

The Threat of HIV/AIDS on Adolescent Academic Achievement: A Case Study in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the menace of HIV/AIDS on the academic performance of adolescents in contemporary society in Nigeria using a survey research design. The population for the study consists of the entire adolescents in Remo North Local Government Area, Ogun State. A simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting a sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents. Adolescent Menace on HIV/AIDS (AMOHA) questionnaire, developed and validated by the authors, was used to source primary data. Test re-test of the instrument on a similar population outside the study gave a reliability coefficient of 0.854 alpha level. Chi-square and t-test statistical tools were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that HIV/AIDS affects the academic performance of adolescents in public secondary schools. It was recommended that youth-friendly centers be established in secondary schools with well-trained professionals to handle issues relating to HIV/AIDS.

Key-Words: human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS); discrimination; adolescents, secondary schools.

1. Introduction

HIV/AIDS has become a topical issue in Nigeria. Since the first case was registered in 1982, the epidemic has continued to increase. More than 3

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million Nigerians are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS (Aanu and Olatoye, 2011). Today, most people are aware of the illness known as AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). This is because it has spread across virtually the entire nation. AIDS impairs the immune system; its victims are helpless against deadly diseases. When doctors in Los Angeles and New York discovered it in 1981, they called the symptoms immunological consequences of some unknown process. All the victims were either young male homosexuals or drug addicts. AIDS has become a disease of consequence since there is no cure yet. Millions of lives are claimed despite the combined efforts of individuals, governments, and non-governmental organizations to find a solution to the disease.

Adolescence is a developmental period marked by discovery and experimentation that comes with myriads of physical and emotional changes. During this time of growth and change, young people get mixed messages (Adebule, 2012). Most teenagers undergo hormonal and physiological changes and are tempted to test their sexual inclinations and put them into practice. They engage in sexual activity without having sufficient knowledge or awareness of the risks involved. Teenagers may act in ways that put them at risk for sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs) (Abu and Akerele, 2006).

The number of newly acquired cases of HIV/AIDS among adolescents and young adults is continuing to rise. Health programs typically cover adults and small children, but adolescents are primarily disregarded. Governments must emphasize teenagers more by addressing their social, educational, and health needs holistically (Oyo-Ita, 2005). According to Ekundayo and Oyeniyi (2008) and Adebule (2012), society is struggling with several student behavior issues, including truancy, disobedience, drug offenses, smoking, flirting, stealing, and armed robbery, as well as violent conduct and demonstration, vandalism, examination malpractice, cultism, and thuggery. Dotonu (2011) claimed that, in addition to the previously mentioned, widely publicized behavioral issues, sexual behavior are also seen as contributing to the behavioral issues common in Nigerian secondary schools: sex abuse is one of the most severe crimes perpetrated by teenagers. In literature, they are referred to as sexual assault, sexual offenses, sexual misbehavior, immoral behavior, and maladjustment (Omoteso, Adeniyi, and Bada, 2010; Anise, 2011).

Sexual promiscuity and immorality, has been demonstrated by researchers (Omoteso, Adeniyi, and Bada, 2010; Anise, 2011; Odebiyi, 2001) to have thousands of negative impacts on pupils. They include unplanned and unwanted pregnancies and infections brought on by STIs and subsequent poor academic performances. Ajayi (2006) and Adebule (2012) confirmed that the prevalence among young people in Nigeria has alarmingly increased. The future of Nigerian society is unclear. Due to this finding, parents and the local community are becoming less interested in teaching their children. They see

investing in education, where no results are anticipated, as a waste of their limited resources. Many people are likely reluctant to send their children to school, given the pervasive view among Nigerians that doing so is not a reliable investment. Therefore, developing effective measures to combat this significant pandemic in the nation is urgently needed.

2. Methods

2.1. Statement of the problem

The spread of AIDS and other linked diseases is killing people. It has worsened poverty and the number of orphans in the nation, endangering overall national development and resulting in poor academic performance among adolescents. The scourge of HIV/AIDS has developed into a significant social issue and has a detrimental effect on many facets of society. This study, therefore, examines the menace of HIV/AIDS on the academic performance of adolescents in secondary schools in the Remo Local Government of Ogun State. The following research hypotheses were adopted for the study: (a) There is no significant relationship between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection; (b) There is no significant difference between male and female adolescents regarding the effects of HIV/AIDS on the academic performance of adolescents.

2.2. Research design

The descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted in the study to assess the menace of HIV/AIDS on the academic performance of adolescents. The study population consists of Remo North Local Government Area, Ogun State students. There are eight (8) public secondary schools in Remo North Local Government, and samples were drawn from five schools. The simple random sampling technique was used to select five schools for the study. The same technique was used to select a sample size of hundred and fifty (150) students for the study.

