

NEEDS AND CONCERNS IN RELATION TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AMONG ETHNIC MINORITY ADOLESCENTS (*)

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According to the definition of WHO, adolescents are persons between 10-19 years of age (WHO, 1998). Although adolescents make up about 20 percent of the world's population (of whom 85 percent live in developing countries), they had been traditionally neglected as a distinct target group. However, there is increasing recognition that adolescents have special health-related vulnerabilities, especially regarding to reproductive health (Dehne KL & Riedner G, 2001). In Vietnam, the situation is similar; the quality of care in reproductive health still suffers from weaknesses and shortcomings. Furthermore, many difficulties in socio-economic development continuously set obstacles to improving adolescent reproductive health status while the adolescents accounted for 23.2 percent of total national population (18.45 million people) (Population and Family Planning Survey 1.4.2002). The notable point here is that 4/5 Vietnamese adolescents are living in rural area and 15 percent is ethnic minorities living in remote area where lack of the resources, difficulty and poverty are existed seriously (Vietnam General Statistics Office, 2001).

In November 2000, Vietnamese Government has approved the National Strategy on Reproductive Health Care in the period of 2001-2010 with target: "It is

that by the year 2010, reproductive health status in Vietnam will be improved significantly and the gaps among regions and objects will be shortened by meeting better diversified demands on Reproductive Health Care so as suitable with conditions of local communities, especially attention is given to difficult regions and objects," in which the improvement of the reproductive health and sexual health of adolescents, the future generation of the country, has become an important particular target to which attention should be paid (Vietnam Ministry of Health, 2001).

Therefore, it is recognized that research on the needs and concerns in relation to reproductive health among ethnic minority adolescents at the present time is very necessary when ethnic minorities are not familiar with the concept of Adolescent Reproductive Health, even in professional point of view. This paper presented the results of a study which found out the needs and concerns of ethnic minority adolescents toward reproductive health through assessing the knowledge, attitudes and practices of adolescents relating to some contents of adolescent sexual/reproductive health.

The data source which was used in this study includes the quantitative data collected

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from the study “Vietnam Adolescents and Social Change” (conducted by Population Council in cooperation with Vietnam Sociology Institute) and the qualitative data collected by the researcher in a field trip.

Due to short time and limited resources, the study’s object and scope is only the ethnic minority adolescents at the age from 13 to 19 years old who are living in Northern mountainous region of Vietnam. The sample was selected randomly in two provinces Lai Chau and Quang Ninh. In order to find out the difference in the needs and concerns relating to reproductive health of the adolescent groups, the analyzed data were always compared between the group of ethnic adolescent, the group of Kinh adolescent who were living in the same studied sites and the group of Kinh adolescent who were living in developed urban area (Ho Chi Minh city).

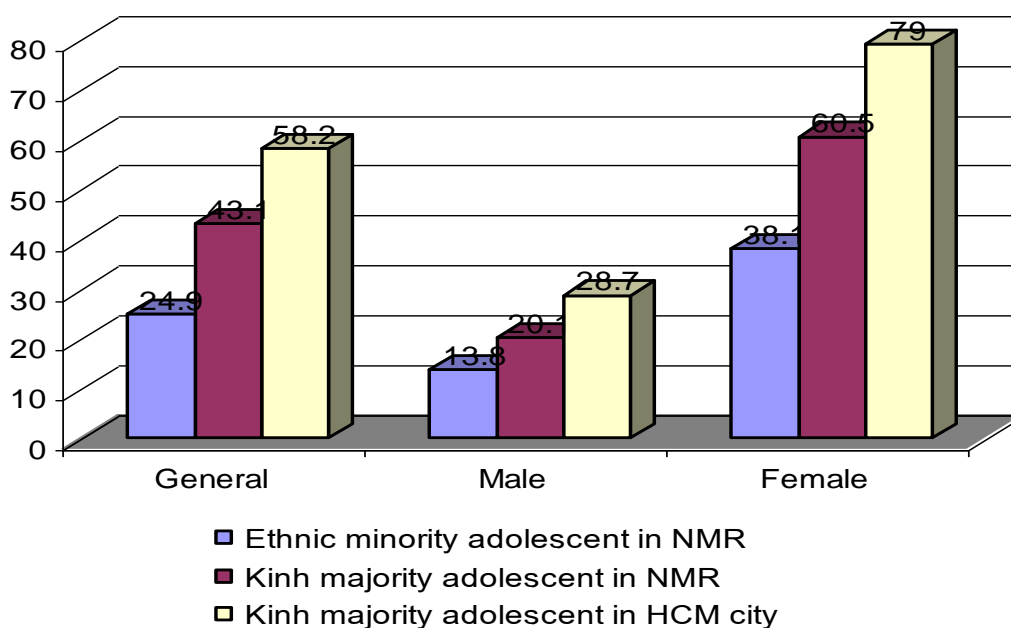
Hopefully, this study would provide the useful information for making policies and interventions which are suitable for and would meet the needs of ethnic adolescent reproductive health in future. Hereinafter are the main findings of this study:

