



A study on the knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among school going adolescents of Kamrup district, India.

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken with the objective to assess the knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among the school-going adolescents of Kamrup District in the state of Assam. The sample consisted of 300 adolescents which includes 150 boys and 150 girls. The Descriptive Survey Method was employed for the present study. The Investigator has used self-structured standardized data gathering tools for collecting the data. To test the hypotheses, appropriate statistical technique has been used. The data was statistically analyzed by using 't' test. The results of the study revealed that in Kamrup district urban school-going adolescents 'had high level of knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS than their rural counterparts. Finally the male adolescents had also high level of knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in comparison to female students. Some recommendations were made on the basis of the study.

Keywords: AIDS, HIV, Knowledge, School-going adolescents.

1. Introduction

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity." Health can be achieved, maintained and improved by supplying the social needs in proper proportion, success and good citizenship and a happy life. New diseases have swept the world from time to time. Human beings have managed to triumph over the majority of them but there seems no cure or vaccine for the deadly and most potent infection- The Human Immune Deficiency Virus commonly known as HIV. It is well known that our Government is spending lakhs and lakhs of rupees for providing medical facilities. It is busy in combating various diseases to make society free from them. But medical facilities alone can never solve the problem. People with sound health may live even in poverty, but they never fall ill. So our people need physical exercise, if they desire to remain fit and healthy. "Health for all by the year 2015" this slogan was raised about half a decade ago with the conviction that all the deadly diseases would be

conquered by the 2015. Unfortunately, it was not known to mankind that their effort would go in vain because of the deadly killer disease "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome" commonly known as AIDS.

2. Significance of the study

The world today is undergoing many major transformations which affect the life of human beings. Everyday newspapers and magazines report about the impact of HIV/AIDS and its related problems. The era of liberalization and globalization has brought people to confront with many challenges.

Adolescents are vulnerable because they often do not know how serious the problem of HIV/AIDS is, how it is caused or what they can do to protect themselves. Physical, psychological and social attributes of adolescents make young people particularly vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI'S). The HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the most important and urgent public health challenges facing government and civil societies around

the world. The vast majority of young people who are HIV positive do not know that they are infected and few young people who are engaging in sex know the HIV status of their partners.

3. Objectives of the study

1. To assess the knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among the rural and the urban adolescents of Kamrup District.
2. To make a comparative study of male and female adolescents regarding their knowledge about prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

4. Hypotheses

Keeping in view of the above objectives the following hypotheses have been framed-

1. There exists a significant difference between rural and urban adolescents in their knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.
2. There exists a significant difference between male and female in their knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

5. Methodology

5.1 Method

Descriptive survey method is applied for the collection of data. The descriptive research method has undoubtedly been the most popular and the most widely used research method in education .

5.2 Sample of the study

For the present study 300 school going adolescents were selected from 20 schools from Kamrup district (10 metro and 10 rural schools). More specifically, respondents were from the age group of 13-18 years and they

represented both male and female respondents. The purposive random sampling procedure was followed in the selection of the sample for present study.

5.3 Tools used

The following tools have been used for data collection.

1. General information Schedule- It consists of items like name, address, sex, age, education etc.
2. The investigator also made use of a structured interview schedule which consist of five questions- regarding knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

5.4 Statistical analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used in the form of frequencies and percentage to describe the findings and the t-test to test the significant of mean difference between rural and urban adolescents, male and female adolescents.

6. Analysis and interpretation of data (objective wise):

The data has been collected by questionnaire and carefully analyzed by applying appropriate statistical techniques in the light of the objectives framed

Objective-1 : The first objective of the study was to assess the knowledge about prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among the rural and urban school going adolescents of Kamrup district.

Hypothesis-1 : There exists a significant difference between rural and urban school going adolescents in their knowledge related to prevention and control of HIV/AIDS .