2.3. Instrument for data collection

The instrument used for data collection is a self-designed questionnaire, the Adolescent Menace on HIV/AIDS (AMOHA) questionnaire. It is divided into two sections: A and B. Section A elicits bio-data and personal information of the respondents, while section B deals with questions on the menace of HIV/AIDS on students' performance. The content of the questionnaire was strengthened by the content validity of the questionnaire. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, the test-retest reliability technique was adopted. The instrument was pre-tested on thirty (30) students comprising both male and female, and after three weeks, the same questionnaire was administered to the same set of students, similar

to the population but outside the population. An alpha coefficient of 0.854 was obtained. The data sourced from the field survey was subjected to statistical tools. A regression analysis statistical tool was used to analyze the data.

3. Results

3.1. Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection.

	Academic Performance				df	X ²	Sig	P
	SD	D	A	SA				
Sexual count immorality	360	300	554	436	3	87.24	0.00	P<0.05
Expected count	412.5	412.5	412.5	412.5				

Table 1. Chi-square analysis of the difference between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection

Table 1 indicates that the chi-square value of 87.24 is significant at a 0.05 level, implying a significant difference between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection. Therefore, null hypothesis one is, at this moment, rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female adolescents regarding the effects of HIV/AIDS on the academic performance of adolescents.

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t _{cal}	t _{cri}	Remark
Male	96	42.6667	5.9252	148	3.549	0.04	Significant
Female	54	43.9259	4.8597				

Table 2. Independent t-test statistics of male and female adolescents on the effects of HIV/AIDS

The table above shows that the t-calculated value of 3.549 is significant at 0.05 levels with 148 degrees of freedom. This implies a significant difference between male and female adolescents regarding the effects of HIV/AIDS on academic performance. Therefore, null hypothesis two is a result of this rejection. The following is a summary of the results presented above: (a) There was a significant difference between sexual immorality and

HIV/AIDS infection; (b) There was a significant difference between male and female adolescents on the effects of HIV/AIDS on academic performance.

4. Discussion

The study investigated the menace of HIV/AIDS on the academic achievement of adolescents in Remo Local Government, Ogun State. Hypothesis one states no significant difference between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection. The result in table 1 above indicates a significant difference between sexual immorality and HIV/AIDS infection. The HIV/AIDS infection is among the causes of death among adolescents. Adolescents can easily contract HIV/AIDS due to unprotected sexual behaviors. Most adolescents do not abstain from sexual relationships; they indulge in risky behaviors like unprotected sex, hence the increased prevalence of HIV/AIDS among adolescents. The study reports that the prevalence of STDS in Nigeria was between ages 15-19. This is in congruence with Gueilla and Madise (2007), who affirmed that the prevalence rate was highest among adolescents and young adults, aged 15-22. Manyara, Kisilu, and Wokabi (2013) referenced AMREF (1994) as evidence that young people's justifications for having sex include peer pressure, curiosity, and the desire for pleasure.

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference between male and female adolescents regarding the effects of HIV/AIDS on the academic achievement of adolescents. The result in Table 2 above indicates a significant difference between male and female adolescents on the effects of HIV/AIDS on the academic achievement of adolescents. This finding agrees with Adeniyi and Okewole (2014), who believed that understanding sexual behavior patterns is crucial to comprehend the possible spread of STDs. The results of this study support Aanu and Olatoye's (2011) finding that there was no significant difference in students' understanding of the cause and method of HIV/AIDS transmission between male and female students.

5. Conclusions

HIV/AIDS represents the most significant single threat to the education process. Numerous difficulties confront the infected and impacted students at school and in the greater community. Adolescents develop in a home setting intertwined with socio-cultural behaviors that are detrimental to their health and play a significant role in HIV and AIDS infection. On the other hand, the school, which is meant to support children as they develop and search for their identities, also faces difficulties, including stigma, prejudice, a lack of support, and the risk of infection. Social and cultural norms, poor food due to poor health, and inability to pay for necessary medication all significantly

impact how adolescents function socially and academically in secondary schools.

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study. Secondary schools should set up youth-friendly centers with qualified staff to deal with HIV and AIDS-related issues. Principals and other stakeholders should get service training on HIV and AIDS. With the full participation of the stakeholders, structures should be built to support expert teachers, particularly school guidance counselors, Family Life and Health Education (FLHE), and quality assurance officers. Non-governmental organizations, in conjunction with government agencies, may organize seminars, workshops, advocacy, and other programs targeting adolescents to achieve the set goals.

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