

**A STUDY ON KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF HIV/AIDS AMONG PUC  
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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** The acquired immunodeficiency syndrome is a fatal illness caused by retro virus known as the Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which breaks down the body's immune system, leaving the victim vulnerable to a host of life threatening opportunistic infection, neurological disorders, or unusual malignancies. **Objectives:** The objectives of the present study is to assess the awareness of PU students regarding HIV/AIDS. To assess the level of knowledge regarding myths and believes about the spread of HIV/AIDS. To improve the knowledge on prevention of HIV/AIDS. **Materials and methods:** This is a prospective observational study which is conducted on PUC students of SLV PU College, Don Bosco PU College and SJM Independent PU College in Chitradurga for a period of six months. **Results:** Three PU colleges from Chitradurga were selected. Among 200(n=200) subjects, 55% were males and 45% were females. Study summarises that there is sufficient improvement of knowledge in pre and post studies. Correlation between test scores with age group, gender and (PU College SLV, Don Bosco, SJMI) given large insight of the study. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that the basic knowledge of HIV/AIDS over various issues like prevention and mode of transmission is deficient among many students. Adolescents are more vulnerable and are less aware of the knowledge to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS should be conducted to enhance the knowledge related HIV/AIDS among the students.

**KEYWORDS:** HIV/AIDS, Awareness, Knowledge, Prevention.**1. INTRODUCTION**

The acquired immune-deficiency syndrome is a fatal illness caused by retrovirus known as the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which breaks down the body's immune system, leaving the victim vulnerable to a host of life-threatening opportunistic infection, neurological disorders, or unusual malignancies.<sup>[1]</sup> HIV continues to be a major global public health issue, having claimed more than 39 million lives so far. Adolescents aged 10-19 years of age accounting for nearly 23% of population in India are exposed to the risk of being victim of HIV/AIDS.<sup>[2]</sup> Discrimination of HIV infected people in healthcare settings exist because healthcare professionals lack adequate knowledge about HIV and consider themselves to be at risk of contracting the infection.<sup>[3]</sup>

The lack of awareness and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS in general population is responsible for rapid spread and social stigma and discrimination in our country <sup>[1]</sup>. In Indian society, most parents hesitate discussing any sexual issues with their children and young adulthood revolve to contemptible medium and get imprecise information. Hence, we have to lay the

foundation for proper lifestyle, safe sexual habits, as well as healthy relationship.<sup>[4]</sup> Recently, the major steps to prevent HIV infection are information, communication and education on HIV/AIDS that aim to target young people. Media also plays a major role in elevating the level of awareness and knowledge of the community and infected patients.<sup>[5]</sup> Since students are among the most vulnerable groups in the society and students are commonly experimental, the assessment of knowledge of students about AIDS is important in planning appropriate preventive measures.<sup>[6]</sup> Young people learn a great deal from each other and by sharing ideas and experiences amongst themselves.<sup>[7]</sup> So assessment of awareness levels in adolescents is important because it helps to determine the impact of previous awareness and prevention efforts made by the government through media and also to know about the need for interventions.<sup>[8]</sup> Defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as persons between 10 and 19 years of age, many adolescents around the world are sexually active and many sexual contacts among them are unprotected.<sup>[8]</sup>

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With these backgrounds, the present study was conducted to assess the current level of knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS among the Higher Secondary students.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The questionnaire based prospective observational study was approved by the Institutional Ethical Committee of Sri Jagadguru Mallikarjuna Murugharajendra College of Pharmacy, Vide number: SJMCP/IEC/PHARM D/02/2019-2020. The study was conducted among PUC students in Chitradurga.

