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SUCHITA LISAM: HIV RISK PRACTICES AND THEIR DETERMINANTS
AMONG INJECTING DRUG USERS IN DELHI AND MANIPUR, INDIA.
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An analytical cross-sectional research approach with quantitative methods was used to assess HIV risk practices and their determinants among injecting drug users (IDUs) in urban areas of Manipur and Delhi, India, in February 2004. Manipur has a stronger policy to prevent and control HIV in IDUs than does Delhi. A total of 200 IDUs (100 IDUs in each place of study) were recruited for the study. The subjects were recruited from 5 NGOs in Manipur, and in Delhi, 74 IDUs were recruited from the one NGO, Society for Service to Urban Poverty (SHARAN), and 26 IDUs were recruited from 2 Drug De-addiction Centre (DDCs, 13 IDUs from each DDC). The study showed that the high HIV injecting and sexual risk practices among IDUs were higher in Delhi than in Manipur, which generally were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). In Delhi, 45% of IDUs indulged high-risk practice of ever sharing of needles & syringes (N&S) in the last 6 months, as compared to 28% in Manipur. In Delhi, prevalences of the high HIV risk practices injecting drug ≥ 3 times/day, infrequent cleaning of N&S in the last 6 months, non-usage of bleach for cleaning N&S, having sex partners >2 in the last 12 months, non-usage of condom with commercial sex workers (CSWs) and inconsistent use of condoms with CSWs were statistically significantly higher than in Manipur. The level of knowledge and attitude on HIV/AIDS were statistically significantly higher in Manipur than in Delhi. The IDUs in Manipur had utilized health and drug treatment services more frequently than IDUs in Delhi. The findings suggested that the HIV/AIDS policy in Manipur had a beneficial effect on HIV risk practices of the IDUs. However, interpretation of the results was limited by the fact that convenience sampling, not random sampling, was employed in the study. There is a need of co-ordination between NGOs involved in HIV/AIDS prevention among IDUs and the respective State/National AIDS Control Organization in Delhi, as it is learnt that there has been no financial and technical support for SHARAN in Delhi from National AIDS Control Programme (NACO) in order to carry out the harm reduction Programme for prevention of HIV transmission among IDUs.

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