

PERCEPTION OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (2015-2016), FACULTY OF EDUCATION, ENUGU STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TOWARDS HIV/AIDS TRANSMISSION.

Loretta Chika Ukwuaba (PHD)

Department of Adult & Continuing Education,
Enugu State University of Science & Technology, Enugu.

loretachika@yahoo.com

Leaticia Nkechi Idoko (RPHN, B.NS, PGDE)

Public Health Unit,
Department of Nursing,
National Orthopaedic Hospital Enugu.

iletty2@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study examined the perception of first year students (2015-16), faculty of Education Enugu State University of science and Technology towards HIV/AIDS transmission. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. A survey research design was used to sample 148 students out of which 140 students responded to the study. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. A reliability co-efficient of 0.76 was obtained using Cronbach alfa method of determining internal consistency of instrument. The research question was answered using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20. The findings reveal that, first year students of Faculty of Education ESUT have a high perception of transmission modes of HIV/AIDS. In test of hypothesis variables like; sexual intercourse, sharing food with infected persons and use of public toilet were rejected showing there is significant difference. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that, the students should be taught sex and HIV/ AIDS education in schools using trained HIV/AIDS educators/ counselor, who will in turn train the teachers to continue the training sessions.

Keyword: Perception, HIV, AIDS, transmission and students.

Introduction

The human immuno- deficiency virus (HIV) is a retroviral that infects cells of the immune system, destroying or impairing their function. As the infection progresses, the immune system becomes more susceptible to opportunistic infections. The most advanced stage of HIV infection is Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). There were approximately 36.7 (34.0–39.8) million people living with HIV at the end of 2015 with 2.1 (1.8–2.4) million people becoming newly infected with

HIV in 2015 globally as against approximately 35.3 million people living with HIV/AIDS in 2012 (World Health organization 2016).

In Latin America and the Caribbean, An estimated 2.0 million people are living with HIV, including 100,000 newly infected in 2015. In Brazil the number of people living with the disease (830,000), in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, An estimated 1.5 million people are living with HIV in this region, including 190,000 newly infected in 2015 (Henry, 2016) . The epidemic is driven primarily by injection drug users, which accounted for more than half of new HIV infections in 2015, although heterosexual transmission also plays an important role.

Globally, adolescents aged 15 to 19 accounts for an estimated 12 per cent of new HIV infections worldwide. Adolescent girls made up over 65% of all new HIV infections among adolescents in 2015 (WHO 2016). In 2015, nearly three times more adolescent girls in sub-Saharan Africa were newly infected with HIV. In South Africa 6.3 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in 2013 and South Africa has the highest number of people living with HIV in the world (about 7.0 million) in 2015. In most other regions of the world, HIV disproportionately affects persons who inject drugs, men who have sex with men and sex workers. The epidemic is evolving, however, transmission patterns are changing throughout the world. Now, infections are steadily spreading into lower-risk populations through transmission to the sexual partners of those most at risk (Henry 2016).

The HIV epidemic in Nigeria is complex and varies widely by region. In some states, the epidemic is more concentrated and driven by high-risk behaviors, while other states have more generalized epidemics that are sustained primarily by multiple sexual partnerships in the general population. Youths in Nigeria are particularly vulnerable to HIV, with young women at higher risk than young men. There are many risk factors that contribute to the spread of HIV, including prostitution, high-risk practices among itinerant workers, high prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STI), clandestine high-risk heterosexual and homosexual practices, international trafficking of women, and irregular blood screening. (Global AIDS Response Country Progress Report 2015) The period of military rule, size of the population pose logistical and political challenges to achieve health care equity across geopolitical zones. HIV prevalence is highest in Nigeria's southern states (South South Zone), and stands at 5.5%. It is lowest in the southeast (the South East Zone) where there is a prevalence of 1.8%. There are higher rates of HIV in rural areas (4%) than in urban ones (3%) (National Agency for control of AIDS 2015).

Behaviours and conditions that put individuals at greater risk of contracting HIV according to WHO 2016 includes;

- having unprotected anal or vaginal sex;
- having another sexually transmitted infection such as syphilis, herpes, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and bacterial vaginosis;
- sharing sharp objects
- receiving unsafe injections, blood transfusions, medical procedures that involve unsterile cutting or piercing

- experiencing accidental needle stick injuries, including among health workers.
- Mothers infected with HIV to infants during pregnancy, delivery and breastfeeding.

