HIV/AIDS AWARENESS LEVEL AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS STUDENTS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL WITHIN THE IMPHAL WEST DISTRICT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This study examines the level of awareness about HIV/AIDS among boys and girls studying in higher secondary schools in Imphal West District. The main objective is to compare their knowledge regarding the meaning, causes, modes of transmission, prevention, and misconceptions related to HIV/AIDS. A descriptive survey method was used, and data were collected from selected students using a structured questionnaire. The findings help to identify differences in awareness levels between boys and girls, arts and science students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal West District, Manipur and highlight the need for effective health education programmes in schools.

Key words used: HIV, AIDS, Higher Secondary School Students and Imphal West District etc

INTRODUCTION:

HIV/AIDS is a serious health problem that affects people all over the world, especially young people. Proper awareness about HIV/AIDS helps students to protect themselves and avoid wrong beliefs related to the disease. Higher secondary school students are at an important stage of life where correct knowledge is very necessary. In India, and particularly in Imphal West District, there is a need to understand how much students know about HIV/AIDS. This study focuses on the awareness level of HIV/AIDS among boys and girls and compares their knowledge to find any differences.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY: The justification of this study lies in the growing importance of HIV/AIDS awareness among adolescents. Higher secondary school students are at a crucial age where lack of correct information can lead to risky behaviour and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS. In Imphal West District, limited studies have been conducted to compare the awareness level of HIV/AIDS between boys and girls. Understanding these differences is important for planning effective health education and awareness programmes in schools. This study helps teachers, parents, and policymakers to identify gaps in knowledge and attitudes among students. The findings can be useful in improving school-based health education and promoting safe and responsible behaviour among young people.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: The statement of the problem is **"HIV/AIDS AWARENESS LEVEL AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS STUDENTS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL WITHIN THE IMPHAL WEST DISTRICT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY".**

DEFINITION OF THE OPERATIONAL KEY TERMS:

For clarity and understanding, the following key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. **HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus):** HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system, specifically the CD4 cells (T cells), which are crucial for fighting infections. Over time, without proper treatment, HIV can weaken the immune system to the point where the body becomes vulnerable to infections and certain cancers. If untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS.

2. **AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) :** AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection, where the immune system is severely damaged, making the body prone to life-threatening infections and cancers. Not everyone with HIV will develop AIDS, especially if they receive proper treatment.

4. **HIV/AIDS Awareness :** HIV/AIDS awareness refers to the knowledge, understanding, and recognition of the HIV virus and its progression to AIDS. This includes understanding how HIV is transmitted, the methods of prevention (such as condom use), the importance of HIV testing, and the available treatments. It also includes recognizing the social stigma surrounding the disease and knowing how to support those affected by HIV/AIDS.

5. **Higher Secondary School Students :** Secondary school students refer to young individuals enrolled in secondary education, typically between the ages of 16 to 18 years (Grade 11 to 12). In the context of this study, it focuses on students attending higher secondary schools in the urban area of Imphal District, who are within this age group and are recipients of HIV/AIDS education programs.

6. **Imphal West District:** Imphal is the capital city of the state of Manipur in northeastern India. Imphal West refers to the more developed, densely populated region, and includes areas where secondary schools are located.

7. **Socio-Cultural Factors:** Socio-cultural factors refer to the social and cultural influences that shape people's behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. These factors include family values, community norms, traditions, and societal views on topics such as sexuality, gender roles, and health. In the context of this study, socio-cultural factors may affect how students perceive HIV/AIDS and whether they are open to learning about it.

8. **HIV/AIDS Education Programs :** These are structured educational initiatives in schools designed to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. The programs typically aim to teach students about the virus, its transmission, prevention methods, and ways to support those living with HIV/AIDS. These programs can include classroom lessons, interactive activities, health campaigns, and peer education.

9. **Transmission of HIV:** HIV transmission refers to the process by which the virus is passed from one person to another. It primarily occurs through the exchange of bodily fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk. The most common ways HIV is transmitted are through unprotected sexual contact, sharing contaminated needles, and from mother to child during childbirth or breastfeeding.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY: The objectives of the present study are:

1. To compare on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within the Imphal West districts.

2. To compare on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within the Imphal West districts.

3. To find out suggestion for further improvement of awareness among the students of Hr. Sec. School students within Imphal West District, Manipur.

HYPOTHESES: The following null-hypotheses have been formulated in order to achieve the stated objectives:

1. There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within the Imphal West districts.

2. There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within the Imphal West districts.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE OF THE STUDY: The statistical techniques to be used for the tabulation and analysis of collected data are:

1. Percentage
2. T-Test and
3. Graphical representation.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

1. The study is delimited to students of Higher Secondary Schools within the Imphal West district in the academic session 2024-2025.
2. The study is delimited to 120 samples from all different Government and Private higher secondary Schools within the Imphal West District.
3. The study is further delimited to HIV/AIDS awareness of the students with regards to its transmission and preventive measures.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES:

