

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS AMONG TOURISM STUDENTS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

HIV/AIDS has rapidly established throughout the worlds over the past three decades and has emerged as the important public health problem. Youth are at greater risk of acquiring infection because of changing behavior pattern. More than one third of reported cases of HIV/AIDS in India are among youth. The purpose of this study was to assess the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University. In this study 30 tourism students both girls and boys from Master Course (first and third semester of Himachal Pradesh selected as sample. The HIV/AIDS awareness tool developed by Kumar (2020) was used to collect the data. The t-test statistical technique was used to analyze the data. The result showed that there is significant difference in the awareness level related to HIV/AIDS among tourism students of university.

Keywords: Awareness, University Students, Tourism, Awareness, HIV/AIDS.



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Introduction

A modern world is in the threatening grip of epidemic breakdowns and human immunodeficiency virus tops in the list. It poses serious challenges to mankind on a global scale. The acquired immune deficiency (AIDS) caused by human immune deficiency virus (HIV) has been a significant public health problem and remain the most serious infectious disease challenge. HIV continues to be a major global public health issue having climbed more than 39 million lives so far. It has become the serious problem amongst the people in India with utmost spread rate and of them adolescents is the highest risk group contracting HIV/AIDS. It has been reported that risk of contracting

sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS due to lack of awareness, sex education and education on prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Thus in view of the rapid progressive epidemic of HIV/AIDS, it is imperative to convergent the focus on college or university health including awareness programme regarding HIV/AIDS. College or university students have just passed through adolescents' age this is the time they began to be interested in sexual relationships. The youth are at a stage when they may want to experiment with sex without giving much consideration to the implication of their present behavior. School children of today are exposed to the risk of being victims of HIV/AIDS which was quite unknown to their predecessors of few decades ago. The budding age of adolescent and youth open the gate of adulthood through which the curiosity and the emerging sexual urge start entering into their life. If they are not guided properly at this stage the future may become a very big question mark in terms of sexual behavior and sexual relationship. It is mostly said that prevention is better than cure. But as well as HIV/AIDS is concerned, there is a possibility for prevention but not for cure. So what is more disturbing is that the most infected and affected victims of HIV/AIDS are the youths. Programme manager and policy maker have often recommended that school can act as the centre point for disseminating information and education on HIV/AIDS. Hence, school, college and university education has been described as a "social vaccine" and it can serve as a powerful preventive tool.

Review of Related Literature

Review of related literature has been done by the investigator as under. Khan (2008) in his study observed that 90% students knew that it is sexually transmitted and 88% students knew about the spread of HIV by the use of contaminated needles. He concluded that non- medical students lacked awareness about the disease. Sharma et. al. (2013) found that all the students heard about HIV/AIDS whereas only (31%) students are knew the difference between HIV/AIDS. Approximately one third of the students had knowledge about the entire risk group for the disease. Lower percentages (46%) of students were aware of sexually transmitted infections whereas greater proportion (64%) students of the subject knew about ICTCs. More than half (56%) students believed that HIV infected people should be shown a friendly attitude. Jain and Mittal (2015) revealed that the selected boys and girls were having awareness and knowledge about HIV/AIDS regarding general issues, mode of transmission, preventive measures and source of knowledge. Both boys and girls were having positive attitude towards infected person.

Shindeet (2016) he observed that awareness regarding mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS was found expressed as unprotected sex by 85.94% students. Awareness regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS 70.70% students believes condom as a best means of protections against HIV followed by safe blood 43.75% students and disposal syringes 40.23% students. Nwatu et.al. (2017) results revealed that there were 183 despondence with a mean age of 15-13 years all female. There was a high level of awareness of HIV (97.8%) students and STIs (94.5%) students while 74.3% students had correct knowledge of modes of transmission, 60.7% students incorrectly identify causal contact as modes of transmission of HIV. Only 59% students correctly identify all the HIV prevention method tested, while 74.9% students practiced all modes of prevention. Brian et al. (2021) revealed that exposure to educational materials on HIV-AIDS from both the university and third-party advocates help to increase students' willingness to share the knowledge they gained about the disease and increased the university's perceived intent to empower students in the same.

