

Assessing the Risk Perception and Prevention Challenges of HIV/AIDS Among the High School Students of Wombera District, Benishangul Gumuz, Ethiopia

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Abstract

HIV/AIDS is the most serious health problems of the 21st century which affects all body systems as well as the mental health and social relationships of carriers and asymptomatic patients. A descriptive cross sectional survey method was used to collect the data. Majority of the study participants 42.1% (n=51) of males and 43.8% (53) of females, have never made the HIV testing in their life. Only 5.8% (n=7) of males and 8.3% (n=10) of females have made the HIV test at least one in their life. 74.5% of student respondents and 34.6% of stake holders agree on the principle of abstain to prevent HIV/AIDS infection for high school students. Similarly about 27.3% (n=33) of the student respondents reflect that the most risk factors in HIV infection are lack of awareness and comprehensive knowledge for controlling and preventing HIV/AIDS infection. Most of the students were aware of about the methods of transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS infection.

Keywords: Health, Virus, Infections, Knowledge, Ethiopia

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INTRODUCTION

HIV/AIDS is one of the major healthy issues, which affects the life and economy of many people in the world. Different factors trigger the high prevalence of HIV infection, which make the control and prevention of the epidemic difficult [1]. Poverty and illiteracy are the major contributing factors for the spread of HIV/AIDS in developing countries [2]. Drug and alcohol use have also a potential roles in predisposing youths to the practice of unprotected sex. Urbanization, modernization and viewing pornographic materials were other factors associated with early sexual initiation [3]. Ethiopia's increased openness to Western culture has resulted in the influx of pornographic videos, books, and magazines, whose consumers are mostly young adolescents. Statistics from the Joint United Nations Programmer on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2006 reported that the number of people living with HIV at the end of 2005 were 38.6 million worldwide [4] According to WHO, the total number of world population in the mid off 2007 is estimated to be more than 6.6 billion, out of which about 1.4 billion are adolescents[4]. This age is a transition period in life from dependent child hood to self-reliant adulthood and it is the age range in which majority of the young people join the labor force. It is also the period where young person achieve the highest stage of cognitive and physical development and strive to define their self-identity [5]. HIV/AIDS has become an obstacle for development efforts in African countries by aggravating the already existing poverty, reversing human development achievement, worsening gender inequalities, hindering government efforts to provide essential services and reducing the productive labor force [6]. Ethiopia is one of the Sub-Saharan countries, where many people are highly affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. According to Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), Ethiopia has one of the lowest HIV prevalence rates in East Africa [7]. Based on all available survey data the Ministry of Health estimated in 2000 the HIV prevalence in the sexually active population (15-49 years) to be 13.4% in urban Ethiopia, 16.8% in Addis Ababa and "about 5%" in rural areas and the highest rates were in Bahir Dar, Gambela and Addis Ababa [8]. HIV/AIDS has emerged as the most formidable challenge to public health, human rights and development in the new millennium. It is the most serious health problems of the 21st century which affects all body systems as well as the mental health and social relationships of carriers and asymptomatic patients [9].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Description of the Study Area

Wombera found in Metekel zone of Benishanigule Gumuze region of Ethiopia. It located at Benishangul Gumuz National Regional state on 658 km away from Addis Ababa toward West. In the dry season maximum daily temperature reaches to 20-35^oc and the coldest period minimum temperature range 12-20^oc depending on altitude season.