- Students those who are present for pretest
- Both male and female students
- Both hostellers and day scholars

**Study Procedure:** A six month questionnaire based prospective observational study was conducted among PUC students of Chitradurga. The study was started after obtaining the consent from Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC). After obtaining informed consent, the questionnaire was distributed among PUC students. A self-administered questionnaire on knowledge and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS has been provided. It consisted of

Part 1. Socio-demographic data

Part 2. Basic Knowledge on HIV/AIDS (5 questions were asked as multiple choice questions)

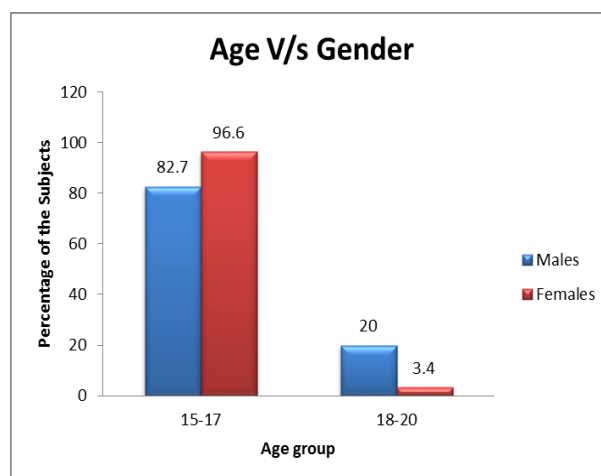
Part 3. Attitude on HIV/AIDS (10 questions with option such as Agree, Disagree and Not sure)

Data was collected by the investigators and confidentiality was maintained during the data collection process. After the pre test, post testing was carried out by distributing the same questionnaire of pre test and was assessed for the improvements. For each correct answer of Knowledge questionnaire was scored '1' and for each wrong answer '0' in pre and post test. The attitude and practice based questionnaire was assessed based on the frequency of options selected in pre and post test

**Statistical Analysis:** The data were analysed by using Microsoft excel-2013 and SPSS software (version 25). Categorical data was analyzed by frequency distribution method and quantitative data was analyzed by central tendency distribution and by measures of dispersion.

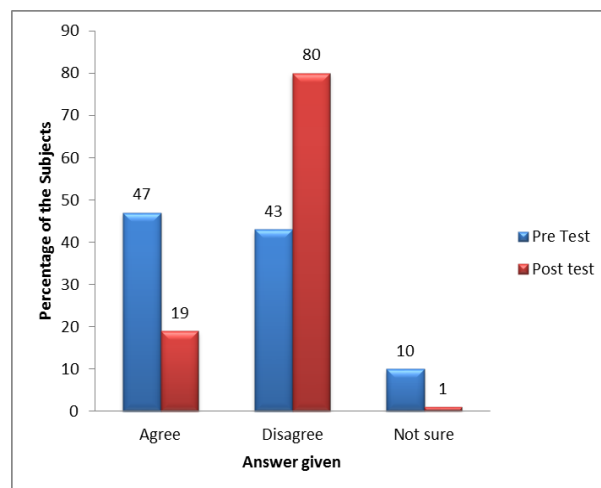
## 3. RESULTS

Out of 200 subjects 91 (82.7%) were males under the age group of 15-17 and 22 (20%) under the age group of 18-20. Out of 200 subjects 87 (96.6%) were females under the age group of 15-17 and 3 (3.4%) under the age group of 18-20. The results are graphically represented in Figure No: 1.



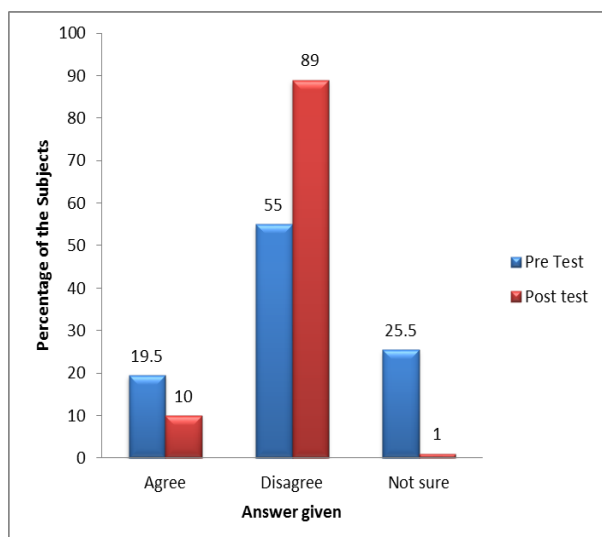
**Fig No: 1** Details of categorisation of Age V/s Gender.