Rationale of the Study

HIV/AIDS is best viewed as a major epidemic which poses serious challenges to mankind on a global scale. At present the only way to restrain from the epidemic is the prevention. The epidemic can only be wiped out through promotion of responsible behavior and imparting education about the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS to the general population and specially the adolescents. In India under the guidelines of the National AIDS Control Programme (NACO), various media (traditional, print, electronic media and outdoor media) are being used its Information Education and Communication (IEC) programme in disseminating various aspects related with HIV/AIDS to the people during the past one decades under. More than one third of reported cases of HIV/AIDS in India are among adolescent age. The present study is aimed to assess the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among *tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University*.

Objectives of the Study

The followings objectives are framed in this study:

- To study the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among *tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University in terms of gender*.
- To study the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among *tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University in terms of locality*.

Hypothesis of the Study

The followings hypotheses are achieved in this study:

- There is no significant difference in the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among male and female *tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University*.
- There is no significant difference in the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among rural and urban *tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University*.

Methodology of the Study

In the present study survey method under the descriptive method of research was used in present study. All the PG tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University constituted the population of the study. It included the PG students (boys and girls) studying in first and third semester. In the present study the investigator used random sampling technique for selecting the 30 Post Graduate tourism students as a sample. Keeping in view the nature of the present study the investigator used the tool, “HIV/AIDS Awareness Test”, developed and standardized by Kumar (2020). The reliability of the tool is 0.87. To collect the related data, investigator personally contacted the PG students of tourism for data collection. The researcher personally administered the HIV/AIDS awareness test to each individual and collected the required information about the present study. The information was tabulated in a systematic manner to arrive at certain conclusions for the study. Since the data from the HIV/AIDS Awareness test was available in the form of scores, so as to find out the significance of difference between the various groups ‘t’-test was applied.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The analysis of data is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of HIV/AIDS Awareness among Male & Female and Rural & Urban Tourism Students

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t-test
Gender	Boys	15	34.65	4.30	28	3.276
	Girls	15	39.88	4.46		
Locality	Rural	19	37.69	4.45	28	2.338
	Urban	11	33.99	4.01		

The analysis was done to study of the influence of various demographic variables such as gender, and locality of students on the awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. Since the calculated value of

gender is 't' - 3.276, which is greater than table value with the significance level of 0.01 with df 28. This means that boys and girls students differed significantly regarding HIV/AIDS awareness. The mean score shows that girl students of tourism department are more aware about HIV/AIDS than boys. Table 1 shows that the calculated value for the students of who belong to rural and urban area is 't' - 2.338, which is more than table value at significance level 0.01 with df 28. This means that urban and rural students differed significantly regarding HIV/AIDS awareness. The mean score shows that rural students are more aware about HIV/AIDS and related issues.

Findings of the Study

The findings of present investigation are as under:

- PG Tourism students (male and female) differed significantly regarding HIV/AIDS awareness. The male students are less aware about HIV/AIDS than female students studying in first and third semester of tourism course.
- PG Tourism students (rural and urban) also differed significantly regarding HIV/AIDS awareness. The rural students are more aware about HIV/AIDS and related issues than urban students.

Educational Implications

The educational implications related to present results showed that the efforts should be made to build on the existing avenues of awareness, by expanding the scope, ensuring that apart from the electronic and print media, government and non-governmental agencies, there should be a community based service, where every community has a HIV/AIDS clinic, with the sole responsibility of educating the community on HIV/AIDS pandemic, with this, individuals in every community would be reached. There should be home, school, college, university and NGO etc, where every individual in the community and irrespective of age will be well educated on the causes, mode of transmission and effects of HIV/AIDS pandemic etc. More efforts should be made by government and non-governmental agencies to reach at risk individuals who may not be in college or university and provide them with the necessary HIV/AIDS education so as to reduce the spread of the scourge.

Conclusion

The study has brought into light some of the important issues about HIV/AIDS Awareness among PG tourism students of Himachal Pradesh University. The action strategies needed for making them awareness toward HIV/AIDS on an urgent basis.

Because HIV infection is a dynamic process and could change as a function of time, more and more similar studies targeted at general public particularly in rural and urban areas are needed at regular intervals to test the results of the preventive measures & efficacy of the existing policies.

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