The one of the effective ways to curbing HIV infection is perception. Perception is defined as an organized process in which an individual interprets situations from an environment and draws subjective inferences and conclusion in order to take certain actions or behaviours. Perception can be affected by mental set, attitude, expectation or desire at any given moment, hence an individual can also perceive quite falsely. Human beings attend to issues according to the perceptive information contained in the issue at stake. Perception in this case occurs as a result of the information that has been interpreted and localized (Oshotimehin 2003 and Omotosho 2004). Information has to be translated into knowledge and then into action. Information, Education and Communications (IEC) intervention has long been used to alert the general public to the realities of HIV/AIDS. Many studies have shown high awareness about HIV/AIDS. Some studies have shown that information and education are not enough to positively impact on behaviour change. Unfortunately, Nigerian students have shown in some studies to perceive AIDS as a highly dreaded disease which leads to avoidance of information and denial of risk (Akande. D, Ross M.W in Okude Jerome 2012).

More so, Onyia, Agunwa and Ndu (2009) in their study on HIV/AIDS risk perceptions and safe practices among youths in Enugu metropolis south-east Nigeria found out that, awareness of HIV/AIDS is high. 80.3% of the participants knew that HIV could be transmitted through sharing of sharp instrument. The knowledge of mother to child transmission was only 54.3%, 70% known that prostitutes are at risk, but knowledge of other people at risk was poor. More than 80% engage in such safe practices as use of safe blood and safe sharp instrument. Knowledge and utilization of PMTCT was slightly above average but referral of rape victims to appropriate center was very poor (6.3%). Although awareness and attitude of voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) was high, the percentage of respondents who had ever screened for HIV was low (37.7%).

Ebeniro,(2010). In his study on the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS among selected in tertiary institution in Nigeria observed that, the difference in gender perception of HIV/AIDS were associated with socio- economic factors, culture and tradition in response to the behaviour aspects of the questionnaire. The study also indicated that knowledge and awareness of HIV transmission is generally high among students due to the fact that in most Nigeria universities there are lots of HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns in the form of billboards and so on. Although the knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS may be high amongst students, there were a good number of students who had misconception on the modes of transmission.

Also, Muoghalu and Jegede (2013) in their study of perception of HIV/AIDS among the Igbo youth of Anambra state, Nigeria. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to elicit information from respondent who were adult males and female. In the study (99.4%) of the respondents have heard about HIV/AIDS while the rest have not heard of it. 71.8% heard it from radio and television. 98.2% of the respondents agree that AIDS is real. On how it is contracted, (92%) said that, it is contracted through sexual intercourse while (11.5%) indicated that it is contracted through hospital and 1.8% through shaking of hands. Meanwhile, 22% of the respondents indicated that they use condoms, in order to protect themselves. 51% abstain from sex,

3% use medicine and 24% do nothing to protect themselves. 34.3% of the respondents indicated that, AIDS afflicts immoral people, (20.6%) said, it can be caused by a germ, 25.9% said, AIDS is a punishment from God, 4.3% saw it as a disease that can afflict anybody. The fact that almost 15% of respondents indicated that, they did not know how to define HIV/AIDS was a sign of low level of knowledge of the disease and could have implications for perception of HIV/AIDS.

Considering the occurrence of new infections among young people aged 15 – 24 and the awareness level of HIV/AIDS. Most studies revealed that they are aware yet there are still new cases. This increase in numbers of infected cases could be as a result of poor perception of their vulnerability to HIV transmission. More so, this vulnerability could be attributed to lack of access to accurate and personalized HIV information and perception. Human beings attend to issues according to the perceptive information contained in the issue at stake. Hence this study was embarked on to ascertain the perception of first year students (2014-2015), Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) towards HIV/AIDS transmission.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study is to determine the perception of first year (2014 -2015) students of Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology towards HIV/AIDS transmission. The study will specifically determine ways HIV/AIDS can be transmitted.

Research questions: In what ways can HIV/AIDS be transmitted?

Hypothesis

In the course of this study a hypothesis was tested at .05level of significance and an appropriate degree of freedom

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean response (score) of male and female students of faculty of education as regard their perception of HIV/AIDS transmission.

