EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF HIV/AIDS AWARENESS, ATTITUDES, AND SEXUAL ACTIVITIES AMONG COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract
The purpose of this empirical review was to cover broad area of quantitative research work done with statistical findings about awareness, attitude and sexual activities on HIV/AIDS among college and university students. Almost all the studies reviewed utilized survey method in the design of the studies with large population samples. The target populations were college and university students in various countries, such as, United States of America, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Ethiopia, Western Napel, and Hyderabab. There was no gender disparity in selection of research subjects. Most of the studies reviewed indicated that respondents in the studies reported having fair knowledge about HIV/AIDS, and sources of information on HIV/AIDS. Respondents also reported having fair knowledge on preventive measures against HIV infections through sexual activities and other means of spread. Some of the studies reviewed indicated that HIV risk awareness and prevention efforts at Historically Black College and University Student (HBCUS) have challenges, and need to be strengthened.

INTRODUCTION
HIV is Human Immune Deficiency Virus, while AIDS is Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The effect of the disease is rated fatal and destructive to human physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth and development for both children and adults, irrespective of race, creed, poor and rich. HIV/AIDS is a destroyer of human lives, which could be seen as a “death trap’ threatening many countries all over the world. The war against this scourge is getting intensive in the health sectors, education, and social welfare sectors.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was first diagnosed in the year 1981, in the United States (Shaukar, et.al. 2009). AIDS is rated as one of the leading causes of death among 15-24 year old world wide (Donenberg, et.tal. 2006). Sub-Saharan Africa reported to have most serious HIV/AIDS spread in the world. In 2012, HIV/AIDS reports in selected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa indicated that roughly 25 million people were living with HIV (Sub-Saharan Africa-2012 statistics). Several researchers in various fields of studies all over the
world have risen against HIV/AIDS scourge by conducting research studies investigating the pattern of spread, awareness and sexual activities among college and university students.

Therefore, the purpose of this empirical review was to cover broad area of quantitative research work done with statistical findings about awareness, attitude and sexual activities on HIV/AIDS among college and university students.

**REVIEW OF HIV/AIDS AWARENESS, ATTITUDES, AND SEXUAL ACTIVITIES AMONG COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Khan, S. et.al (2011) investigated awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among college students in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa, utilized cross sectional method in two colleges of Peshawan. The population of the study consisted of sixty (60) students in two colleges (public and private). Results of the study indicated that 60% of the students from the public college and 70% from the private college knew that a person appearing to be healthy might have been invested with HIV. Both public and private college students were aware that HIV/AIDS has no curative treatment. 35% public students and 40% private regarded use of condoms as preventive measure.

Omeonu & Kollie (2010) studied knowledge and attitude of Babcock University students on risk behaviours of HIV/AIDS. The aim of the study was to identify the level of knowledge and the kind of attitude that level 100 students (freshmen) at Babcock University upheld towards risk behaviours that encourage the spread of HIV/AIDS. In addition, the study sorts to identify the difference in awareness level of male and female students in the spread of HIV/AIDS. A descriptive survey design was utilized with a sample population of 206 respondents. Finding of the study revealed that:

1. Babcock male and female student have adequate knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS.
2. It was reported that Babcock students have no positive attitude towards risk behaviour that spread HIV/AIDS. That is to say that the students showed neither positive nor negative attitude towards risk behaviours that transmit HIV.

Egbezor and Echendu (2012) investigated the impact of HIV/AIDS education programmes on sexual behaviour of female students in Nigeria schools. The study utilized 200 female students, and reported the following results:

1. Female students in urban schools seems to be more conscious of HIV/AIDS infection and appear to modify their sexual behaviour towards avoiding HIV infection.
2. In the urban schools, mean rating for female students deciding to delay sex until marriage is 2.44 and 2.10 for rural female students.
3. The mean rating for female students insisting on their male partner using condom in 2.65.
4. In urban schools, the mean rating for female students urge to have multiple sex partners is 2.37, while for rural schools in 2.65.
5. The mean rating for female students willing to go for HIV test is 3.73 for urban schools and 2.60 for rural schools.
6. Female students in urban schools mean rating for resisting the pressure for unprotected sex is 2.67 and 3.26 for rural schools (P.104).