1. Puberty beginning is datum point to mark the time of adolescence. It is one of the concerns of adolescent in this time because it happened in their own bodies. Adolescent really have need to receive knowledge on the physical changes those are happening within their body.

“I have not known what is monthly period of women... In the first time, I was very afraid since I didn't know what happened...”

(Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group)

Figure 1 – Adolescent’s knowledge about monthly cycle



Assessing the knowledge level of ethnic minority adolescent towards this content showed that only a quarter of adolescents said they knew about the menstrual cycle; only 38.1% of female ethnic minority adolescents had the knowledge about that and of course the proportion of male ethnic minority adolescents knowing about the monthly cycle is lower (13.8%) (Figure 1). Of female adolescents who used to get the menstrual cycle, the number of adolescents who had been explained and counseled about this is small (24.7%).

Of the puberty signals in a man e.g. voice changes, wet dreams, increase height and weight and public hair appears, the signal of voice changes is always known much but there is only 23.9% male ethnic minority adolescents know this signal. Wet dreams, like to menstrual circle in women, is the main signal help to determine the time at which the puberty is marked to begin. However, only 7.5% ethnic minority adolescents say they know about this. Notably, 28.3% of male ethnic minority adolescents say do not know any signal of puberty (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1 – Adolescent’s knowledge about the puberty’s signals in boys

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	Knowledge about the puberty’s signals in boys			
	Voice changes	Wet dreams	Increase height & weight	Public hair appears
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	23.9	7.5	7.5	10.1
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	37.5	10.4	11.8	7.6
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	54.5	13.9	5.0	5.0

Table 2 – Adolescent’s knowledge about the puberty’s signals in boys

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	Knowledge about the puberty’s signals in boys			
	Know at least 1 signal	2 signals	3 signals	DK
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	71.7	64.1	42.8	28.3
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	81.9	72.2	52.1	18.1
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	85.1	80.2	65.3	14.9

Adolescents need to get more knowledge about their own signals of physiological maturation. The qualitative data show that with little knowledge about menstruation, adolescents usually were anxious when they met the first monthly circle. There was no instruction given to them, and adolescents did not do anything to protect their body hygiene: “When I had a period, I did not use a pad; I just wore underwear... No one told me about it... I felt uncomfortable at this period and I did not go out” (Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group).

2. Adolescents really have concerned about sexual intercourse, they need to have more information about this for their life.

“I want to know more about sexual intercourse... to get more experience...”

(Binh, male, Tay ethnic group)

“I want to ask... ask... It's hard to say... I want to ask about sexual intercourse in the couple's relation later on, how is it like?”

(Hanh, male, Yao ethnic group)

With the questions mentioned above, adolescents really have concerned about sexual intercourse, they need to have more information about this for their life. In reality, what do adolescents know about sexual intercourse, its consequences? The frequency of sexual intercourse among ethnic minority adolescents needs to identify.

The study results revealed that: For ethnic minority adolescents, sexual intercourse has not been a strange phenomenon like it was kept secret in the past. They started understanding the nature of intercourse relation and they also have knowledge about the consequences of relation later on. Adolescents explained how the

sexual relation according to their limited understanding is: “Sexual intercourse means the coitus between a girl and a man” (Binh, male, Tay ethnic group). “Sexuality between a girl and a man is made with reproductive organs” (Duc, male, Tay ethnic group).

