

Does Pre-test Counselling Increase Specific Types of Knowledge about Transmission of HIV and Viral Hepatitis B and C?

Objectives

To identify the contribution of a standardized pre-test counselling session in improving different types of knowledge about the transmission of three infections: HIV infection, hepatitis B (VHB) and hepatitis C (VHC), as part of an integrated voluntary counselling and testing program unfolded by Baylor Foundation in Dobrogea region, Romania. Secondly, to identify if subjective knowledge (SK) increases and how much compared with objective knowledge (OK).

Methods

Beneficiaries of VCT program in two centers responded to a knowledge questionnaire about transmission ways of the three infections before and after the counselling session. The questionnaire lists 20 situations and respondents must mark if it leads to transmission of infection or not. The SK questionnaire is a visual analogue scale from zero to 100 and subjects mark how much knowledge they considered they gained about transmission.

Definitions:

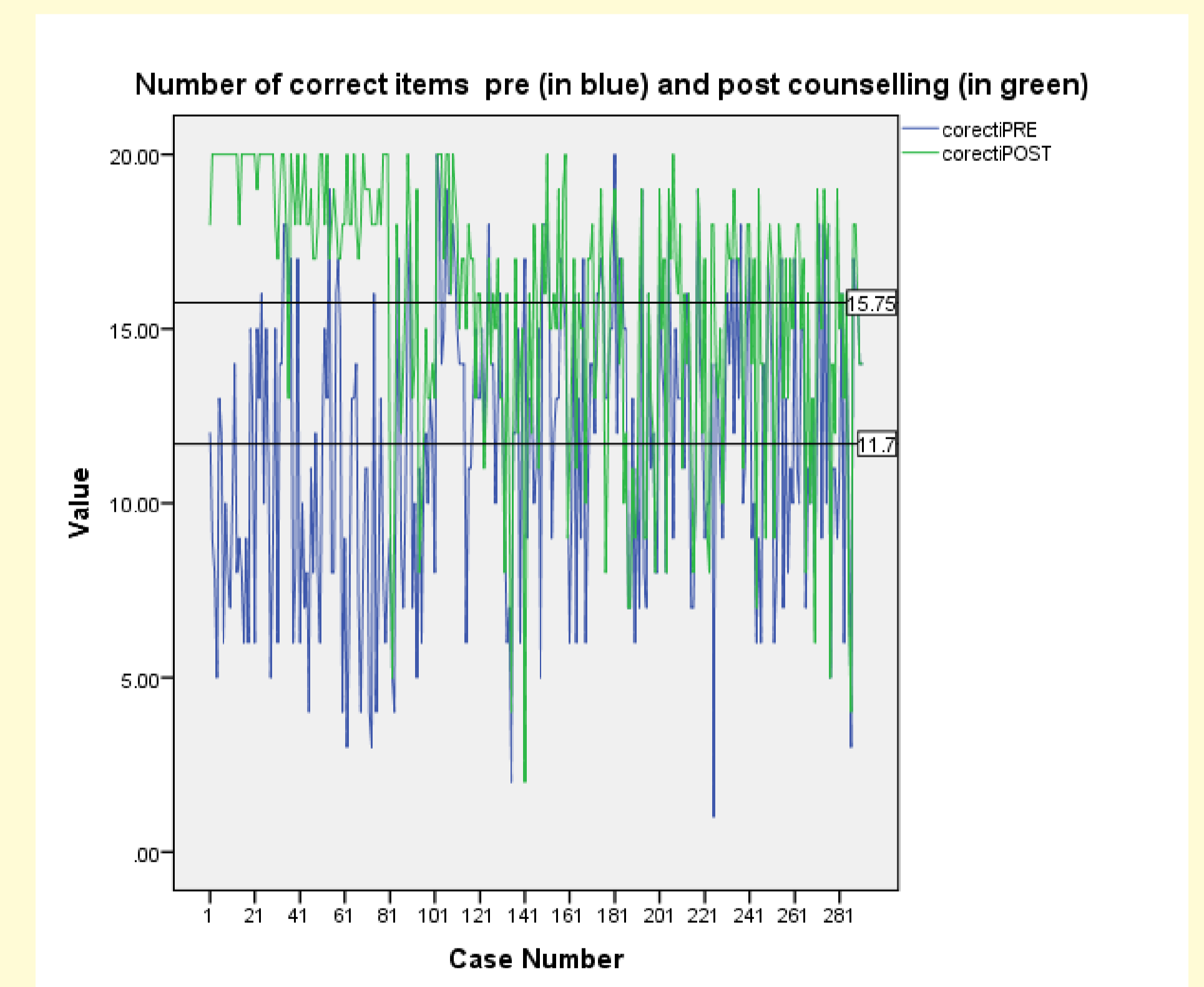
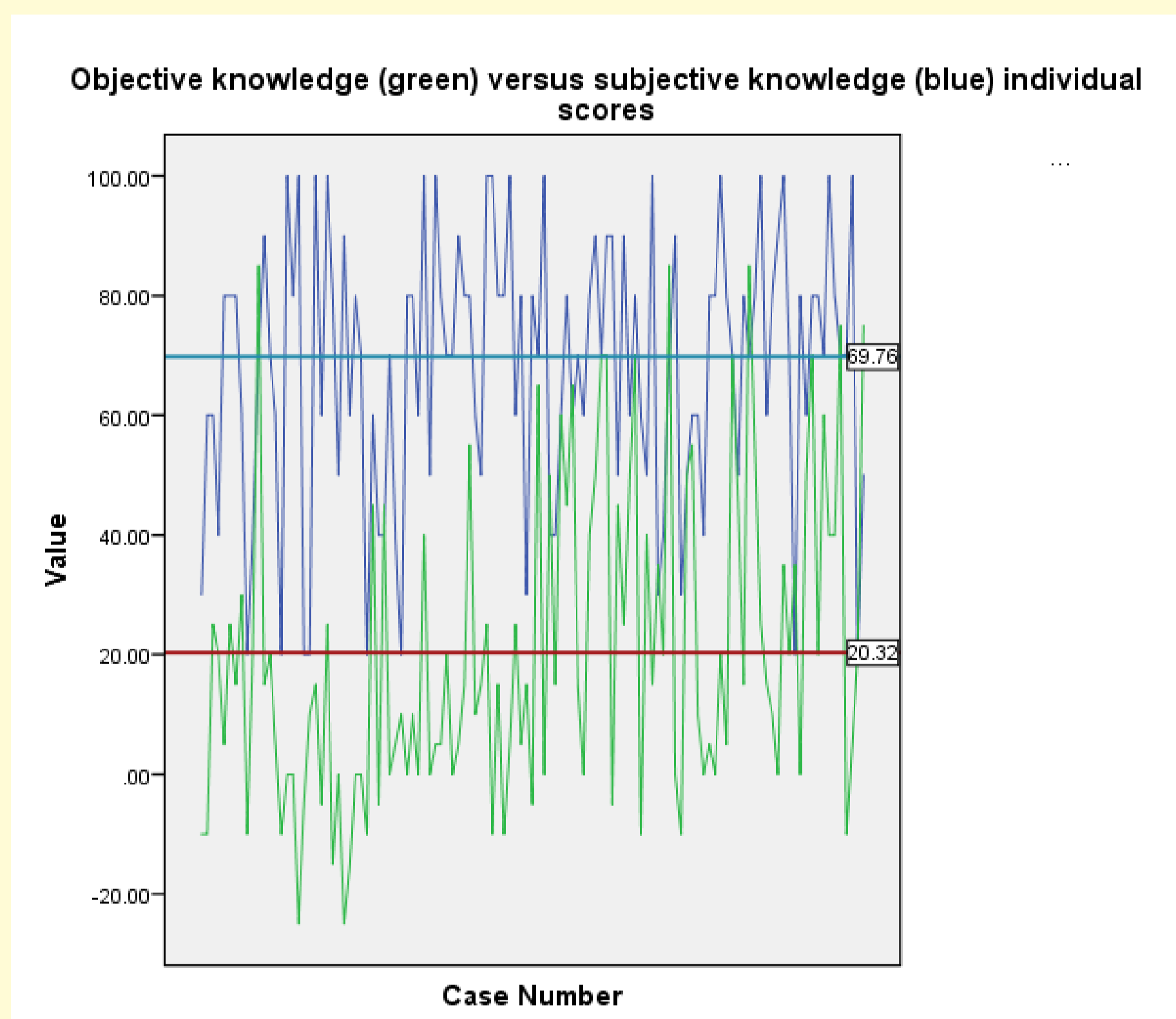
Knowledge¹ = the information stored within memory