Similarly, Ojo (2011) conducted a study to asses HIV/AIDS knowledge and risk behaviour of fresh undergraduates of a tertiary institution in Ekiti-State, Nigeria. The study utilized a sample population of 433 students of which 207 are males, while 226 are females. Awareness of
HIV/AIDS questionnaire (AHQ) was used. The age distribution of the respondents was as follows: 15-17 years (196), while 18 and above (237). The result indicated that there was no significant gender main effect of gender difference in the knowledge of undergraduates on the risk behaviour of HIV/AIDS pandemic. Also, the study revealed that the level of knowledge of HIV/AIDS for both sexes was equal.

Alued, et.al (2005) conducted a study assessing Nigerian University students’ knowledge about HIV/AIDS, using a total of 900 undergraduates of Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Nigeria. The research subjects consisted of 520 male students and 380 female students. Both male and female students were within the age bracket of 18 years and 40 years. The results of the study revealed that:

1. Nigerian university students have high knowledge about HIV/AIDS.
2. There was a significant difference between male and female students in their knowledge about HIV/AIDS (male students, M = 94.64, while female students, M = 78.82).
3. There was no significant difference in the knowledge and awareness level of HIV/AIDS; and married and single students (married students, M = 81.32, single students, 80.89).
4. Significant difference existed between Adolescents and Adults in their knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Adolescent (M = 96.72, higher than Adults, M = 79.51) (p.211).

Donkor (2012) carried out a study investigating knowledge, attitudes and practices of voluntary counselling and testing for HIV among university students in Ghana, West Africa, using a cross-sectional method. The target population was university students with a total of 6,549. The sample population of the study was 100 students. The majority of the student participants fell in age group of 21-35 years. While, 56% were males and 44% were females.

Knowledge of VCT
The results of the study showed that:
1. Majority of the respondents (81%) indicated that they had heard of VCT, while (19%) denied previous knowledge of VCT.
2. Respondents 70% felt that VCT help individuals to know about their HIV status.
3. Twenty one percent (21%) of the respondents indicated that those positive of HIV should seek medical attentions, while six percent (6%) suggested protective sex practices.

Attitudes towards VCT
The study reported that eighty-eight percent (88%) of the respondents have positive regards to VCT, while about 65% of the respondents felt that those who went for VCT as promiscuous. Fourty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents felt that HIV positive people should not be integrated to the society.

Practices of VCT
Fourty percent (40%) of the respondents indicated interest in accessing VCT services if available, while 25% indicated no interest.
Asante (2013) investigated HIV/AIDS knowledge among undergraduate university students in Ghana. The sample population of respondents for this study consisted of 324 university students,
of 43.8% were females, while 56.2% were males, all from a private tertiary institution in Accra, Ghana. The respondents were within the age group of 17 to 37. The results of the finding showed that:

1. The respondents (99.7%) reported that they had heard about HIV/AIDS.
2. Ninety-eight percent (98%) knew the right meaning of the acronyms HIV and AIDS.
3. One hundred and seventy-seven respondents (54%) knew that Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). That is, the respondents were aware of the meaning and causative agent of AIDS.
4. Three hundred and twelve persons (96.3%) were able to identify modes of HIV transmission.
5. One hundred and fifty-six Persons (50%) knew that HIV could be transmitted through unprotected sexual intercourse with infected person.
6. Seventy-eight person (25%) were aware that sharing needles/strings with infected persons, and seventy eight persons (25%) were aware that infection is possible through mother to child. Three hundred and six persons (94%) were aware of various ways of prevention, about 82.7% have received information about HIV/AIDS from the media. Over 90% of the students reported having knowledge of where to test HIV.

Arogundade (2012) investigated HIV/AIDS awareness as a predictor of university students’ dating behaviour in South-West Nigeria. The researchers carried out a cross-sectional design with a sample population size of (1600, M=800 and F=800) undergraduates in age range 16 to 30 years old. The “Awareness/Attitude to AIDS Scale” (AAS) and the “Dating Behaviour Questionnaire (DBQ) were used to collect data for analysis. Results showed that:

1. There is a significant difference in undergraduates dating behaviour on the basis of their knowledge of the occurrence and prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Where t=4.82, df1191, P<0.05.
2. There is a significant difference in undergraduate dating behaviour on the basis of their awareness of mode of contracting of HIV/AIDS. Where t=2.09, P<0.05.
3. There is no significant difference in undergraduates dating behaviour on the basis of their awareness of the effects and consequences of HIV/AIDS; where t = 1.38, P>0.05 (p.11).

