

Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among Secondary School Students

K. Govindarajan

Professor, Faculty of Education Vinayaka Missions University, Puducherry, India

Abstract

The present study “Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students” has been carried out on a sample of 320 secondary school students from Dharmapuri District, Tamilnadu which includes Government and Management schools, Rural and Urban schools. It is conducted on the population namely secondary school students, and also the present study attempts to identify the differential effect of the background variables on Knowledge and Attitude towards HIV/AIDS. The result of the study shows that the knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students is high. There is no significant difference between boys and girls, IX and X std. students, Government and management school students and rural and urban school students with respect knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS. There is a significant relation between knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students.

KEYWORDS : HIV/AIDS, Attitude. Knowledge, Secondary school students

INTRODUCTION

India has a population of one billion, around half of whom are adults in the sexually active age group. The first AIDS case in India was detected in 1986 and since then HIV infection has been reported in all states and union territories.

The spread of HIV in India has been uneven. Although much of India has a low rate of infection, certain places have been more affected than others. HIV epidemics are more severe in the southern half of the country and the far north-east. The highest estimated adult HIV prevalence is found in Manipur (1.40%), followed by Andhra Pradesh (0.90%), Mizoram (0.81%), Nagaland (0.78%), Karnataka (0.63%) and Maharashtra (0.55%).¹

In the southern states, HIV is primarily spread through heterosexual contact. Infections in the north-east are mainly found amongst injecting drug users (IDUs) and sex workers.

With an estimated 5.7 million people living with HIV/AIDS, India has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world, according to UNAIDS.

1. Among 15-49 year olds, an estimated 5.2 million are living with the disease, according to India's National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)
2. Still, India's prevalence rate (the percent of the adult population estimated to be infected with HIV) is relatively low. However, India is considered to be a “next wave” country; that is, it stands at a critical point in its epidemic, with HIV poised

to expand, but where large-scale prevention and other interventions today could help to contain a more serious epidemic in the future.

3. As the second most populous nation in the world, even a small increase in India's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate would represent a significant component of the world's HIV/AIDS burden.
4. The first case of HIV disease was documented in India in 1986.
5. Later that year, the Government of India (GOI) established a National AIDS Committee under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to formulate a strategy for responding to HIV/AIDS in the country. It launched a National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) in 1987.
6. NACO, established in 1992 by the Ministry with major support from the World Bank, is the implementing entity of the National AIDS Control Programme. Phase I of the Programme started that year; Phase II followed in 1999. Phase III is slated to begin in 2006.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The most common place for people to learn about HIV/AIDS is at school. Due to their capacity and universality, schools are a crucial setting for education young people about AIDS. As young people are at high risk of becoming infected with HIV, it is vital that they are educated about HIV transmission before they are exposed to situations that put them at risk of HIV infection. Schools play a major role in shaping the attitudes, opinions and behavior of young people and so are ideal environments for teaching the social as well as the biological aspects of HIV/AIDS.

Students are considered at greater risk of contracting HIV infection due to lack of knowledge on their part and intravenous drug use as a result of curiosity. So, it is necessary to assess their knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS education. Hence they should be trained and prepared to overcome the hazards of HIV/AIDS pandemic.

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

Sellapandi K. (2008), in a study on Aids awareness of higher secondary students found the difference among gender, type of school management and locality. Surendra Mahto & Jitender Kumar (2007) in this study on B.Ed., Teacher knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS education revealed that 65% of the B.Ed teacher trainees answered the entire knowledge questions correctly and 77% of the B.Ed Teacher trainee have positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS education. A study by Gray.L.A.et. (2004) on college students revealed that a majority of the participants learned about HIV/AIDS from reading material while some learned about HIV/AIDS from school reading materials while some learned about HIV/AIDS from school classes, and only a few learned from family members. 39% had never communicated to anyone about HIV/AIDS. The present investigation carries distinction and novelty over the previous one by adopting normative method. It is to be conducted on the population namely secondary school students, and also the present study attempts to identify the differential effect of the background variables on Knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students in Dharmapuri District
2. To study the difference in the level of knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS between the groups regarding Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions
3. To find out the relationship between knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institution.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant mean difference between Secondary school students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions.
2. There is no significant mean difference between Secondary school students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions.
3. There is a significant relationship between the Knowledge and Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students
4. There is a significant relationship between the Knowledge and Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed normative survey method for the present study. After selection of the title and tool the data were collected from 320 students. The data thus collected were statically analyzed and conclusions were drawn. The researcher has selected four demographical variables for the present study which were Gender, Class, Type of school, and Locality of the school.

