

HIV/AIDS' knowledge and condom usage as preventive measure among university students in South West Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated HIV/AIDS knowledge and the use of condom as prevention among the university students in south west Nigeria. A total of 750 students were chosen as subjects using a multistage sampling technique, and a structured questionnaire was used to gather information from the subjects. Research questions were raised and research hypothesis was formulated. Descriptive statistic were used for the socio demographic characteristics, and research question, while the inferential statistics of pearson product moment correlation coefficient was employed to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. The findings showed that, there existed a significant relationship between the students knowledge of HIV/AIDS and the use of condom as prevention. It was recommended among these that, adequate knowledge about reproductive health, especially sex education should be given priority in our school from secondary and tertiary levels, and government should emphasize on health education as introduce health science back into the secondary school curriculum, because the university students who is expected to pass through this level of education would have gained adequate knowledge about HIV/AIDS and use of condom, since this time usually the experimental stage for sexual activity.

INTRODUCTION

The disease AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is generally known now. This is because, it has spread to almost all over the world. AIDS affects the human immune body system, thereby rendering its victim defenseless against rare cancers and fatal illness, as many as eight million Americans, sixteen thousands Nigerians and hundred, thousand in other countries have been exposed to the frightening diseases (WHO, 2008). When it was discovered in 1981 by doctors in Los Angeles and New York, they called their symptoms the immunological consequences of some unknown process. All the victims were either young male homosexual or drug abusers.

Bowen (2005) said that AIDS could well become one of the worst health problems in the history of the world. Sexual exploitation by both the

young and old has contributed to the scourge, which has reached crisis proportion. AIDS has become a disease of consequence since there is no cure yet, millions of lives are claimed despite all combined efforts of individuals, government and non governmental organizations to find a solution to the diseases.

Hardly a day passes that British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) and Voice of American (VOA) do not carry headlines about HIV/AIDS. Looking widely at the implications of the epidemic for the future, both nationally and internationally, it is clear that mankind is on the threshold of a viral catastrophe. The Nigeria's situation cannot be said to be better. The scourge of AIDS has reached crisis proportion and the epidemic is varying in Nigeria. This is substantiated by Offor (2003), when he asserted that illicit sex without the use

of condom account for millions of Nigerians being infected by acquired Immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) this making it become pandemic. At a public lecture on HIV/AIDS organized by the Women's Health and Action Research centre (WHARC) in Benin City, Edo state, Ahonsi (2003) noted that appropriate community sensitization on AIDS remains the key to slowing down the growth of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nigeria. Reading out alarming statistics of prevalence of AIDS in Nigeria, Ahonsi (2003) said that in the 1980s one out of every 200 Nigerians has AIDS that later increased to one out of 100, then one is 50, five year ago, one out of 20 Nigerian is HIV positive

Condom has globally become one of the most potent phenomenon in reproductive health issues. Treache (2006) saw condom as part of contraceptive technology which has recorded medial success for women who do not want to be pregnant. Condom saves lives and prevent morbidity and for the married users, it enhances quality of life, allowing couples to choose when they wish to have children. And for the teenagers and other unmarried users, it provides protection against unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The Nigerian adolescents, like their counterparts in other parts of the world have become more sexually active. Studies have shown that the Nigerian adolescents initiate sexual activities quite early and remain sexually active for most of their adolescence years (Olaitan, 2002 and Adebusuyi, 2002). The resultant effect of this sex boom include increased rate of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The fear of population explosion and death as a result of AIDS has stepped up campaigns on the use of condoms.

Sellers, Mc Graw & Mc Kinley (1999) explained that teenagers all over the world are significantly becoming sexually active and must be provided with the means of protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. They reported that in 1993 about 50% American female adolescents and 60% male adolescents 15 to 19 years of age had engaged in sexual experiences and contracted STDSs.

