Abstract

The target of this study is to assess the relationship between sexual sensation-seeking, worry about STD/HIV infection, and risky sexual behaviours among 182 adolescents aged 13-18 years. Results showed that participants who engaged in a wider range of potentially risky behaviours (e.g., sexual experience, higher number of sexual partners in last six months, and the last sexual contact with a casual partner) obtained higher sensation-seeking scores. It was also found that adolescents who engaged in sex with a casual partner in their last sexual contact reported being worried about STD/HIV infection, but adolescents having sex with a steady partner underestimated their risk of STD/HIV infection. These results support the idea that preventive programmes may benefit from including components aimed at teaching adolescents to satisfy their preferences for sexual sensation-seeking through novel and stimulating sexual behaviours involving minimum risk. Similarly, the need to include components aimed at making adolescents become realistically aware of the STD/HIV risk involved in unprotected intercourse with steady love partners is highlighted.