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## A Study of AIDS Awareness among Senior Secondary Standard Students

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### **Abstract:**

Mankind is facing a serious threat due to epidemic AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome) which is sweeping across the continents forebodes a grim future for the world. It is affecting millions across the globe particularly Central and East Africa. AIDS is the condition in which in built defense system of body breaks down completely. Most of individuals especially adolescents are not aware of symptoms of this disease. Sex education must be made compulsory in all schools and colleges with a view and target the 15-24 age groups. The main findings of different researches on AIDS show that the main cause of AIDS, especially in India, is sexual contact. Sexual transmission accounts for over 75% of infections. The adolescents are more prone to it. Therefore, it is essential that besides traditional education they should be given education about AIDS too. Present study assesses the AIDS awareness among Senior Secondary School Students. With a view of realizing the objectives, to begin with survey method was considered appropriate. The population of the study was the senior secondary school students of Kurukshetra District. From this 50 senior secondary male and 50 senior secondary female students were selected. A self made questionnaire was prepared and used by the investigator. Main findings of the study showed that male students were more aware about the AIDS in comparison to the female students.

### **1. Introduction**

Mankind is facing a serious threat due to epidemic AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome) which is sweeping across the continents forebodes a grim future for the world. It is affecting millions across the globe particularly Central and East Africa. Millions of people are already living in the shadow of death. This modern plaque is spreading at an alarming rate, cutting across not only nations and continents but also the age, sex and socio economic gaining is increasing acceptance among the new generation the incidence of sexually transmitted disease including AIDS has risen.

AIDS is the condition in which in built defense system of body breaks down completely. Most of individuals especially adolescents are not aware of symptoms of this disease. Sex education must be made compulsory in all schools and colleges with a view and target the 15-24 age groups.

#### *1.1. Meaning of Aids*

AIDS, the Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome, whose damage potential has become known as more lethal than nuclear explosions, it is a fatal illness and an epidemic disease, which has no cure but can be prevented. AIDS is not one disease but a combination of conditions, which occur due to damage to immune system by the HIV virus. A virus called HIV (Human Immuno Deficiency Virus) causes AIDS. It is not a single virus but a family of many viruses called retroviruses. When a person is infected with HIV, nothing is visible on exterior but it is possible for person to still infect others. It is an illness in which the body's immune system is destroyed largely. Because of AIDS, the body is not able to fight against the diseases and becomes defenseless. Such a person becomes easily susceptible to many infections.

#### *1.2. Historical Background and Origin of AIDS*

Tracing the history of AIDS is like unrevealing a mystery. The first recorded sample of HIV was discovered in 1959 in a blood specimen obtained at Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo. This was the first known death chalked up by AIDS. The first human cases of AIDS were reported in the US in 1981, amongst male homosexuals in Los Angeles and New York. Within two decades up to 50 million may have been infected globally, approximately 22 million have succumbed and nearly; 15000 new infections are said to occur daily.

In India the first known case of HIV was diagnosed by Dr. Suniti Solomon in 1986, amongst female sex workers in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Later that year, sex workers began showing signs of this deadly disease.

### 1.3. AIDS in India

According to National AIDS Control Organization of India, the prevalence of AIDS in India in 2013 was 0.27, which is down from 0.41 in 2002. While the National AIDS Control Organization estimated that 2.39 million people live with HIV/AIDS in India in 2008–09, a more recent investigation by the Million Death Study Collaborators in the British Medical Journal (2010) estimates the population to be between 1.4–1.6 million people.

The last decade has seen a 50% decline in the number of new HIV infections. According to more recent National AIDS Control Organization data, India has demonstrated an overall reduction of 57 percent in estimated annual new HIV infections (among adult population) from 0.274 million in 2000 to 0.116 million in 2011, and the estimated number of people living with HIV was 2.08 million in 2011. The spread of HIV in India is primarily restricted to the southern and north-eastern regions of the country and India has also been praised for its extensive anti-AIDS campaign. Currently it is estimated that 2.1 million people are living with HIV in the country. {National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) report}

The main findings of different researches on AIDS show that the main cause of AIDS, especially in India, is sexual contact. Sexual transmission accounts for over 75% of infections. The adolescents are more prone to it. Therefore, it is essential that besides traditional education they should be given education about AIDS too.

### 1.4. Process of Transmission of AIDS

How is HIV transmitted: One can become infected with HIV in several ways like: -

- Sexual Transmission
- Transmission Through Infected Blood
- Transmission Through Needle Sharing
- Transmission Through Accidental Needle Sticks
- Transmission From Mother To Child
- The virus may be transmitted through organ or tissue transplants or unsterilized dental or surgical equipment.