Subjective knowledge² = what a person thinks he or she knows

Objective knowledge² = what a person proves to know as measured by a test or other instrument

Results

291 persons completed the questionnaires, mean age 47.23 (min 17, max 77, SD 15.29), 66% females, 69% from Constanta county, 94% health insured. Mean results were 58.47 pre-counselling OK, 78.80 post-counselling OK, 67.09 SK for HIV and 72.44 for hepatitis SK. Objective knowledge increased significantly after counselling ($t = -14.31$, $df = 290$, $p = .000$) and hepatitis SK increased significantly than about HIV ($t = -4.992$, $p = .000$). There was significant increase on knowledge regarding transmissibility of infections through medical maneuvers, dialysis, sex, drug use, tattoos, biting, cutlery, mosquitos, scissors and blood brothers. No increase was noticed regarding the following: cohabitation, touching, kissing, eating and drinking, use of toilet, pool.



Conclusions

In our sample, there is still confusion regarding routes of transmission of HIV, VHB and VHC and there is value in providing education and counselling, as it increases OK by a mean 20 points. Subjectively, this is perceived by respondents as a higher gain (almost 70-point gain). These results can shape the educational message for community campaigns regarding transmission.

Authors

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¹ Engel, James F., Blackwell, Roger D., and Miniard, Paul W.: Consumer Behavior, 7th ed., The Dryden Press, Chicago. 1993, pp. 298–31

² Subjective and objective knowledge influence information processing. (Brucks, Merrie: The Effects of Product Class Knowledge on Information Search Behavior. Journal of Consumer Research, 12 (June 1985): 1–16.) and the behavior through different mechanisms (Aertsens J, Mondelaers K, Verbeke W, Buysse J, Van Huylenbroeck G. The influence of subjective and objective knowledge on attitude, motivations and consumption of organic food. Br Food J 2011; 113: 1353–1378)