The qualitative study found out that male adolescents tend to be more knowledgeable than female on the consequences of sexual relations at adolescence. Some of girls claimed they did not have any knowledge about these consequences: “Making love in such manner, I think pregnancy capability is impossible” (Man, female, San Chi ethnic group) or “I don't know but I think sexuality has no result” (Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group). Whereas, boys knew about that in more details: “By this sexuality, the girl can be pregnant... Sexuality will cause infectious disease, for instance SIDA, from the man to the girl and vice versa... Having sexual relation early influences to reproduction later. If the girl is pregnant, she doesn't know how to bring up her baby and the man doesn't know how to get money to feed his wife and child. It is so miserable!” (Hung, male, Yao ethnic group).

According to the quantitative data, among ethnic minority adolescents, 6.7% of unmarried boys and 5.1% of unmarried girls reported that they had had sexual relation. The data are likely low that they suggest that premarital sex seems to be uncommon among both male and female ethnic minority adolescents. But notably, if comparing with the cohort of youth 20-22 year of age, this rate is 18.5% in boys and 8.3% in girls (Table 3). So the tendency here is that adolescents will engage more in premarital sex when they enter coming ages.

Table 3 – Premarital sexual relations in adolescents

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	Premarital sexual relations					
	Cohort 15-19 year olds			Cohort 20-22 year olds		
	General	Male	Female	General	Male	Female
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	6.1	6.7	5.1	15.4	18.5	8.3
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	3.1	5.1	1.6	13.2	21.9	0.0
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	6.0	13.0	1.0	22.4	31.1	4.5

The statistics results in both married and unmarried ethnic minority adolescents show that the proportion of adolescents who had engaged in sexual intercourse in adolescence period is 14.3% (9.0% in boys and 21.1% in girls). Those rates are also higher than rate of Kinh adolescent in NMR and Kinh adolescent in HCM city (6.8% and 8.1% in respectively) (Table 4). It suggested

that ethnic minority adolescents tend to get married earlier and the number of adolescents who had engaged in sexual intercourse in adolescence period is much larger than of Kinh adolescents. From the analyzed data above, it was also interesting to find that the male adolescents generally less engage in sexual intercourse than female adolescents but they seem more engage in premarital sex.

Table 4 – Adolescents have had sexual relations

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	Adolescent have had sexual relation					
	Cohort 15-19 year olds			Cohort 20-22 year olds		
	General	Male	Female	General	Male	Female
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	14.3	9.0	21.1	59.8	53.2	68.6
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	6.8	6.0	7.3	49.5	34.2	60.4
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM</i>	8.1	13.0	4.6	36.6	35.4	38.2

The same result came out from qualitative data with acknowledgement by adolescents themselves about this tendency: “I realize that most of my friends now do like that. They are not married but make love in topsy-turvy. In my opinion, it is not good and fair. After that some talk about that, some don't and now most of youth are same... My friends are going to get married but have involved in sexual intercourse. My sister is the same or others too” (An, female, Tay ethnic group).

3. Adolescents have also concerned about gestation and pregnancy. They have needed to be provided the knowledge on this issue.

“I want to know that why they are pregnant when they have sexual intercourse...”

(Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group)

“I haven't known about when woman appears menstrual cycle, she is able to pregnant. No one told me that.”

(Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group)

In the quantitative study, the knowledge of adolescents of gestation and pregnancy was determined through questions about the gestation time and ability to get pregnant. In the question concerning the time in the woman's menstruation cycle at which pregnancy most likely occurs, only 13.5 % of ethnic minority adolescents got the right answer and up to 70.3% said they do not know anything about this time. The ethnic minority boys are more knowledgeable than girls (27.3% of boys had right answer while 7.7% of girls had this answer) (Table 5).

Table 5 – Adolescent's knowledge about the time when pregnancy most likely occurs

Count unit: %

<i>ADOLESCENT GROUPS</i>	<i>Knowledge about the time when pregnancy most likely occurs</i>					
	<i>General (%)</i>		<i>Male (%)</i>		<i>Female (%)</i>	
	<i>Right</i>	<i>DK</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>DK</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	13.5	70.3	27.3	54.5	7.7	76.9
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	20.0	44.1	37.9	17.2	15.5	50.9
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	17.6	33.1	10.3	24.1	19.5	35.4

The ability in being pregnancy in case intercourse relation without contraception was known by ethnic minority adolescents more than the time at which pregnancy most likely occurs. 48.1% of ethnic minority adolescent got right answer, more than ½ of

adolescent got wrong answer or did not know about this. The Kinh majority adolescents also have higher knowledge in this content than ethnic minority adolescents (67.1% and 73.8% of adolescents in NMR and HCM city have right answer) (Table 6).