According to research studies and related literature it has been found that in most cases there is no significant difference between awareness of male and female students. A study conducted by *Chittani et al. (1990)* among 669 men and 829 women near Delhi and Haryana showed that 50% of men and only 12% of women were aware of AIDS/HIV. *Siegel, Lazarus and Durbin (1991)* conducted a study to gain information about AIDS knowledge; attitudes and behaviour of junior high school students. African–American students had greater AIDS general knowledge than Asians and similar general knowledge to Latinos and Whites. Of individuals having had sexual intercourse, a positive association was found between the belief that condoms are effective in preventing HIV infection. *Ndlovu and Sihlangu (1992)* conducted a study on 478 high school students, they are randomly selected and stratified to represent sex and forms 1 through to 6. There were notable differences between boarding school respondents and day scholars. No regional differences were noted.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the AIDS awareness among Senior Secondary School Students.
2. To study the AIDS awareness among female students of Senior Secondary schools.
3. To study the AIDS awareness among male students of Senior Secondary Schools.
4. To compare the AIDS awareness among female and male students of Senior Secondary Schools.

## 3. Design and Sample of the Study

With a view of realizing the objectives, to begin with survey method was considered appropriate. The population of the study was the senior secondary school students of Kurukshetra District. From this, sample of 100 students (50 male and 50 female) were selected at random from two schools which were selected purposively for the study.

## 4. Tools Used In the Study

A self made questionnaire was prepared and used by the investigator.

## 5. Statistical Techniques Used

Percentage was calculated to test the difference between awareness of male and female students.

## 6. Analysis

This section would simply provide a general picture of the AIDS awareness of school children. The following table highlights the AIDS awareness level of Secondary School students.

Student	A Acquired Immune Deficiency system	B Acquired Immune Virus	C Acquired Immune Disease Syndrome	D Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
Male (50)	22%	4%	8%	66%
Female (50)	16%	10%	14%	60%

Table 1

From the table no. 1 it is evident that 66% of the male student and 60% of the female student know about the right full form of AIDS 22% male & 16% female chose 'A' option, 4% male 10% female chose 'B' option and 8% male & 14% female chose 'C' option.

Student	A Human Immune disease virus	B Human Immunodeficiency virus	C Human Immune virus	D Human Immune system virus
Male (50)	4%	66%	20%	10%
Female (50)	2%	76%	22%	0%

Table 2

From the table no. 2 it is evident that 66% of the male student and 76% of the female student know about the right full form of HIV. 4% male 2% female chose 'A' option, 20% male & 22% female chose 'C' option 10% male & 0% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A AIDS is transmitted from mother to baby	B Infected needle	C Only	D Both 'a' and 'b'
Male (50)	4%	2%	4%	90%
Female (50)	6%	4%	8%	82%

Table 3

From the table no. 3 it is evident that 90% of the male student and 82% of the female student know that AIDS is transmitted from mother to baby and through infected needles. 4% male & 6% female chose 'A' option, 2% male & 4% female chose 'B' and 4% male and 8% female chose 'C' option.

Student	A AIDs can be transmitted through eating utensils he/she uses	B His/her blood	C Bathroom he/she uses	D All the above
Male (50)	4%	88%	0%	8%
Female (50)	0%	76%	0%	24%

Table 4

From the table no. 4 it is evident that 88% male and 76% female chose the right answer that AIDs can be transmitted through blood of infected person. 4% male & 0% female chose 'A' option and 8% male & 24% female chose 'D' option. Nobody chose 'C' option.

Student	A AIDS can be transmitted through piercing ears or other body parts	B Injecting steroids	C Injecting drugs	D All of the above
Male (50)	18%	4%	12%	66%
Female (50)	22%	10%	12%	56%

Table 5

From the table no. 5 it is evident that 66% male and 56% female know the right answer 18% male & 22% female chose 'A' option 4% male & 10% female chose 'B' and 12% male & 12% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A Country has the maximum number of AIDS cases: USA	B India	C Africa	D U.K.
Male (50)	64%	8%	16%	12%
Female (50)	76%	4%	10%	10%

Table 6

From the table no. 6 it is evident that only 16% male & 10% female know the right answer. 64% male & 76% female chose 'A' option 8% male & 4% female chose 'B' option, and 12% male & 10% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A causes to transmit the AIDS virus is Deep Kissing	B Blood transfusion	C Sexual Contract	D All of the above
Male (50)	8%	4%	6%	82%
Female (50)	2%	6%	2%	90%

Table 7

From the table no. 7 it is evident that 82% male and 90% female know the right answer that all are the causes to transmit the AIDS virus. 8% male and 2% female chose 'A', 4% male & 6% female chose 'B' and 6% male & 2% female chose 'C' option.