Table 1 : Data representing the knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among the rural and urban school going adolescents

Items	Responses	Rural		Urban		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Sex with only one partner	Yes	97	64.7	121	80.7	218	72.7
	No	26	17.3	12	8.0	38	12.7
	Not sure	27	18.0	17	11.3	44	14.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0
2. Using condom during their intercourse	Yes	98	65.3	118	78.7	216	72.0
	No	17	11.3	26	17.3	43	14.3
	Not sure	35	23.3	6	4.0	41	13.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300.0	100.0

Items	Responses	Rural		Urban		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
3. Checking blood prior to transmission	Yes	69	46.0	77	51.3	146	48.7
	No	66	44.0	26	17.3	92	30.7
	Not sure	15	10.0	47	31.3	62	20.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0
4. Sterilizing needles and syringes for injection	Yes	67	44.7	72	48.0	139	46.3
	No	63	42.0	42	28.0	105	35.0
	Not sure	20	13.3	36	24.0	56	18.7
	Total	150	100	150	100.0	300	100.0
5. Avoiding Pregnancy when having HIV/AIDS	Yes	64	42.7	72	48.0	136	45.3
	No	65	43.3	40	26.7	105	35.0
	Not sure	21	14.0	38	25.3	59	19.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0

6.1 Interpretation of table 1

From the table No. 1, it has been observed that the knowledge of ways to avoid HIV/AIDS among the adolescents is unsatisfactory. The knowledge with regard to 'sex with only one partner' was the highest (72.7%) i.e 80.7% in urban areas and 64.7% in rural areas followed by "Using condom during their intercourse"(70.0%) i.e 65.3% in rural area and 78.7% in urban area, "Checking blood prior to

transmission 48%, Sterilizing needles and syringes for injection (46.3%), Avoiding Pregnancy when having HIV/AIDS (45.3%) Again it is clear that rural people were less aware than urban people that a healthy looking person could have the virus.

To test the hypothesis I, 't' test was applied to find out the significant differences if any between rural and urban adolescents regarding their knowledge about HIV/AIDS.

Table-2: Distribution of Number, Mean, Standard Deviation, Degrees of Freedom, 't' Ratio and significance level of rural and urban school going adolescents' knowledge towards prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Area	N	Mean	Std deviation	t	df	Level of significance
Rural	150	2.77	1.851	.805	298	N.S**
Urban	150	2.93	1.419			

** Not Significant at both the levels

Interpretation of table

From the table No 2, it is observed that the mean and S.D. of the rural respondents are 2.77 and 1.851 respectively where as the mean and S.D of urban respondents are 2.93 and 1.419 respectively. The obtained 't' value is .805. Thus it indicates that the 't' value is not significant at .05 level. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between rural and urban respondents in respect of knowledge towards prevention of HIV/AIDS. Hence,

we can reject the hypothesis which we have stated.

6.2 Analysis And Interpretation of Objective and Hypothesis- 2

Objective: 2 To make a comparative study of male and female adolescents regarding their knowledge about prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

Hypothesis:2 There exists a significant difference between adolescent male and female regarding their knowledge about prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

Table 3: Data representing the knowledge towards the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS among the male and female school going adolescents.

How do you think one can avoid HIV/AIDS	Responses	Gender				Combined	
		Male		Female		N	%
		N	%	N	%		
1. Sex with only one partner	Yes	113	75.3	105	70.0	218	72.7
	No	20	13.3	18	12.0	38	12.7
	Not sure	17	11.3	27	18.0	44	14.7
	Total	150	100	150	100	300	100.0
2. Using condom during their intercourse	Yes	108	72.0	108	72.0	216	72.0
	No	11	7.3	32	21.3	43	14.3
	Not sure	31	20.7	10	6.7	41	13.7
	Total	150	100	150	100	300	100.0
3. Checking blood prior to transmission	Yes	81	54.0	65	43.3	146	48.7
	No	36	24.0	56	37.3	92	30.7
	Not sure	33	22.0	29	19.3	62	20.7
	Total	150	100	150	100.0	300	100.0
4. Sterilizing needles and syringes for injection	Yes	76	50.7	63	42.0	139	46.3
	No	41	27.3	64	42.7	105	35.0
	Not sure	33	22.0	23	15.3	56	18.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.00	300	100.0
5. Avoiding Pregnancy when having HIV/AIDS	Yes	80	53.3	56	37.3	136	45.3
	No	34	22.7	71	47.3	105	35.0
	Not sure	36	24.0	23	15.3	59	19.7
	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100