AIDS can be transmitted sexually by having sexual intercourse with an infected person with the virus. A women or man with the virus can pass it to his or her partner during sexual intercourse. Also a man can pass it to another man as in the cause of anal sex (homosexuality) and sex is riskier than oral sex because it may result in skin abrasion or injuries in the anus, making it easier for HIV infection to occur (Olaitan, 2004). Risk factors in contracting the virus include presence of genital ulcers, multiple sexual partners, sexual relationship with prostitutes and uncircumcision in males. Genital ulcer provides easy routes for the HIV to enter the blood of the victim from the fluids of an infected partner. (Offor, 2003). Condom education in Nigeria has been used to create awareness about the use, efficiency availability. University students in south west Nigeria represent the informed, cohesive and sexually active group expected to understand and utilize the condoms more.

Research questions

1. Are the university students in south west Nigeria knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS?
2. Are the university students in south west Nigeria knowledgeable about condoms as a preventive measure against HIV/AIDS?

Research hypothesis

These would be no significant relationship between the knowledge of HIV/AIDS and the use of condom as a preventive measure among the university students in south west Nigeria.

Methodology

A multistage sampling technique was adopted to select 900 university students from south west Nigeria. A total of 150 university students each were chosen from, University of Lagos, Akoka (Lagos State), University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (Ogun State), University of Ibadan, Ibadan, (Oyo State), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, (Osun State), and University of Ado-Ekiti (Ekiti State). Only 750 subjects answered the study questionnaire because as at the time of the study, university of Ado-Ekiti (Ekiti state) was closed down due to the political crisis in Ekiti State. Some of the characteristics of the students are shown in table 1.

Table 1: socio demographic characteristics of the students
(N = 750)

VARIABLE	NO OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
University/school		
Unilag, Lagos State	150	20
UNAAB, Oyo State	150	20
UI, Oyo state	150	20
OAU, Osun state	150	20
FUTA Ondo state	150	20
Age (years)		
≤ 20	133	17.7
21- 30	356	47.5
≥ 31	251	34.8
GENDER		
Male	376	50.1
Female	374	49.9
RELIGION		
Christianity	398	51.9
Islam	352	48.1

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher, which comprised two major areas, such as section A; the personal information of the student (4

items) and section B; knowledge of HIV/AIDS and information about the use of condom (10 items each) with responses in four rating scale of Likert format. A test re-test method was used to ensure reliability. The reliability coefficient (r) 0.92 was obtained, using forty subjects from university of Ilorin (Kwara State) a separate population which is not part of the sampled population. To speed up and ease administration of the questionnaire to the university students in south west Nigeria, twelve research assistants (2 to each university) were employed within two weeks, questionnaires were distributed and collected, the return rate was 83.3% i.e. 750.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

With regard to the research questions, table 2 shows that students have adequate knowledge that HIV/AIDS is real, that it has no cure, that adolescents are more sexually active, that HIV/AIDS can be transmitted through sexual intercourse and that it can affect one's economy. This is supported by Olaitan, (2002) who opined that Nigerian adolescents like their counterpart in other parts of the world are more sexually active and that they initiate sexual activity quite early and remain sexually active for most of their adolescence years. So also, they have adequate knowledge about the use of condom that, it prevents unwanted pregnancy, it protects against HIV/AIDS, even though they don't enjoy using it, yet NGOS give them face of change and that it cheap and affordable. This supports the assertion of Treacle (2006) that condom is a contraceptive technology as recorded medical success rate and provides protection against unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other STIs (table 2).

Table 2: knowledge of HIV/AIDS and the use of condom (N= 750)

Knowledge of HIV/AIDS		Use of condom	
HIV/AIDS knowledge	Mean (X)	Condom usage	Mean (X)
I know that HIV/AIDS is real	3.67	Protects against HIV/AIDS	3.40
Can be transmitted through sex	3.35	Students like to use it	2.23
Having multiple partners an increase it	2.89	It prevents unwanted pregnancy	3.78
Can affect academic performance	2.24	I don't enjoy using it	3.24
Can affect economy	3.01	I don't feel shy to buy it	1.92
Homosexual are prone to HIV/AIDS	2.78	Condoms are of different types	2.92
Adolescents are more sexually active	3.52	Cheap and affordable	3.03
AIDS has no cure	3.65	Readily available in my school	2.63
HIV/AIDS victim is my school	1.96	Government make is available in school	1.94
Prostitute is my school	2.07	NGOs give it free of charge	3.11