Research method

The research design used for this study was survey research design. This was deemed appropriate to enable the researcher study the respondents in classroom setting of Faculty of Education, ESUT. The area of study was the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) permanent site at Agbani in Nkanu West Local Government Area. The target population for this study was all the first year study students (2015-2016), Faculty of Education, ESUT. The number of registered students at the time of research was one hundred and forty eight (148). Since the entire population of the registered students at the time of study were 148 (one hundred and forty- eight). The researcher deems it was necessary to study the entire population. The instrument for data collection was 9- itemed four point scale response option questionnaire with a response format of strongly agree (SA), agree(A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) and a numerical value of 4,3,2and 1 respectively

The instrument used for data collection questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha and internal consistency reliability co-efficient of 0.76 was obtained. The researcher was assisted by four trained post-graduate diploma students in Education

as research assistants to help in administering the questionnaires. The data was analyzed using statistical package social sciences (SPSS) version 20 to find the mean standard deviation and test of hypothesis. The decision rule for answering the research questions was arrived at by finding the average of the 4 points scale. Therefore, items with mean score of 2.50 and above were accepted, while those below 2.50 were rejected.

The hypothesis was tested using t-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. The choice of this test was made because it could be applied for both large and small sample. The hypotheses were rejected if the calculated t-statistics is less than 0.05 level of sig but accepted if the calculated t-value were greater than the critical value.

Results

The result of the data analysis were presented in tables according to the research question and hypothesis.

Research question: In what ways can HIV/AIDS be transmitted?

Table 1: Mean rating of respondent's perception about the ways HIV/AIDS can be transmitted
N = 140

| s/n | Items | Male | | | Female | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----------|------|----------|-----------|------|----------|
| | | \bar{x} | SD | Decision | \bar{x} | SD | Decision |
| 1 | Sexual intercourse | 3.92 | 0.27 | A | 3.65 | 0.48 | A |
| 2 | Blood transfusion | 3.79 | 0.41 | A | 3.68 | 0.62 | A |
| 3 | Mother to child | 3.17 | 0.71 | A | 3.40 | 0.51 | A |
| 4 | Exchange of sharp object | 3.15 | 0.70 | A | 3.20 | 0.67 | A |
| 5 | Mosquito bites | 1.88 | 0.68 | D | 2.10 | 0.62 | D |
| 6 | Kissing | 2.27 | 1.05 | D | 2.26 | 0.98 | D |
| 7 | Sharing food with infected persons | 2.27 | 1.12 | D | 1.81 | 0.89 | D |
| 8 | Hugging | 1.85 | 0.98 | D | 1.71 | 0.93 | D |
| 9 | Use of public toilet | 2.19 | 0.95 | D | 1.65 | 0.76 | D |

Table 1: shows that the respondents had a high mean rating on sexual intercourse, blood transfusion, mother to child transmission, exchange of sharp objects. Since their mean scores are above 2.5 while others like mosquito bites, kissing, sharing of food with infected persons, hugging, and use of public toilet had a mean rating of less than 2.5. These findings reveal that first year students of Faculty of Education ESUT have a high perception of transmission mode of HIV/AIDS.

Testing of null hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean response score of male and female students of faculty of education as regard their perception of HIV/AIDS transmission.

Table 2: t-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female students on their perception of HIV/AIDS transmission.

| Items | Gender | N | \bar{x} | SD | Df | T | Sig(2.tailed) | Decision |
|------------------------------------|--------|----|-----------|------|-----|--------|---------------|-----------|
| Sexual intercourse | M | 52 | 3.92 | 0.69 | 138 | 3.798 | 0.000 | Reject Ho |
| | F | 88 | 3.64 | 0.48 | | | | |
| Blood transfusion | M | 52 | 3.79 | 0.41 | 138 | 1.108 | 0.270 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 3.68 | 0.61 | | | | |
| Mother to child | M | 52 | 3.17 | 0.71 | 138 | -1.850 | 0.066 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 3.39 | 0.68 | | | | |
| Exchange of sharp object | M | 52 | 3.15 | 0.71 | 138 | -0.235 | 0.814 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 3.18 | 0.68 | | | | |
| Mosquito bites | M | 52 | 1.88 | 0.67 | 138 | -1.930 | 0.056 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 2.10 | 0.62 | | | | |
| Kissing | M | 52 | 2.27 | 1.05 | 138 | 0.045 | 0.964 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 2.26 | 0.97 | | | | |
| Sharing food with infected persons | M | 52 | 2.27 | 1.12 | 138 | 2.624 | 0.010 | Reject Ho |
| | F | 88 | 1.81 | 0.89 | | | | |
| Hugging | M | 52 | 1.85 | 0.97 | 138 | 0.783 | 0.435 | Accept Ho |
| | F | 88 | 1.71 | 0.93 | | | | |
| Use of public toilet | M | 52 | 2.19 | 0.95 | 138 | 3.658 | 0.000 | Reject Ho |
| | F | 88 | 1.66 | 0.76 | | | | |

