



AIDS Awareness Among XI Standard Students in Pondicherry Region

KEYWORDS

AIDS Awareness, XI Standard students

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ABSTRACT *This study was undertaken with the objective of identifying the level of AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students in Pondicherry region. A sample of 160 students was selected from nine schools in Pondicherry. An AIDS Awareness questionnaire which has five components namely, Knowledge about AIDS, Knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV, Knowledge of precautions, Knowledge about the role of Government in prevention of HIV and Sociability was used to collect the data. The study revealed that the level of AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students is high.*

INTRODUCTION

There is an increasing need for AIDS education among the adolescents. It is high time that we embark on a mission to launch a comprehensive AIDS Education programs for young boys and girls failing which we may have to face the irreparable damages that the rampant consumerism and media can cause to children. Today about 50 percent of HIV infected persons are teenagers or adults age ranging from 15 to 45 years.

Studies from various parts of the country show that our young people are sexually very active in their teens and early adulthood. In absolute numbers, India continues to stand next to South Africa, having an estimated 1.8 – 2.9million HIV positive persons in 2007. The arrival HIV/AIDS has shaken human race and human relationship, particularly the youth have been affected by it. There is much need for an open and frank approach to the problem caused by AIDS. So educating youth for AIDS prevention is a major challenge to social institutions, teachers and students, which can only be materialised through social action, community organisation and empirical research on delicate issues like the sexual behavioural pattern, knowledge about AIDS and assessment of need for AIDS awareness. Hence the researcher has decided to measure the AIDS awareness among XI standard students. AIDS Awareness is analyzed on the basis of the components knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV, knowledge of precautions, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention of HIV and sociability.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Since the outbreak of the disease AIDS it has been taking lives continuously. It has left about 3.1 million people dead in 2004 alone; millions of families shattered over 15 millions of children orphaned. According to a report submitted by NACO (2005) says one student among 10 students of Higher Secondary School students have casual sexual relationship. In 2003, young people (15 – 24 years) accounted for half of all new HIV infections worldwide; more than 6000 become infected with HIV. The HIV prevalence has been significantly increasing trend among 16 sites in India among which Pondicherry, the region taken by the researcher for the study, is one.

With the advent of HIV into the country which has much to do with the sexual behaviour it is high time that the responsible people like researchers, teachers and parents equip themselves with the complete information on various aspects of sex and sexuality in relation to HIV in order to help and guide our younger generation. In absolute numbers India continues to stand next to South Africa having 5.3 million people infected with HIV. Moreover the disease does not have any

cure. AIDS treatment will only be affordable and sustainable only if HIV prevention is effective. Hence creating awareness among the students regarding AIDS gains significance in the present situation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the AIDS Awareness with its components viz. Knowledge about AIDS, Knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV, Knowledge of precautions, Knowledge about the role of Government in prevention of HIV and Sociability of XI Standard students.
2. To find out the significant differences, if any, among the sub samples of Locality of School, Parental Qualification, and Family Income in the AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students.

METHODOLOGY

An empirical survey was undertaken. The population of the study comprised of XI students from nine schools in Pondicherry. A sample of 160 students was selected from nine schools in Pondicherry by random sampling technique. Out of this, 84 were from Urban and 76 were from Rural area; 32 were from parents whose qualification is above degree and 128 were from parents whose qualification is below degree; and, 112 were from family whose income is Rs 3000 and below and 48 were from family whose income is above Rs 3000.

The data were collected by using the AIDS Awareness Questionnaire developed and standardized by J. Sahayarani. The tool has 40 items spread over the five components. i.e., 10 items each for each of the five components namely Knowledge about AIDS, Knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV, Knowledge of precautions, Knowledge about the role of Government in prevention of HIV and Sociability.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The summary of the results of the mean scores of AIDS Awareness and its five components is given in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION ON THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF AIDS AWARENESS – TOTAL SAMPLE

Measures	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	AIDS Awareness
Mean	85.55	73.91	73.75	85.00	82.66	80.22
S.D	14.67	16.43	19.49	16.34	18.39	12.12

A - Knowledge about AIDS

B - Modes of transmission of HIV

C – Precautions

D - Role of Government in the prevention of HIV
E – Sociability

As per the tool the higher the score, the higher is the index of AIDS Awareness. The mean scores of the components viz. knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV and knowledge of precautions are lesser than those of the components namely, knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention and Sociability. The results in Figure 1 indicate that the mean scores of the components knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV and knowledge of precautions are approximately equal and the components knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention and Sociability are also approximately equal. It can be concluded that the XI Standard students have better AIDS Awareness in knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention and Sociability than in knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV and knowledge of precautions which means they have less AIDS Awareness in knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV and knowledge of precautions. They are moderately stable in knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention and Sociability. In general the AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students is high.

FIGURE 2
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE AIDS AWARENESS SCORE CATEGORY-WISE

Variable	Sub sample	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Sig. level
Locality of school	Urban	84	66.39	10.31	2.86	0.01
	Rural	76	62.04	8.89		
Parental Qualification	Above Deg	32	67.78	9.37	2.31	0.05
	Others	128	63.46	9.84		
Family Income	3000 & below	112	63.18	9.32	2.15	0.05
	Above 3000	48	67	10.69		

From Figure 2 it is observed that in the sub samples urban

and rural, Parental qualification above degree and Others, and Family Income Rs 3000 & below and above Rs 3000 differ in their AIDS Awareness. The mean differences between the above mentioned groups are significant at 0.01, 0.05 and 0.05 levels respectively.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The index of AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students is high.
2. Their scores on all the components namely knowledge about AIDS, knowledge about modes of transmission of HIV, knowledge of precautions, knowledge about the role of Government in prevention of HIV and sociability are on the higher side. Hence the students are sound in all the components of AIDS Awareness.
3. The AIDS Awareness of XI Standard students is influenced by Locality of School, parental Qualification and Family Income. The index of AIDS Awareness of Urban students is higher than that of the Rural students. It is also to be noted that the students whose parental qualification is above Degree have more awareness than that of the others. It is also found from the Figure-2 that there is significant positive relationship between Family income and the index of AIDS Awareness: Students of family income above Rs 3000 have higher numerical score than the low income students- which means students from high income family have more AIDS Awareness.

SUGGESTIONS

The study can be done for the extended population with taking the other background variables like Siblings, Residence of the students, Medium of Instruction etc.

AIDS Awareness can also be studied with other psychological variables.

A separate AIDS Awareness questionnaire can be constructed and validated for rural area children.

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