In pre and post test the subject disagreed that sharing personal items like tooth brushes with someone who is HIV infected can transmit HIV/AIDS. The result is graphically represented in Figure No:2.



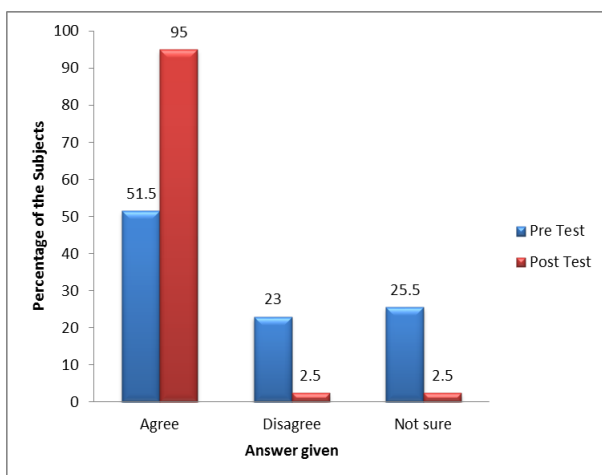
**Fig No: 2.** Response given by the subject to question: Sharing personal items like toothbrushes with someone who is HIV infected can transmit HIV/AIDS.

In pre and post test the subject disagreed that spiritual factors can cause HIV/AIDS. The results are graphically represented in Figure No.3



**Fig No. 3: Response given by the subject to question: Spiritual factors can cure HIV/AIDS.**

In pre and post test the subjects agree that knowing your HIV/AIDS status can help prevent. The results are graphically represented in Figure No: 4.



**Fig. no. 4: Response given by the subject to question: Knowing your HIV/AIDS status can help prevent.**

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The current study was a prospective observational questionnaire survey to assess the study on knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS among PUC students of Chitradurga. The objective of the study was to assess the awareness of PU students regarding HIV/AIDS, to assess the level of knowledge regarding myths and believes about the spread of HIV/AIDS and to improve the knowledge on prevention of HIV/AIDS. In the study, awareness regarding mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS was found expressed as unprotected sex by 93.5% students similarly in a study conducted by Shinde M *et al* who found that awareness regarding mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS was found expressed as unprotected sex by 85.94% students. The study included total of 200 subjects and among them 110 were males and 90 were females. Although both are having almost

same improvement, comparatively males are having high improvement in terms of knowledge similarly Jain J *et al* conducted a study and found that both males and females are having knowledge about HIV/AIDS. The current study aimed to assess the knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS among PUC students of Chitradurga during which the pre-test 66% of students answered right and 97.7% students answered the right option in the post-test which showed a high improvement. This research study findings is in line with Vijayageetha M *et al*. In their study, about 374 adolescents were participated, among them around 50% had a negative attitude towards HIV. To bring down the discrimination of people living with HIV among adolescents, life skill education with HIV awareness should be implemented in schools. The study revealed that many of the students aware that HIV can be transmitted by sexual intercourse, from mother to child and through sharing needles or syringes. Similarly Thanavanh B *et al* concluded their study that most of the students aware that HIV can be transmitted by sexual intercourse, from mother to child and through sharing needles or syringes. According to the finding of the study most students believes that knowing our HIV/AIDS status can help prevent the disease to great extent. Similarly students have a satisfactory level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS prevention suggested by Nubed CK *et al* in his study.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

This Study concludes that there is sufficient improvement of knowledge in pre and post studies. Correlation between test scores with age group, gender and college given large insights of the study. Males and females are having almost same improvement but comparatively Males is having high improvement in terms of knowledge. Still much more studies yet to be done on knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS. The awareness programmes should be conducted at schools for protecting and preventing adolescents from HIV/AIDS.

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