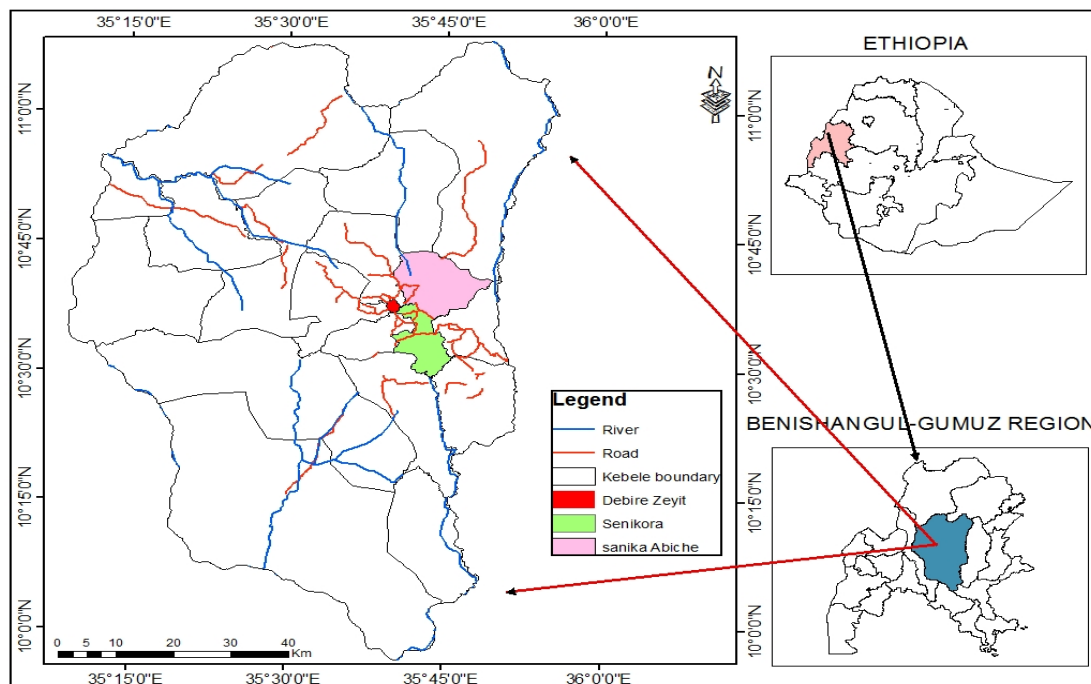


Fig 1. Map of the study sites

Study design

A descriptive cross sectional survey method was used to collect the data. Quantitative data approach was applied to collect data from questionnaire and analyzed those collected data survey using descriptive approach.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The targeted schools were Wombera, Senkora and Sanki. Simple random sampling method was used to select the samples from the total population. From the total 951, about 121 respondents were selected using LoBiondo & Haber, 2017 techniques [10].

Data collection method

Both primary and secondary data sources were used for the study. The sources of primary data of this study were students from secondary schools. The data gathering tools were close-ended, open ended questionnaires

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Risk perception of respondents on HIV/AIDS

The majority of the study participants 42.1% (n=51) of males and 43.8% (53) of females) have never made the HIV testing in their life. Only 5.8% (n=7) of males and 8.3% (n=10) of females have made the HIV test at least one in their life. In addition, only 14.1% of study participants have ever under gone voluntary counseling (Table1).

Table1.The risk perception factors for HIV infection among schools
 (n=121)

Variables	Response	Sex		
		Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Ever had been tested for HIV/AIDS before	Yes	7(5.8)	10(8.3)	17(14.0)
	No	51(42.1)	53(43.8)	104(85.9)
Voluntariness to undergo HIV/AIDS test	Yes	27(23.3)	33(27.3)	60(49.6)
	No	31(25.6)	30(24.8)	61(50.4)
Expectation of risk of getting HIV	Yes	34(28.1)	30(24.8)	64(52.9)
	No	24(19.8)	33(27.3)	57(47.1)
Perception about chance of acquiring HIV/AIDS	Low	29(24)	28(23.1)	57(47.1)
	Medium	8(6.6)	16(13.2)	24(19.8)
	High	1(0.8)	3(2.5)	4(3.3)
	I don't know	20(16.5)	16(13.2)	36(29.7)
Are there any risk areas/conditions that make you vulnerable to HIV/AIDS?	Yes	33(27.3)	42(34.7)	75(62)
	No	18(14.9)	13(10.7)	31(25.6)
	I don't know	7(5.8)	8(6.6)	15(12.4)

About 74.5% of student respondents and 34.6% of stake holders agree on the principle of abstain to prevent HIV/AIDS infection for high school students (Figure 2).