Student	A AIDS is a Virus disease	B Bacteria	C Protozoa	D Fungus
Male (50)	90%	2%	2%	6%
Female (50)	84%	4%	6%	6%

Table 8

Table no. 8 shows that 90% male and 84% female gave the right answer. 2% male & 4% female chose 'B', 2% male & 6% female chose 'C' option and 6% male & female chose 'D' option.

Student	A PPLO virus causes AIDS	B HIV virus causes AIDS	C TMV virus causes AIDS	D Bamboo Mosaic Virus causes AIDS
Male (50)	6%	90%	2%	2%
Female (50)	0%	96%	2%	2%

Table 9

From the table no. 9 it is evident that 90% male and 96% females aware about the HIV virus which causes AIDS. 6% males and 0% females chose the 'A' option and 2% males and 2% females chose the 'C' and 'D' option.

Student	A AIDS originated in Late 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	B 18 <sup>th</sup> Century	C 21 <sup>th</sup> Century	D 17 <sup>th</sup> Century
Male (50)	64%	20%	10%	6%
Female (50)	50%	30%	16%	4%

Table 10

From the table no. 10 it is evident that 64% of male and 50% female know that AIDS originated in 19<sup>th</sup> century. 20% males and 30% female chose 'B' option, 10% male and 16% female chose 'C' option and 6% male and 4% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A First country which recognized AIDS USA	B India	C Russia	D Britain
Male (50)	22%	4%	8%	66%
Female (50)	16%	10%	14%	60%

Table 11

Table no. 11 indicates that 22% males & 16% of females know that USA is the 1<sup>st</sup> country which recognized AIDS. 4% male & 10% female chose 'B' option. 8% male & 14% females chose 'C' option & 66% male & 60% females chose 'D' option.

Student	A Survival time after HIV infection is 15-18 Years	B 5-6 years	C 9-11 years	D 20-25 years
Male (50)	6%	74%	8%	12%
Female (50)	14%	66%	12%	8%

Table 12

From the table no.12 it is evident that 8% male & 12% females have the right knowledge about the survival time after HIV infection. 6% males and 14% females chose 'A' option, 74% male and 66% chose 'B' option and 12% male and 8% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A Estimated death since of origin of AIDS 10-15 Million	B 20-25 million	C 30-35 million	D 35-40 million
Male (50)	22%	4%	8%	66%
Female (50)	16%	10%	14%	60%

Table 13

Table no. 13 shows that 66% male and 60% females have the right knowledge about the estimated death since of origin. 22% males & 16% females chose 'A' option 4% males & 10% females chose 'B' option and 8% males & 14% females chose 'C' option.

Student	A The people suffering with HIV till 2012-13 is 30-35 million	B 5-10 million	C 10-20 million	D 5-15 million
Male (50)	58%	20%	18%	4%
Female (50)	40%	20%	24%	16%

Table 14

From the table no. 14 it is evident that 58% males and 40% females have the right knowledge about the people suffering with HIV till 2012-13. 20% males and female chose 'B' option 18% males & 24% female chose 'C' option and 4% males & 16% females chose 'D' option.

Student	A AIDS is a Communicable disease	B Non-Communicable	C Hereditary	D Both 'a' and 'c'
Male (50)	22%	4%	8%	66%
Female (50)	16%	10%	14%	60%

Table 15

From the table no. 15 it is evident that 66% males and 60% female know that AIDS is a communicable as well as hereditary disease. 22% males & 16% females chose 'A' option 4% males & 10% female chose 'B' option & 8% males & 14% female chose 'D' option.

Student	A Sexual Contact contributes maximum spreading of AIDS	B Mother to baby	C Through infected syringes	D Blood transfusion
Male (50)	70%	8%	12%	10%
Female (50)	62%	20%	8%	10%

Table 16

Table no. 16 indicates that 70% males & 62% female know that sexual contact contributes maximum spreading of AIDS. 8% males & 20% female chose 'B' option. 12% male & 8% female chose 'C' option, 10% male & female chose 'D' option.

Student	A Organization working for spreading awareness about AIDS in the world is UNESCO	B WHO	C NACO	D All the above
Male (50)	22%	4%	8%	66%
Female (50)	16%	10%	14%	60%

Table 17

From the table no. 17 it is evident that only 8% males and 14% females know that NCAO is the organization which is working for spreading awareness about AIDS in the world. 22% males & 16% females chose 'A' option. 4% males & 10% females chose 'B' option and 66% males and 60% females chose 'D' option.