Table 6 – Adolescent’s knowledge about the time when pregnancy most likely occurs

Count unit: %

<i>ADOLESCENT GROUPS</i>	<i>Knowledge about the time when pregnancy most likely occurs</i>		
	DK	<i>Right</i>	<i>Wrong</i>
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	70.3	13.5	16.2
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	44.1	20.0	35.9
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	33.1	17.6	49.3

4. Adolescence period at which the changes not only in physiology but also in psychology are taking place strongly. Sentimental perspectives of sexual emotions and relationships have been paid attention by ethnic minority adolescents. They have need in exploring the love, loving relation, evenly “sexual” feeling.

“I feel not knowing enough, I want to know more about the emotional problems, I also want to know of relation between 2 persons... How we can do when we love someone...”

(Man, female, San Chi ethnic group)

What do ethnic minority adolescents understand about love? It is difficult to define what love is, being expressed by their feeling, love is understood very simple. The adolescents who do not have

boyfriend or girlfriend understood the love in theoretical perspective:

“Between a boy and a girl, if they like on another, they will love each other”

(Duc, male, Tay ethnic group)

For adolescents, who had experienced being in love, love was identified purely by their feeling: “I do not understand what love is... With my girlfriend, I felt that she loves me and I want to get married with her... When having feelings like that, we could not make love with others” (Hanh, male, Yao ethnic group). “I don’t know what love is, I just feel lacking something, if my boyfriend does not come with me for some days... I also feel sad, and I don’t know why... I just feel like this, I don’t know more, just know love being that” (Thach, female, Yao ethnic group).

However, ethnic minority adolescents have a positive attitude toward love and they would like to be liberal in loving relationship, in contrast to the love arrangement and marriage enforcement of parents in the former generation.

“Loving is happy... loving is making thing better”

(Binh, male, Tay ethnic group)

“If you love, you should love truly, not deceit fully”

(Hung, male, Yao ethnic group)

“I would like to look for my own lover, and don't like my parents to impose my marriage. I would like to be free”

(Man, female, San Chi ethnic group)

“Man and woman never touch on another” (Nam nu thu thu bat than) – this is the traditional conception in Vietnamese society. It expressed that there was to be no interaction between two persons of different sex. Now, in the concern of ethnic minority adolescents, they wanted to know the interaction between two persons in relationship aspect.

At present, opposite to those in the past, affectionate behaviors have been normalized in the attitude of ethnic minority adolescent. They consider those to be the behaviors expressing true love: “I think this is normal between two lovers” (Giang, male, San chi ethnic group). “Affectionate behavior such as embracing and kissing each other would be sound.

When two persons embracing each other, I feel that they virtually love each other” (Mui, female, Yao ethnic group). However, for most of the ethnic minority adolescents, in their feelings, those affectionate behaviors have been still considered as sensitive and secret behaviors: “I feel it stranger to me. Once, when I went out in the evening, I saw a love couple embracing, coming home, I feel ashamed” (Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group). “This thing, affectionate behaviors such as embracing, kissing each other, doesn't... doesn't matter... but seeing ones having these affectionate behaviors, I feel ashamed... I just hold the hands of my girlfriends, I haven't kissed her” (Henh, male, Yao ethnic group).

Going stronger and further than affectionate behaviors between two partners, that is sexual relations. In contrast to Western countries, in Vietnam, sexual relations are very sensitive and seldom spoken out. However, adolescents still need to explore this.

“I want to know why sexual relation might happen when they go out together...”

(Thanh, female, Tay ethnic group)

In the knowledge of majority of the ethnic minority adolescents, sexual relations are close related to loving relations and express true feelings of love: “This is an unavoidable action of love. If they don't love, they have no sexual relation... If they love, it is sound and

agreeable” (Binh, male, Tay ethnic group). “I think if the two persons truly love, sexuality, i.e. intercourse relation between boy and girl, obviously happens” (Thach, female, Yao ethnic group).

In the sexual relations of adolescents, boys are always the first decision makers and initiators. However, the accepting attitude of the girls also play important role making sexual intercourse happen because that is the closest contact between two partners: “When kissing, I (male adolescent) am the initiator. The girl is always ashamed, but when I take initiative the girl follows, she doesn't oppose” (Hung, male, Yao ethnic group). “Man takes initiative, first, man always needs making love, but it happens only with mutual consent” (Hanh, male, Yao ethnic group). “It happens only with the two persons' consent, but man often takes initiative... At that time, I truly loved him and I was content with it...” (Mui, female, Yao ethnic group).