Chng, et.al (2005) conducted a study on Nigerian college students on HIV knowledge and perceived risk sexual behaviour among 370 undergraduate students. Sample for the study was collected from three universities, namely: University of Benin-Edo State, Federal University of TechnologyOwerri Imo State, and University of Uyo Akwabong. Percentage population sample 18%, 17% and 20% respectively. The results of the study revealed that:

1. HIV knowledge scale indicated that female students showed (mean = 15.49, than males (mean = 14.52).
2. The risk of HIV transmission through oral sex. Female also scored higher (mean = .73) than males (mean = .60).
3. The risk of transmission through needle sharing in steroid use. Female students scored higher than men (female = .82; male = .62).
4. Female and male susceptibility for sexual behaviour (males – mean = 6.57; female – mean 2.63).

Caldeira, et.al (2012) investigated HIV testing in recent unmarried college students in USA for prevalence and correlates. The study was longitudinal, consisting 1253 fresh students ages 17 to
19 years. One thousand and three students completed all self-administration items on HIV testing and sexual activity. The final analytic sample was 95 individuals. Results showed that:

1. Nearly half the sample (n=455, 47%) had been previously tested for HIV at least once in their life.

2. Correlates of HIV Testing was significantly related to gender race/ethnically, sexual orientation, lifetime, and recent same-sex and opposite sex activity.

3. Significant race/ethnicity differences were observed for sexual behaviour (Blacks 65.9%; Asians 60.7%; Whites 79.95).

4. Neighborhood income was the only variable tested that was related to HIV testing.

5. Alcohol and other drug (AOD) dependence on HIV were more strongly associated with HIV testing in women than men.

Alamrew, et.al (2013) conducted a study on risky sexual practices and associated factors for HIV/AIDS infection among private college students in Bahir Dar City, Northwest Ethiopia. The research was targeted to adolescent and young adults attending eight private colleges in the city of Addis Ababa, with a sample population of seven hundred and ninety (790), of which four hundred and ninety eight respondents (64.6%) were females. Eighty four and seven percent (84.7%) were never married. Finding of the study revealed that:

1. Age of sexual activities commenced for both sexes was 18.7 years, and 118 female respondents (56.9%) had sex before age 18.

2. Three hundred and fifty-six (M =43.3% and F = 56.9%) had sex in the last 12 months of the study periods.

3. One hundred and fifteen (115) 65% males and one hundred and forty (140) 35% females had sex with more than one sexual partner.

4. Two hundred and thirty one (59%) respondents reported using condom consistently, while 106 (27%) reported using condom occasionally. Seventy-three (28%) did not use condom for fear of side effects. And 18.5% did not use condom for fear of religious reason.

Agarwal & Sushma (2013) carried out a cross sectional study to investigate knowledge, attitude and sources of information for awareness of HIV/AIDS among college students in private colleges in the city of Hyderabad. A purposive sample of 100 students (M = 50; F = 50) of age range of 18-23 years was used. Results showed that:

1. There was no significant gender difference found in the attitude towards people with HIV/AIDS (t = 3.28, P<0.05 leve).

2. There was significant positive correlation between the knowledge that college students have about HIV/AIDS and their attitude towards people with HIV/AIDS.

3. 96% of the male respondents, and 90% of female respondents reported the need for more knowledge and awareness about HIV/AIDS.

4. Both male and female students reported that they were comfortable with friends as source of information for HIV/AIDS.

5. Also, female respondents prefer Doctors as authentic source of information than male respondents.

Makwe & Adenyuma (2014) assessed knowledge of students of the university of Abuja about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and AIDS by finding out their understanding about the means of transmission of STIs and AIDS, and preventive measures available. The study utilized
a population sample of four hundred and five (405) students. The sample population cut across eight faculties of the university. The study was a descriptive survey method, utilizing simple descriptive statistics of percentages. Findings revealed that:

1. Knowledge of STIs (87.4%); HIV/AIDS (91%); Types of STIs (gonorrhea, 89.3%); (syphilis, 81.2%). It was reported that television was the highest source of knowledge (82%); while, school education (81.5%). The study concluded that the students' awareness about STI and HIV/AIDS was considered relatively on the high side. Also, the study concluded that Gonorrhea and Syphilis were the most known types of STIs among the students respondents.