Interpretation of table 3

From the table No 3, it has been observed that the knowledge of ways to avoid HIV/AIDS among the male respondents is higher than the female counterparts except both male and female respondents responded positively same (72%) regarding the using condom during their intercourse. Thus, it can be

concluded that male adolescents had more knowledge of the preventive methods of HIV/AIDS as compared to the female respondents.

To test the hypothesis 2, 't' test was applied to find out the significant differences if any between male and female adolescents regarding their knowledge about HIV/AIDS.

Table 4: Distribution of Number, Mean, Standard Deviation, Degrees of Freedom, 't' Ratio and significance level of male and female respondents knowledge towards prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	t	df	Level of significance
Male	150	3.00	1.757	1.580	298	N.S.**
Female	150	2.70	1.523			

** Not significant at both the levels

Interpretation of table 4

From the table 4, it is observed that the mean and SD of the male respondents are 3.00 and 1.757 respectively where as the mean and SD of the female respondents are 2.70 and 1.523 respectively. The obtained 't' value 1.580. Thus, it indicates that the 't' value is not significant at .05 level. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to their knowledge towards prevention of HIV/AIDS. Hence we can reject our hypothesis.

7. Findings related to objective no 1

1. It is found that students residing in urban areas fared better knowledge than those from rural areas regarding all aspects of prevention of HIV/AIDS.
2. From the "t" test it is found that the mean value of urban respondents' is 2.97 and rural respondents is 2.77 in relation prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and it shows that there exists no significant difference between rural and urban respondents in respect of prevention and control of HIV/AIDS..

This finding is similar with one of the findings of Sing, A. and Jain, S. (1998), Karl. et al. (2002) where the Students residing in urban areas fared better knowledge regarding prevention and control of HIV/AIDS than those from rural areas. The findings of the study are contradicted by findings of Fennel(2004) who observed in his study that the urban college students possessed relatively low level of knowledge towards prevention and control of HIV and AIDS than those from rural areas.

7.1 Findings related to objective no-2

1. It is found that use of condom was perceived by same proportion of respondents (72%). This result was consistent with findings of the study performed by Ogbuji (2005)
2. When we look at the incorrect responses, relatively more females than males give incorrect

responses towards prevention of AIDS.

This finding of the study is supported with the findings o Dadkha.B., Mohammadi. A.M; and Mozafari N (2007) who reported that there is no significant difference with regard to the knowledge of HIV/AIDS possessed by the male and female respondents. The findings of the study are contradicted Deshmukh ,J,S *et.al* (1999) where the result indicated a significant difference between male and female students with regard to their knowledge about prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

8. Conclusion

The research findings reveal that though a considerable percentage of adolescents had correct knowledge about HIV/AIDS, yet they lacked indepth knowledge about the disease.Encouraging and satisfactory response concerning major preventive measures such as sex with only one partner, screening of blood, use of sterilizing needles and condoms were reflected in our study. The findings of this study indicate that there is an urgent need for conducting AIDS education among school going adolescents.

Following are some of the steps which may help in eradicating HIV/AIDS virus:

1. **Self Control:** Adolescents should understand their problems clearly. They should have a clear idea about the change in hormones during this stage. They should have self- control and they should be motivated to concentrate on good aspects of life. They should have awareness about the preventive measures of HIV/AIDS virus.
2. People must be given awareness in their vernacular language and they must be motivated to extend their support to the HIV virus affected person.
3. **Conducting competition and exhibition:** Youth should take the responsibility in conducting various types of competition and exhibition in various schools, colleges regarding the awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

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