

Refining STI Risk Prevention Messages That Yield Strong Intentions

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Introduction & Overview

- Risky sexual behaviors increase the risk of STI's and condom use is the primary strategy of reducing risk.
- Condom use remains low in the U.S., especially among African Americans.
- Understanding messages that lead to behavior change remain important for targeting new interventions and tailoring existing ones.
- Previous research has utilized many psychosocial theories to inform STI risk reduction. Among them, the theory of planned behavior (TPB).
- Interventions may be impactful if moving people from "somewhat endorsing" to "strongly endorsing" a pro-condom belief will produce formidable effects.
- The present study explores and identifies potential TPB beliefs about condom use that are related to strong intentions to use condoms for males and females.

Methods

- Participants: Data collected from 211 college freshmen (N=67 male and N=144 female) from a Historically Black University.
- Procedures: A paper and pencil survey was administered in a closed-door setting to the participants. 3-month follow-up to report behavior.
- Measures: YEP Sexual risk and intention survey that included a measure of sexual risk behavior (N=2 items), attitudes (N=6 items), subjective norms regarding sexual risk behaviors (N=8 items), self-efficacy regarding sexual risk behavior (N=7 items), and intentions to engage in sexual risk behavior (N=3) (Carmack et al 2015)
- Analyses: Pearson Chi-Square was used to explore the association between level of intention (strongly agree vs. agree) to use condoms and level of agreement with attitudes & self-efficacy beliefs toward condom use.

Results & Conclusions

- For males, strongly endorsing the attitude beliefs: "condoms do not ruin the mood;" "I ask my partner about using a condom before sex;" "It is easy for me to get condoms" was significantly related to strongly intending to use condoms ($p < .05$).
- For females, highly endorsing the beliefs: "condom use does not mean a girl is promiscuous;" "I can say to my partner we should use a condom;" "sex still feels natural when a condom is used" were significantly related to having strong intentions to use condoms ($p < .05$).

Strong Condom Use Intentions	Agree 5 endorsed (% actual use)	Strongly Agree 5 endorsed (% actual use)
Male sample:		
Condoms do not ruin the mood	10% (7%)	68% (67%)
I ask my partner about using a condom before sex	8% (2%)	77% (77%)
Female sample:		
Condom use does not mean a girl is promiscuous	15% (10%)	79% (75%)
I can say to my partner we should use a condom	17% (9%)	78% (76%)
Sex still feels natural with a condom	20% (10%)	64% (63%)



Implications & Future Directions

- The present study was a baseline illustration of pro-condom beliefs that may be amenable to minimal change through intervention, while engendering a sizeable impact on strong intentions.
- Intentions were related to actual condom use more so for participants who "strongly agreed" with condom use cognition.
- Future research might benefit by focusing on identifying messages related to strong intentions to use condoms for college students who already intend to use condoms.
- More research should be conducted to explore whether the TPB beliefs about condom use can predict or have a causal influence toward strong condom use intentions.