HIV Knowledge and Risk Behaviour among Migrants and Non-Migrants in Tianjin, China

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Abstract
Many early studies of the socio-economic risk factors for HIV infection found that migrants were at elevated risk of HIV infection, and this is attributed to higher levels of risk behaviour such as a higher number of sexual partners and lower condom use. Using data from a survey of 995 migrants and non-migrants in Tianjin, China, we investigate whether observable characteristics of migrants, such as lower knowledge about HIV/AIDS and lower education level, or latent (unobserved) characteristics of migrants better explain differences in risk behaviour between migrants and non-migrants. We show that migrants have lower knowledge about HIV/AIDS, but this is mostly explained by lower education. Controlling for differences in education and HIV/AIDS knowledge, inmigrants are no less likely to use condoms during sex, but have a significantly greater number of sexual partners. These mixed results suggest that continued policy focus of HIV prevention efforts on migrant workers is justified.

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