-economic status	Employed	44 (94%)	10 (83%)	0.266 (fisher's exact test)
	Unemployed	3 (6%)	2 (17%)	

Utilization of condom				
Variables		Good utilization	Poor utilization	P-value
Support for sexual preference by family	Yes	12 (71%)	4 (50%)	0.394 (fisher's exact test)
	No	5 (29%)	4 (50%)	
Alcohol consumption during sexual intercourse	Yes	11(100%)	5 (62%)	0.050 (fisher's exact test)*
	No	0 (0%)	3 (38%)	
Marital status	Married	26 (74%)	17 (71%)	0.775 (fisher's exact test)
	Unmarried	11(26%)	7 (29%)	

\* indicates  $P$ -value  $<0.05$

## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore knowledge and utilization of condom among Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people of Nepal. The study indicated that 100% of respondent had used condom during sexual contact within last 12 months. Similar result was found in cross sectional study in Togo, West Africa where 78.4% MSM had used condom during sexual activity with another man.<sup>3</sup>

Almost half of the respondent i.e 46% were involved in commercial sex work and among those who were involved in commercial sex work , half of them i.e 48% had commercial sex work as primary occupation. In contrast to a study done in Chennai city among Male to Female transgender, more than one forth (28%) had sex work as their primary occupation.<sup>4</sup> This difference in two major cities of neighbouring country indicates that there is discrimination among these population and they donot have much employment opportunities which compels them to get involve in CSW.

One third of the respondent i.e 37% had sexual contact with commercial sex worker and almost all of them i.e 95% had used condom consistently during sexual contact with commercial sex worker. Conversely, in a study done in Chennai city among Male to Female transgender who were involved in commercial sex, 40% of them had used condom consistently.<sup>4</sup> This shows vast

difference in result between two major cities of neighbouring countries. This implies that knowledge regarding condom among gay, bisexual and transgender of Nepal is relatively high.

Also, it was found that most of the respondent had association with LGBTI related organization from where they obtained various types of health benefits. Most of the previous study show significant relationship between such type of association and utilization and knowledge of condom.<sup>5</sup> Association with such types of organization helps in obtaining various types of health benefit and it makes easier to access to health services which further helps in increasing knowledge and utilization of condom..

A significant association between alcohol use during sexual contact and use of condom was found by this study. Similar result was obtained from study in India as well as study done in USA which established alcohol and drug use during sexual contact as a factor influencing utilization of condom.<sup>4,6</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

The study was conducted on Gay, bisexual and transgender people regarding their knowledge and utilization of condom. Knowledge regarding condom among this community was found to good. Likewise, there was good utilization of condom among most of the respondent. There was consistent

use of condom among most of the respondent during sexual contact in last twelve years. Also, there was significant association between alcohol consumption during sexual contact and utilization of condom.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** None

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