5. Adolescents did not much pay attention to learn about contraceptive methods and they did not have need in learning this issue. However, this is a conflict to the fact that knowledge of contraceptive methods is really important and significant to the adolescent's life.

“I don't want to ask anything... I don't want to get any more information about

contraceptive methods since I am not familiar with contraceptive methods”

(Lenh, male, Yao ethnic group)

“There's no need to know now because I don't use that. Generally, I don't want to know because I'm not married. I will need to know when having already got married and had children, two sons, and one daughter. I only want to know when I have enough children.”

(Thu, female, Yao ethnic group)

In reality, what do they know about contraceptive methods? Do they accept contraceptive using in premarital sexual intercourse?

The knowledge level on contraceptive methods of ethnic minority adolescents had measured in the quantitative study. The data revealed that They are most knowledgeable about the condom, pill and IUD but only 1/3 of them know about these methods – 36.5% of adolescents know pill, 36.2% know condom, 32.8% know IUD. This knowledge level of ethnic minority adolescent about contraceptive methods much lower than that of Kinh majority groups (the proportion of Kinh adolescent in NMR and Kinh adolescent in Ho Chi Minh city respectively known about pill were: 55.4% and 59.8%; condom: 59.3% and 84.4%; IUD: 38.4% and 62.6%). Female ethnic minority adolescents have knowledge about contraceptive methods better than male (Table 7).

Table 7 – Adolescent's knowledge about contraceptive methods

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	% Adolescents know about the contraceptive methods					
	Pill	IUD	Inject	Condom	F Ster	M Ster
GENERAL						
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	36.5	32.8	16.1	36.2	19.6	16.1
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	55.4	38.4	17.1	59.3	23.8	22.2
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	59.8	62.6	22.2	84.4	40.3	41.0
MALE						
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	27.7	20.8	10.1	28.3	8.9	7.6
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	53.5	37.1	15.2	56.3	23.1	13.6
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	54.5	48.0	13.0	84.2	29.7	34.7
FEMALE						
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	47.0	47.0	23.3	45.5	32.1	26.1
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	56.8	39.5	18.5	61.6	24.3	21.1
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	63.6	72.7	28.7	84.5	47.9	45.5

The average number of contraceptive methods mentioned by ethnic minority adolescent is 1.6 while it is 2.2 in Kinh adolescent in NMR and 3.1 Kinh adolescent in HCM city.

Male ethnic minority adolescent know average only 1 method while female know 2.2; married adolescents know 2.6 methods, single adolescents know 1.5 methods (Table 8).

Table 8 – The number of modern contraceptive methods are known

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	The number of modern contraceptive methods are known (Mean)				
	General	Male	Female	Married	Single
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	1.6	1.0	2.2	2.6	1.5
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	2.2	2.1	2.2	3.0	2.2
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	3.1	2.6	3.4	4.5	3.1

Contraceptive practice of adolescents depends much on the attitude of adolescents toward contraceptive use. Depending on whether their attitude is approving or disapproving of contraception, they might decide to use contraception or not. In quantitative data, the unacceptable tendency in contraceptive using is dominated. 70% of adolescents (72.4% girls and 67.9% boys) did not accept to use contraception before getting married (Table 9).

Table 9 – Adolescent's attitude: Accepted/Unaccepted unmarried adolescent using contraception

Count unit: %

ADOLESCENT GROUPS	Attitude – Accepted/ Unaccepted under 18, unmarried people using contraception			
	Disagree (%)	Agree but no sex is better (%)	Agree (%)	DK (%)
GENERAL				
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	70.0	6.5	7.8	15.7
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	93.7	0.6	3.9	1.8
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	91.0	4.1	0.8	4.1
MALE				
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	67.9	5.0	13.8	13.2
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	91.0	1.4	6.9	0.7
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	86.1	7.9	1.0	5.0
FEMALE				
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	72.4	8.2	0.7	18.7
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	95.8	0.0	1.6	2.6
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	94.4	1.4	0.7	3.5

In qualitative study, ethnic minority adolescents tend to oppose to contraceptive using: “I don't want to use condom... because if I have intercourse with my girlfriend, she will be pregnant and I think that pregnancy is mine. It is unnecessary to use condom with my darling...” (Hung, male, Yao ethnic group).