For the hypothesis however, table 3 shows the relationship between HIV/AIDS' knowledge and condom usage as prevention. This is not surprising with the amount of propaganda mounted by the WHO, government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to educate the people about HIV/AIDS causes, mode of transmission and prevention. For instance, WHO assembly in 1987 sent information to the world revealing HIV as a natural occurring retrovirus, namely; immunodeficiency virus (type 1 and II or T-lymphotrophic virus III infection). Also Offor (2003) asserted that the illicit sex without the use of condom accounted for millions of Nigerians being infected by HIV/AIDS making it become pandemic (table 3).

Table 3: Relationship between knowledge of HIV/AIDS and use of condom for prevention.

Variables	Mean (X)	SD	r-alc.	df	r-crit	Remarks
Knowledge of HIV/AIDS	2.91	0.42	0.78	748	0.164	Rejected
Use of condoms	2.82	0.40				

$p \leq 0.05$

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of the study clearly revealed that there is significant relationship between students' knowledge of HIV/AIDS and the use of condom as preventive measure. Based on the finding it is recommended that, adequate knowledge about reproductive health, especially sex education should be given priority in our schools from the secondary

to tertiary institution. Government should emphasize on health education or reintroduce health science into our secondary school curriculum as subject, this is because, the university students would have gained this knowledge at that level, when they plan to experiment sexual activities.

The universities in south west Nigeria should liaise with the federal ministry of health for intensive campaign against HIV/AIDS through posters, handbills, mass media, through which the students could be adequately reached. Finally, universities authorities in south west Nigeria should place at strategic locations on their campuses, information about HIV/AIDS and the usefulness of condom to prevent against the deadly diseases.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

HIV/AIDS KNOWLEDGE AND THE USE OF CONDOM AS PREVENTION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SOUTH WEST NIGERIA.

Dear Respondent

This questionnaire is strictly meant for the above study. All information given will be treated confidentially.

Please respond to each question as honestly as possible. In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, do not write your name.

Thanks

O. 'Lanre OLAITAN, *Ph.D.*
Researcher

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Instruction: please tick (✓) or fill the space provided appropriately.

1. University/School.....
2. Age:.....
3. Gender: Male () Female ()
4. Religion: Christianity () Islam (), traditional () Others, specify

SECTION B(i)

• KNOWLEDGE OF HIV/AIDS .S A. A. D. SD..
KNOWLEDGE OF HIV/AIDS .S A. A. D. SD..

1. I know that HIV/AIDS is real.....
2. I know that HIV/AIDS can be transmitted through sex.....

3. I know having multiple sex partners can increase the chance of contracting HIV /AIDS.....
4. Know HIV/AIDS can affects one's academic performances.....
5. I know HIV/AIDS can affect one's economy.....
6. I know homosexual are prone to HIV/AIDS.....
7. I know adolescents are more sexually active.....
8. I know HIV/AIDS has no cure.....
9. I am aware of any HIV/AIDS victim in your school.....
10. I know that prostitute are in your school.....

SECTION B (ii)

• INFORMATION ON CONDOM USE. SA. A. D. SD.

INFORMATION ON CONDOM USE. SA. A. D. SD.

- 11.The use of condom can prevent against HIV/AIDS.....
12. Student like to use condom.....
- 13.The use condom prevents unwanted pregnancy.....
14. I don't enjoy using condom during sexual intercourse.....
- 15.I don't feel shy to buy condom.....
16. Condoms are of different types.....
- 17.Condom is cheap and affordable in my school.....
- 18.Condom is readily available in my school.....
- 19.Government make condom available in my school.....
20. NGOs give us condom free of charge in my school.....