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Prevalence of HIV/STD infection and correlated factors among Vietnamese cross-border female sex workers in a border region of Yunnan province, China

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Background: Female sex workers (FSWs) are vulnerable to human immunodeficiency virus and sexually transmitted diseases (HIV/STD) infection and serve as a bridge in HIV transmission from the high-risk population to the general, low-risk population. Little is known about the characteristics and risk factors for HIV/STD infection among Vietnamese cross-border FSWs in Hekou county Yunnan Province in southwestern China bordering with Vietnam recently.

Methods: To examine the factors of Vietnamese FSWs that correlate with the prevalence of HIV/STD infection in the China-Vietnam border region, a cross-sectional survey was conducted in 2015 in Hekou county of Yunnan province, China. We performed a questionnaire survey to collect data on demographics, sexual behavior and drug use. Blood and urine samples were collected for testing of HIV/STD and drug use.

Results: Totally 594 female participants were recruited in our study. We found that the prevalence of HIV and herpes simplex virus (HSV-2) infection among Vietnamese FSWs were 1.85% (11/594) and 45.29% (269/594). In addition 6 Vietnamese FSWs (1.01%) were Syphilis positive. Multivariate logistic regression analysis revealed that HSV-2 infection was a risk factor of HIV infection, further more age, monthly income, has no-commercial sexual partners and positive urinalysis result for amphetamine-type stimulants were correlated factors of HSV-2 infection of Vietnamese cross-border FSWs.

Conclusion: Prevalence of HIV infection was decreased but HSV-2 prevalence was still alarmingly high among Vietnamese cross-border FSWs in Hekou County. The correlation between HIV and HSV-2 infection among Vietnamese FSWs suggests that the increased role of sexual transmission in the HIV epidemic in the China-Vietnam border region. Positive urinalysis result for amphetamine-type stimulants was observed in Vietnamese FSWs with HSV-2 infection, confirming that drug use is an important target in future HIV/STD related interventions. Moreover, non-commercial sexual partners of Vietnamese FSWs may be a potential bridge for HIV/STD transmission that needs further research.

Biography

Jing Zhu is majoring in Epidemiology of Infectious Disease. He has been engaged in research on HIV/STD prevention and intervention for high-risk population who are vulnerable to HIV/STD in border regions of Yunnan Province, China for many years. In the last 5 years his studies were focused on HIV/STD prevention for female sex workers and their male clients in the China-Vietnam border region.

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