So in fact, contraceptive use among ethnic minority adolescents is limited. In the quantitative study, only 1/4 of male and female ethnic minority adolescents who were sexually active reported that they had ever used a modern contraceptive method. This rate in Kinh minority adolescent is little bit higher (37.5% in Kinh adolescent in

NMR and 46.7% in Kinh adolescent in HCM city). It is noted that only 6.4% of ethnic minority adolescents who were sexually active used contraception in the first sexual intercourse with the reason they did not know about the contraceptive method or did not prepare or not available at that time (Table 10).

Table 10 – Using contraception in adolescent who have ever had sexual relations

Count unit: %

<i>ADOLESCENT GROUPS</i>	<i>% Adolescents used contraception</i>	
	<i>In adolescents had sex</i>	<i>In the first sexual relation</i>
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	25.8	6.4
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	37.5	12.5
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	46.7	20.0

6. Ethnic minority adolescent had little knowledge on STIs. Their need of getting information and knowledge on STIs was very high.

In the quantitative study, the general knowledge about STIs was assessed through 3 questions: (1) mention the name of sexually transmitted diseases, (2) ability to recognize STIs from outward and (3) possibility in long lasted disease when the signs or symptoms disappeared. Score marking method was applied in this assessment. With the correct

answer, adolescent got 1 score so the full level in knowledge about STIs is 3 score (100%). The mean score show that the knowledge of ethnic minority adolescents only reached 50% (1.5 score) (Table 4, 2, 3, and 5). The names of sexually transmitted diseases mentioned by adolescents are mainly HIV/AIDS, syphilis and gonorrhea but notably here there are 54.9% - more than half of ethnic minority adolescents did not know any name of sexually transmitted diseases (Table 11).

Table 11 – Adolescent's knowledge about sexual transmitted infections (STIs)

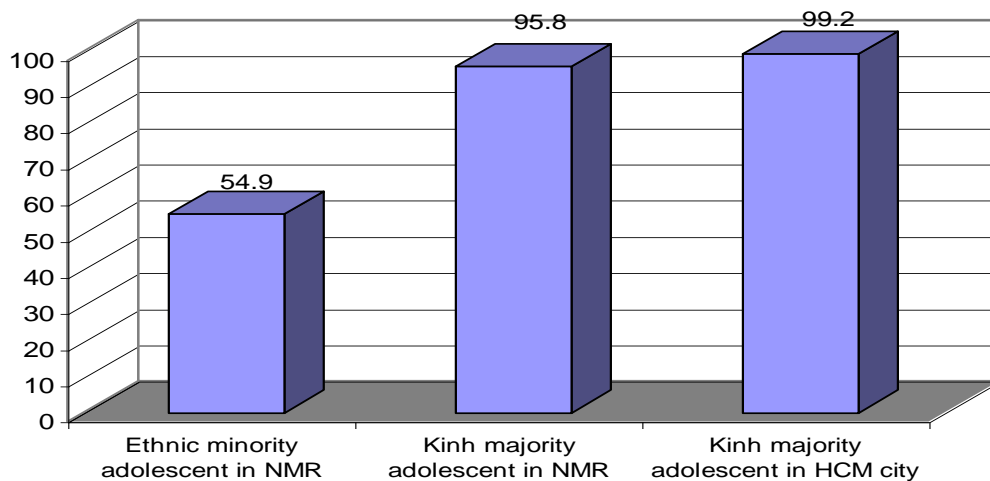
Count unit: %

<i>ADOLESCENT GROUPS</i>	<i>Adolescents do not know any name of STD (%)</i>		
	<i>General</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<i>Ethnic minority adolescent in NMR</i>	54.9	54.7	55.2
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in NMR</i>	11.1	7.6	13.7
<i>Kinh majority adolescent in HCM city</i>	12.7	8.9	15.4

While HIV/AIDS is the global disease, affecting to the human lives everywhere in the world. 99.2% of Kinh adolescents in HCM city and 95.8% of Kinh adolescents in NMR know about this, but up to 45.1% of ethnic minority adolescents had not ever heard about HIV/AIDS. This is

one of condition for HIV/AIDS spreads throughout ethnic minority communities. Among the ethnic minority adolescents who had ever heard about HIV/AIDS, the knowledge about the transmission ways and prevention measure was insufficient (Figure 2).