Mongkuo, et.al, (2012). This study utilized the concept of Information-Motivation-Behavioural Skills (IMB) to measure the effects of prevention education, prevention personal motivation and overall prevention knowledge on HIV prevention behavioural skills among historically black college students. The study used a population sample size of 297 HBCU students participated in the survey. The race/ethnicity break down indicated that 81% (African America, 10% (cancasian), 4% (Hispanic), 1% (Native American) and 4% others. The study was a cross-sectional quasi one-shot case study design. The X² statistics was utilized for analysis of data collected; in conjunction with structural Equation Unstandardized and Standardized Regression Weights of Prevention information, Prevention Education Motivation and Prevention Personal Motivation on Prevention. Behavioural Skills among Historically Black College students (HBCU). Findings revealed that:

1. The fit of the IMB prevention model was X² (48, N=37) = 52.965m P<.01; CFI = .99; TLI = .99; RMSEA = .017) was reported.
2. Personal prevention motivation has significantly positive effect on prevention behaviour skills (B=.29, t = .29, t = 2.90, P<.01).
3. Prevention education motivation had significantly negative effect on prevention behavioural skills (B = .10, t = 1.99, P<.05).
4. Prevention knowledge had no effect on prevention behavioural skills (B = .10, t = .95, P<.05).

Shankar, et.al. (2009). Conducted a study on perception and knowledge about HIV/AIDS among students in a medical college in Western Nepal. The sample population of this study consisted first, third, fifth and sixth semester undergraduate medical (MBBS) students at the Manipal College of Medical Sciences, Pokhara, Nepal, summing up 163 students. The Mann-Whitney test was used for dichotomous variable, while Krushal-Eallis test for other variable. Results of the study revealed the following:

1. The foreign and self-financing students were observed to need greater training to tackle HIV/AIDS.
2. Medical students had better knowledge and attitude than others.
3. Students were of the misconception that HIV/AIDS in a more dangerous disease than hepatitis B.
4. Over 305 of the students would avoid social contact with HIV/AIDS.
5. Students agreed with the statement that homosexuality is a crime.
population. Data completed included the following: urban/public 14%, urban/private 25%, rural/public 32%, rural/public 23% and uniden school type 8% respectively. Findings:

1. Eighty-two percent (n=860) scored high knowledge of HIV risk.
2. More than 505 of respondents reported having two or more sex partners.
3. 56% of the respondents had ever been tested for HIV.
4. Average/high HIV knowledge scores were found among those who have not used a needle to inject drugs.
5. Finally, the study revealed that HIV risk awareness and prevention efforts at HBCUs have been a challenge, and need to be strengthened.

Summary of the various Empirical Review

Almost all the studies reviewed utilized survey method in the design of the studies with large population samples. The target populations were college and university students in various countries, such as, United States of America, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Ethiopia, Western Napel, and Hyderabab. There were no gender disparity in selection of research subjects.

Most of the studies reviewed indicated that respondents in the studies reported having fair knowledge about HIV/AIDS, and sources of information on HIV/AIDS. Respondents also reported having fair knowledge on preventive measures against HIV infections through sexual activities and other means of spread. Some of the studies reviewed indicated that HIV risk awareness and prevention efforts at Historically Black College and University Student (HBCUS) have challenges, and need to be strengthened.

Implications for HIV/AIDS Counselling

Colleges and universities in Sub-Saharan Africa should strengthen counselling and testing centres where students can assess information on HIV and Check their sero-status. Colleges and universities should have trained school counsellors for individual and group counselling for fresh and old students in each semester. VCT should be encouraged by the colleges and universities administrators in various countries around the world. Counsellors should strictly adhere to confidentiality as professional ethics, so that students will feel free to test their sero-status. Counsellors in government institutions should collaborate with college and university counsellors in facilitating training sessions for voluntary counselling and testing for students.

REFERENCES