SAMPLE

The sample consists of 320 IX and X standard students from both Government and Management schools, Dharmapuri District.

TOOL USED

HIV/AIDS Knowledge and Attitude questionnaire was designed and standardized by Gentry & Wallace (1993) will be used for the study.

ANALYSING AND INTERPRETING THE DATA

TABLE 1
Showing Mean and Standard Deviation of the HIV/AIDS Knowledge of Secondary School Students.

Variable	N	Mean	SD
HIV/AIDS Knowledge	320	14.78	3.10
HIV/AIDS Attitude	320	63.9	8.75

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant mean difference between Secondary school students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions

Table : 2
Showing the Mean, S.D and 't' values of HIV/AIDS knowledge with respect to Gender, Class, Types of Institutions and Locality

Variables	N	Mean	SD	't'	'p'
Boys	170	14.78	3.32	0.0042	NS
Girls	150	13.79	2.78		
IX Std.	160	13.09	2.70	2.64	S
X Std.	160	15.54	3.01		
Government	170	14.25	3.31	0.710	NS
Management	150	14.35	2.89		
Rural	170	14.35	3.31	0.818	NS
Urban	150	14.27	2.89		

Hypothesis : 2 There is no significant mean difference between Secondary school students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions.

Table : 3
Showing the Mean, S.D and 't' values of HIV/AIDS Attitude with respect to Gender, Class, Types of Institutions and Locality

Variables	N	Mean	SD	't'	'p'
Boys	170	63.86	9.27	0.934	NS
Girls	150	63.94	8.14		
IX Std.	160	62.35	8.75		

X Std.	160	65.44	8.49	0.0014	NS
Government	170	63.64	8.56	0.571	NS
Management	150	64.19	8.98		
Rural	170	64.32	8.41	0.356	NS
Urban	150	63.41	9.11		

Hypothesis: 3 There is a significant relationship between the Knowledge and Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students

Table 4

Showing a relationship between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of High School students.

Variables	N	'r'	'p'
HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude	320	0.2288	S

Hypothesis: 4 There is a significant relationship between the Knowledge and Attitude towards HIV/AIDS among secondary school students with respect to Gender, Locality and Types of Institutions.

Table 5

Showing a relationship between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude with respect to Gender, Class, Types of schools and Locality.

Variables	Sub-variables	N	'r'	'p'
HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude	Boys	170	0.267	S
	Girls	150	0.179	NS
	IX Std.	160	0.106	NS
	X Std.	160	0.241	S
	Government	170	0.217	S
	Management	150	0.243	S

	Rural	170	0.233	S
	Urban	150	0.226	S

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The mean score of HIV/AIDS knowledge for the entire sample is 14.78 which indicates 60% level.
2. The mean score of HIV/AIDS Attitude for the entire sample is 63.9 which indicates high.
3. There is no significant difference between Boys and Girls students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge. It is concluded that boys have more knowledge in HIV/AIDS than the girl's students.
4. There is a significant difference between IX std. and X std. students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge. It is concluded that the X std. students have more HIV/AIDS Knowledge than the IX std. students.
5. There is no significant difference between Government and Management School students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge. Government and Management students have same level of HIV/AIDS Knowledge.
6. There is no significant difference between Rural school and Urban school students in their HIV/AIDS Knowledge.
7. There is no significant difference between Boys and Girls students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude.
8. There is no significant difference between IX std. and X std. students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude. It is concluded that the X std. students have more HIV/AIDS attitude than the IX std. students.
9. There is no significant difference between Government and Management School students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude. It is concluded that the Management school students have more HIV/AIDS attitude than the government school students.
10. There is no significant difference between rural school and urban school students in their HIV/AIDS Attitude.
11. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of secondary school students.
12. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of boys.
13. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of girls.
14. There is no significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of IX Std. secondary school students.

15. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of X Std. secondary school students.
16. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of Government High School students.
17. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of Management High School students.
18. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of rural secondary school students.
19. There is a significant relation between HIV/AIDS Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Attitude of urban secondary school students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. HIV/AIDS has no vaccine, the social vaccine of education and awareness is the only prevented tool. To achieve this need of special AIDS programmes to educate the secondary school students for proper transmission of the message to the students.
2. To create awareness about HIV/AIDS the message has reached the students in an effective way. This may be due to the HIV/AIDS attitude and sufficient knowledge of the HIV/AIDS disease among the secondary school students.
3. Aids education should be implemented as a compulsory subject in school curriculum at all levels.
4. New communication strategies are the need of the hour to create awareness about HIV/AIDS, which lead to proper attitude towards HIV/AIDS and its victims.

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