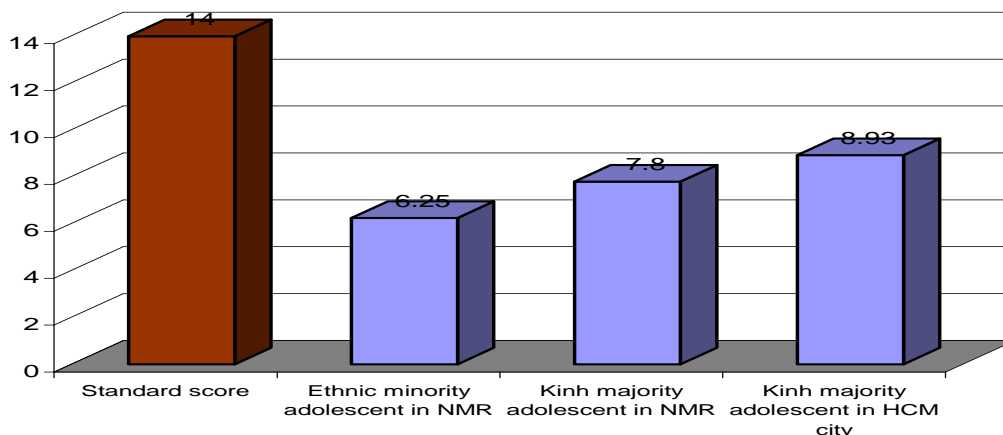
Figure 2 - Proportion of adolescents who have ever heard about HIV/AIDS



The adolescent's particular knowledge about HIV/AIDS was determined by a series of test variables. The knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission ways was measured by score range from 1 to 14. The mean score for knowledge about transmission ways of

ethnic minority adolescent is only 6.25 that mean they know only 44% of right knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission ways. This score of Kinh adolescents in NMR and Kinh adolescents in HCM city are 7.8 and 8.9 (equivalent to 56% and 64% of right knowledge) (Figure 3).

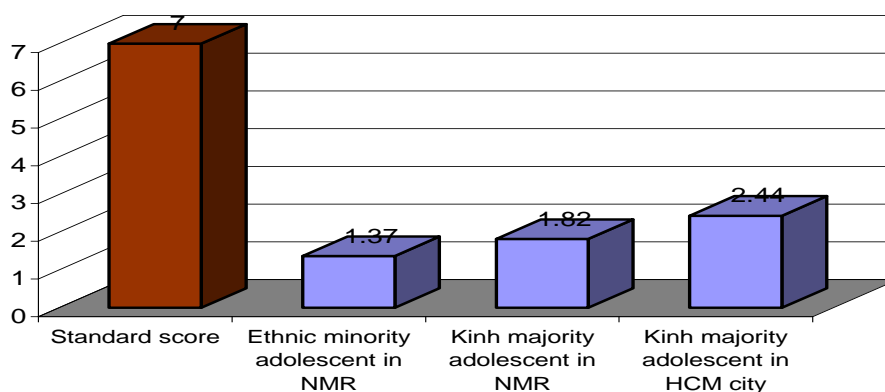
Figure 3 – Mean score for adolescent's knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission ways



The knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention ways was measured by score range from 1 to 7. The scores were marked for 7 test variables. The average score for knowledge about prevention ways of ethnic

minority adolescents is only 1.37. This result suggested that the knowledge level of ethnic minority adolescents toward HIV/AIDS prevention ways is too low (equivalent to 20% of right knowledge) (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Mean score for adolescent's knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention ways



In short, ethnic minority adolescents have urgent needs and concerns in relation to sexuality and reproductive health. They substantially have low knowledge level in reproductive physiology e.g. puberty, sexual intercourse, gestation and pregnancy so they would like to get more information about that. The emotional perspective of sexual relation and relationship is also a concern of adolescents who want to explore the psychological, sentimental and social aspects in love, affectionate behaviors and sexual intercourse. Ethnic minority adolescents are also lack knowledge about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases but they do not feel very concerned about these issues, they do not want to get more information about this. It is noteworthy that this gap need be closed since this knowledge is really important in the life of ethnic minority adolescent.

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