Student	A AIDS microorganism dies at 30 <sup>o</sup> C	B AIDS microorganism dies at 40 <sup>o</sup> C	C AIDS microorganism dies at 50 <sup>o</sup> C	D AIDS microorganism dies at 60 <sup>o</sup> C
Male (50)	22%	30%	28%	10%
Female (50)	28%	30%	20%	22%

Table 18

Table no. 18 shows that 10% males and 22% females know that in an open atmosphere at 60<sup>o</sup>C AIDS microorganism dies. 22% males and 28% female chose 'A' option, 30% males & females chose 'B' option and 28% males & 20% female chose 'C' option.

Student	A Test used to detect HIV is PCR test	B Western Blot	C ELISA	D ESR
Male (50)	2%	54%	26%	18%
Female (50)	10%	40%	26%	20%

Table 19

From the table no.19 it is evident that only 26% males & female know that ELISA test is used to detect HIV. 2% males & 10% females chose 'A' option. 54% males & 40% female chose 'B' option & 18% males & 20% males chose 'D' option.

Student	A AIDS day is celebrated on 14 NOV	B AIDS day is celebrated on 1 <sup>st</sup> DEC	C AIDS day is celebrated on 25 <sup>th</sup> DEC	D AIDS day is celebrated on 2 <sup>nd</sup> JAN
Male (50)	6%	52%	14%	18%
Female (50)	14%	20%	26%	20%

Table 20

From the table no. 20 it is evident that 52% males & 20% females know that AIDS day is celebrated on 1<sup>st</sup> December. 6% males & 14% female chose 'A' option 14% males & 26% female chose 'C' option & 18% male & 20% female chose 'D' option.

## 7. Main Findings

The main findings of the present study are detailed below: -

1. Male students have more knowledge about the full form of Aids.
2. Female students have more knowledge about the full form of HIV.
3. Male students have more knowledge about the different modes of transmission of AIDS.
4. Male students have more knowledge that USA is the 1<sup>st</sup> country which recognized AIDS first.
5. Male students are aware about that Africa has the maximum number of AIDS cases.
6. Female students have more knowledge that AIDS can be transmitted through deep kissing, blood transfusion & sexual contact.
7. Male students have more knowledge that AIDS is a viral disease.
8. Female students have more knowledge that HIV virus causes AIDS.
9. Male students have more knowledge that HIV originated in late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
10. Male students have more knowledge that USA is the first country who recognized AIDS.
11. Female students have more knowledge that survival time after infection with HIV is 9-11 years.
12. Male students have more knowledge that since its discovery 35-40 million people died due to AIDS.
13. Male students have more knowledge that as per 2012-13, 30-35 million people living with HIV.
14. Male students have more knowledge that AIDS is a communicable as well as hereditary disease.
15. Male students have more knowledge that maximum contribution of spread of AIDS is from sexual contact.
16. Female students have more knowledge that NACO is the organization working for the spreading awareness about AIDS in world.
17. Female students have more knowledge that in an open atmosphere AIDS microorganism dies at 60<sup>o</sup> C.
18. Equal percentage of male & female students know that ELISA test is used to detect HIV
19. Male students have more knowledge that AIDS day is celebrated on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec.

## 8. Educational Implications

The present study has its implications for government. planners, policy makers, administrators, teachers, doctors, health organization who are already doing a very good and a noble job but there is a need of doing much work in this area because of growing number of the patients of AIDS. Senior Secondary School students have a very poor knowledge about various aspects of AIDS and there is an



urgent need of exposing them and making them aware of this disease and its ill effects so that preventive measures could be taken at the earliest stage.

### 9. Suggestions for Further Study

Some of the suggestions for further research can be enumerated as under:

- ❖ A similar study can be undertaken on a large sample for comprehensive results and better generalizations.
- ❖ A sample study can be conducted in other parts of Kurukshetra to find out the AIDS awareness level of university students and adults.
- ❖ The study can also be conducted on different states and at national level.
- ❖ The study may be conducted on different age groups.
- ❖ Similar type of study can be undertaken by considering the other variables like urban students, college-going students, students of professional colleges etc.
- ❖ A comparative study of AIDS awareness can be conducted among exceptional children like visually impaired and sighted children of schools or colleges.
- ❖ The same study can also be conducted to check the awareness level of special school and integrated school children.

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