

A STUDY TO ASSESS THE ATTITUDE REGARDING HIV/AIDS AMONG COLLEGE GOING ADOLESCENTS OF DISTT. AGRA OF UTTAR PRADESH

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ABSTRACT:

Objective: To assess the attitude regarding HIV/AIDS among college going adolescents.

Method: 500 adolescents from two intermediate college were selected randomly. The information was collected by interviewing the students one by one in privacy through a pre-tested interview schedule.

Result: Attitude of the students towards HIV victims was sympathetic but in many aspects, negative attitude towards PLHA was also observed. About 50% students were not in the favour of working with PLHA. 54.5% females did not like to share shaving blade while 63.4% females liked to share clothes with HIV Positives as compared to 49% males.

Conclusion: Fear and intolerant attitude towards PLHA were prevalent in adolescents. HIV/AIDS education designed in a way to raise the knowledge and change the attitudes making them respectful to community values, is urgently needed from media, schools/colleges and health professionals.

Introduction:

There is no vaccine to prevent HIV infection and there is no cure for AIDS. The only way to prevent AIDS is through education and counselling which can result in attitude changes that prevent the transmission of HIV. The acquisition of knowledge is not only required for medical and paramedical personnel, but also to some extent, to majority of population particularly high risk. In present circumstances, AIDS prevention largely depends on health education and behavioral changes based on HIV/AIDS awareness particularly among adolescents who are prone to risky behavior. Due to lack of knowledge any person can be infected and can adopt discriminative and stigmatized behavior towards HIV/AIDS and also can get negative attitude. The impact of HIV/AIDS related stigma and discrimination does not end here. It also affects the capacity of societies to respond constructively to the devastation caused by the epidemic.

Objective of the study:

To study the attitude towards HIV/AIDS among adolescents of Distt. Agra.

Material and Methods:

The study was conducted on 500 adolescent students studying in class 9th to 12th, aged 13-19th years of the two Intermediate college (One Urban & One Rural) of Agra District. For the study 250 adolescents from each college were

selected randomly comprising of 298 male & 202 females. The information was collected by interviewing the students one by one in privacy by author himself through a pre-tested interview schedule which was prepared in the tune with the objectives of the study for the purpose of data collection.

The collected information was analyzed & tested statistically and the results are presented below.

Observation:

The study population comprised of 298 male & 202 female students (59.6% & 40.4%) in age group of 13-19 years.

Attitude Regarding Communicability of HIV⁺ persons:

Majority of students had sympathetic attitude towards HIV victims. It was observed that 50% or more boys and girls were not having any hesitation in having casual contacts with HIV+ve persons as they told that they will like to shake hands with them. (94.6 & 90.1%). While only 12 (4.03%) & 11 (5.45%) male & female students denied to shake hands with these person as shown in (Table 1). Majority of male students responded that they will like sharing the clothes, will continue to work with them, will allow them to work with as before while only 43% girls were ready to continue to work with them. 46% girls will allow them to work with but 54.5% girls will not like to share shaving blades while 63.4% girls will like to share clothes as compared to 49% boys.

Table 1
ATTITUDE REGARDING COMMUNICABILITY OF HIV+ve PERSONS

Response	Male = 298			Female = 202			Test of Significance	
	Y	N	NR	Y	N	NR	χ^2	p
With PLHA :								
*Will like to share shaving blade	147	77	74	60	110	32		
%	49.33	25.84	24.83	29.70	54.46	15.84		
*Will do casual contact/shake hand	282	12	4	182	11	9		
%	94.63	4.03	1.34	90.10	5.45	4.45	42.17,	<0.05
*Will like to share clothes	146	41	111	128	42	32		
%	48.99	13.76	37.25	63.37	20.79	15.84	5.288,	>0.05
*Will continue to work with	147	44	107	87	54	61		
%	49.33	14.76	35.91	43.07	26.73	30.20	27414,	<0.05
*Will allow to work with you	149	43	106	92	58	52		
%	50.00	14.43	35.57	45.55	28.71	25.74	16.339	>0.05

Belief Regarding Communicability of HIV :

Regarding the belief on communicability of HIV persons, mostly students were not in favour of sharing syringe & needles, having homosexual relationship, also that HIV+ve should not procreate or give birth to a child and breast feeding. Response on breast feeding to a child was of lesser girls (81.7%). (Table 2).

Table 2
BELIEF REGARDING COMMUNICABILITY OF HIV

Response	Male = 298			Female = 202			Test of Significance	
	Y	N	NR	Y	N	NR	χ^2	p
Are you in favour of								
*Share needle/syringe with HIV+ve	-	297	1	-	201	1		
%	-	99.66	0.34	-	99.50	0.50		
*HIV+ve women should give birth to a child	7	289	2	2	184	16		
%	2.35	96.98	0.67	0.99	91.09	7.92		
*HIV+ve mother should Breast-feed the baby	7	278	13	20	165	17		
%	2.35	93.29	4.36	9.90	81.68	8.42	17.836,	<0.05
*Having homosexual relationship	2	296	-	1	200	1		
%	0.67	99.33	-	0.50	99.00	0.50		

Attitude Regarding prevention and treatment :

The table-3 reveals about safe sex that 295 (98.99%) male & 201 (99.50%) female students denied to multi-sex partner while about 99% male & female students were in the favour of use of condom during sexual contact. Majority i.e. About 92% adolescents informed that to give early treatment of STDs is necessary for prevention of HIV infection. (91.3 M & 93.1 F).

Table 3
ATTITUDE REGARDING PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Response Regarding Preventive aspect of HIV	Male = 298			Female = 202		
	Y	N	NR	Y	N	NR
*Multi-Sex Partnership acceptable	-	295	3	-	201	1
%	-	98.99	1.01	-	99.50	0.50
*Will like Use of condom	295	-	3	199	3	-
%	98.99	-	1.01	98.51	1.49	-
*Early Treatment of STDs is necessary	272	-	26	188	9	5
%	91.28	-	8.72	93.07	4.46	2.47

Conclusion :

The students should be educated not merely about 'sex', but educate them about value systems and healthy behavior. UNICEF has recognized the Uganda Education Ministry Model's countrywide syllabus on sex-education and self-esteem development for school going adolescents.

All medical and Para-medical professionals should receive training and education with great stress on HIV-related topics, so that they will ensure that Universal Safety Health Precautions are followed in the best interests of the patients and health-care provider. AIDS attracts intense public attention. Incorrect statements by professional can be construed as factual by the lay public. Fear and intolerant attitudes toward PLHA were prevalent HIV/AIDS education designed to raise knowledge and change attitudes and respectful of community values, is urgently needed from media schools/ Collaage and health professionals. The following steps can be recommended in this regard :

Recommendation :

1. Implementation of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in schools, colleges and community.
2. Inclusion of sex education and family life education in school/college curriculum to get 100% level of knowledge.
3. Inclusion of HIV/AIDS in detail in curriculum of other types of medical faculties like Ayurveda, Unani,

Homeopathy etc and involvement of these doctors in AIDS awareness programe.

4. Mass education using television, radio, newspapers etc for propagating safe sex and dispelling the myths and propagating against drug abuse should be included in these programes.

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