This hypothesis was analyzed using t- test at 0.05 level of significance and 138 degree of freedom. The variables that the t- statistics were less than 0.05level significance were rejected like; sexual intercourse, sharing food with infected persons and use of public toilet. From this analysis it shows that there is significant difference while those with t- test above 0.05level of significance (blood transfusion, mother to child, exchange of sharp objects, mosquito bites, kissing and hugging) were accepted showing that, there are no difference between male and female perception towards HIV/AIDS transmission.

Discussion of findings

From the findings, majority of the respondents were aware of ways HIV infection could be transmitted. However, this finding agree with the study conducted by Onyia, Agunwa and Ndu (2009) which revealed that, knowledge of most routes of transmission and some preventive methods were high while slightly more than half knew of mother to child transmission. In addition a study conducted by Muoghalu and Jegede (2013) revealed that, majority of the respondents agree that HIV/AIDS is contracted through sexual intercourse.

Also, the study indicated that, there is significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students towards sharing food with infected person and use of public toilet while the variables like; blood transfusion, mother to child transmission, exchange of sharp objects, kissing, mosquito bites and hugging indicated that there is no difference. Invariably showing that, both male and female students were aware of routes of transmission of HIV/AIDS. These findings may be as a result of public health awareness through different public health agencies/ strategies.

Conclusion

From the result of the finding the following conclusion were drawn; the respondents are aware of ways HIV infection can be transmitted but are still misconceptions as regards transmission through mosquito bites, kissing and use of public toilet.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings the following recommendations were made;

1. The students' still need sensitization on HIV/AIDS on ways HIV/AIDS can be transmitted. They should be mindful of that slogan "HIV NO DEY SHOW FOR FACE". According to the Slogan, one can never predict someone as positive for HIV unless tested.
2. Government should provide fund for sensitization, and provision of test kit.

REFERENCES

Ebeniro, C.D. (2010) Knowledge and beliefs about HIV/AIDS among males and female students of Nigeria Universities. *Journal of comparative research in anthropology and sociology* vol 1 (1): 121-131. Retrieved on 9/12/16

Henry, J., (2016). Global HIV epidemic. Kaiser FoundationFamily. kff.org/global-health-policy-hiv/aids-epidemic.

Global AIDS Response Country Progress Report (GARPR)., (2015).

www.unaids.org/sited/default/files/media---/Jc2702-GARPR2015_guideline-en.pdf

Muoghalu C. O and Jegede S.A (2013). Perception of HIV/AIDS among the Igbo of Anambra State, Nigeria. *Journal of US National library of Medicine National institute of Health*.10(1): 42-54. Retrieved on 10/12/16.

National Agency for control of AIDS (NACA) 2015' GARPR2015.

www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/country---/NGA-narrative-report-2015.pdf

Okude Jerome(2012)*knowledge and attitude of young people about HIV/AIDS in Nigeria* , a systematic review. Digitalcommon.library.tmc.ed/cgi/newcontent.cgi/article. Retrieved on 8/12/16

Omosho, J. A. (2004). Influence of gender knowledge of HIV/AIDS among secondary and tertiary institutions students in Ilorin metropolis: *Implication for counselling. The Counsellor* (8), 54-63. Retrieved on 10/12/16.

Onyia S.U, Agunwa, E.N, Ndu, A.C. (2009). HIV/AIDS risk perception and safe practices among youths in Enugu metropolis. *South East Nigeria. International Journal of medicine and Health development*.14, (2). 88-100. Retrieved on 7/12/16.

Oshotimehin, I. E. (2003). Preventive behaviour education among school adolescents. *Journal of Nigerian School of Health* 14 (4), 54-58. Retrieved on 7/12/16.

World Health Organization (WHO) Fact sheet 2016. www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs360/en/