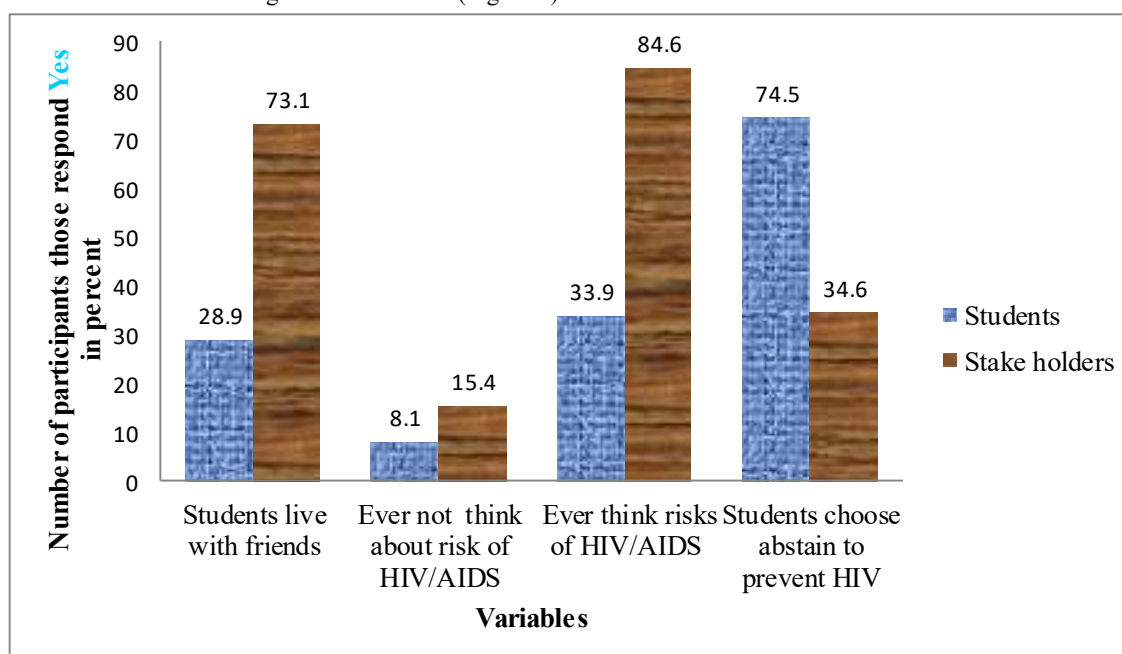


Fig. 2: Association of students and other stake holders on HIV risk factors

Challenges in HIV prevention and protection

According to the present study most of student respondents explain awareness creation for students at schools is very low when we compare to the past years, even though the curriculum is designed and issue of HIV/AIDS is included in most subjects, most teachers as well as students do not want to teach or learn about it because they believe as it is already known , there is no open discussion among students at schools, peer to peer learning, or life skill discussion about risk of HIV/AIDS infection. Similarly about 27.3%(n=33) of the student respondents reflected that the most risk factors in HIV infection are lack of awareness and comprehensive knowledge for controlling and preventing HIV/AIDS infection (Table 3).

Table 3. Challenging factors mentioned by respondents in prevention of HIV/AIDS of selected three high schools of Wombera district

Variable	Respondents in the three schools			
	Response	Wombera	Senkora	Sanki
Challenging factors for HIV/AIDS prevention	Drinking alcohol, chew khat	17(14%)	3(2.5%)	4(3.3%)
	Peer pressure	7(5.8%)	4(3.3%)	3(2.5%)
	Lack of awareness creation by different stake holders and open discussion in schools	19(15.7%)	7(5.8%)	7(5.8%)
	Face book	5(4.1%)	6(5%)	5(4.1%)

According to this study 62% of the study participants described that there are risk areas and conditions that increase their chance of vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infection. About 9.1% of respondents explained lack of giving more attention for HIV issues at high schools, is one factor. Among the risks chew khat, drink alcohol in the hotels, living with friends (away from their family); even living alone and so there is no control this makes them free to undergo sexual practice which is in agreement with the study done by LoBiondo-Wood and Haber [10].

CONCLUSIONS

The knowledge and practice of selected Wombera secondary school students towards the risk of HIV/AIDS and the challenges were assessed. The results indicate that most of the students were aware of about the methods of transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS infection.

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