1. **Shinde, M., et al. (2016). A study of awareness regarding HIV/AIDS among secondary school students.**Main Findings: Awareness regarding mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS was found expressed as unprotected sex by 85.94% students. 70.70% students believe condoms as a best means of protection against HIV. Followed by safe blood (43.75%), disposable syringes (40.23%).
2. **Mehta, V., et al. (2016). Assessment of HIV knowledge and awareness in adults of a slum area of Mumbai, India: A cross-sectional study.** Main Findings: The present study showed that in general 67.77% of the adults gave more than 13 correct answers. Mean correct answers from males was 13.69 while that from females was 13.06 out of 18. Overall, females had less knowledge as compared to that of males. Adults in age group from 31 to 45 years had the maximum knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS followed by age group 18 to 30 and 45 to 60 years
3. **Singh, R. K. L. (2022) has conducted a study on "Level of awareness among college students about HIV/AIDS in Imphal East District".** Awareness levels of HIV/AIDS of the students between Modern College and Standard College revealed that mean value of Modern College students' (40.26) were higher than Standard College students' (30.5). Students of Science stream between Modern College and Standard College shown that mean value of Modern College students' (40.73) was higher than Standard College students' (38.65). Again, students of Arts stream between Modern College and Standard College presented that mean value of Modern College students' (39.7) were higher than Standard College students' (37.75). There was no significant difference on level of awareness of HIV/AIDS male students between Modern College and Standard College. there was significant difference on level of awareness of HIV/AIDS female students between Modern College and Standard College.
4. **Lalbiklian, J. (2010). Social dimensions of HIV/AIDS in Churachandpur District of Manipur.** Main Findings: The main causes responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS in Churachandpur district has been found to be transmitted between intravenous drug users sharing contaminated needles and syringes or piercing instruments besides heterosexuals, blood transfusions, misuse of sex by illicit drug users and illicit sex through contaminated blood and blood products coupled with the failure of moral norms of society. Majority of the people of Churachandpur district are also generally friendly, loving and caring towards HIV/AIDS patient and does not discriminate the AIDS patient, though stigmatization unusually prevails.

CONCLUSION: It was concluded that this research represents a novel area of study, as no previous investigations had been conducted on this topic. The study sought to provide an analytical assessment of HIV/AIDS awareness levels among boys and girls students of higher secondary school students in the Imphal West District.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY: For this research on HIV/AIDS awareness level among higher secondary school students in Imphal West, the appropriate method is Descriptive Survey Method which is to describe and analyze how much students are aware of HIV/AIDS, what they know about its causes, prevention, and whether they believe any common myths.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY: The target population for this study consists of higher secondary school students in the Imphal West District. Secondary schools in the region include both government and private schools, with students typically between the ages of 16 and 18 years.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY: A total of 120 students will be selected for the study, with approximately 60 students from 3 government schools and 60 students from 3 private schools. (20 students from each school, 10 male and 10 female).

TOOLS OF THE STUDY: Tools are those instruments employed for gathering new facts to explore field. The present study is an explorative study and Descriptive Survey Method was used for investigation. In this regard, questionnaire was used in the present study explore "**HIV/AIDS AWARENESS LEVEL AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS STUDENTS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL WITHIN THE IMPHAL WEST DISTRICT: A COMPARARTIVE STUDY"**

The questionnaire composed the statements covering various aspects/parameters of HIV/AIDS Awareness.
The questionnaire contains 39 items under the 5 areas of different perspectives of HIV/AIDS Awareness, Namely:
Section 1: General Information about Hiv/Aids (8- items)
Section 2: Scientific Information (8 - items)
Section 3: General Awareness about Other People and Aids (8 - items)
Section 4: Information Relating to Mass Media and Aids (7 - items)
Section 5: Preventive Measures (8- items)

TIME LIMIT OF THE TOOLS USED: The reasonable and actual time limit was given to the Students in order to assess the level of HIV/AIDS awareness. Most of the students managed to complete the questionnaire within 45 minutes positively.

SCORING PROCEDURE OF THE TOOLS OF THE STUDY: The scoring procedure of the given questionnaire of the study was under Thurston Method i. e: The 1 (one) point scale is YES/NO. There will be positive as well as negative questions. 1 mark is to be awarded for right response for positive question. 1 mark is to be awarded for "No" response for negative question.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE OF THE STUDY: For the analysis and interpretation of data, the following Statistical Techniques were used:

1. Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. Graphical Representation
4. T- Test and
5. Percentage

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within Imphal West Districts.

TABLE 1: To compare the level of on HIV/AIDS awareness level among boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within Imphal West Districts.

Sl. No.	N	Sex	Mean	SD	SED	T- test	Df
1	**60**	**BOYS**	**27.35**	**04.37**	**0.37**	**- 0.37**	**118**
2	**60**	**GIRLS**	**27.67**	**05.02**			

@ Remark – Insignificant as the t-value is -0.36872. The p-value is .712994. The result is not significant at p < .05

INTERPRETATION: It can be observed from the above table No: 4.4 that the levels of awareness level among Boys and Girls are found to have mean score of 27.35 and 27.67 with standard deviation of 04.37 and 05.02.

The ratio of the two mean score comes out to be with standard error of 0.37 with t-test -0.37 which is lesser than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the 3rd hypothesis of the study "There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among Boys and Girls students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of the HIV/AIDS awareness among Boys and Girls are found at the average of 27.35 and 27.67.

Hypothesis-2: There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within Imphal West Districts

TABLE 2: To compare the level of on HIV/AIDS awareness level among arts and science students of higher secondary schools within Imphal West Districts.

Sl. No.	N	Stream	Mean	SD	SED	T- test	Df
1	60	Science	26.85	4.96	0.36	-1.55	118
2	60	Arts	28.16	4.33			

@ **Remark – Insignificant as** The t-value is -1.54771. The p-value is .12437. The result is not significant at $p < .05$

INTERPRETATION: It can be observed from the above table No: 4.5 that the levels of awareness level among arts and science students are found to have mean score of 26.85 and 28.16 with standard deviation of 4.96 and 4.33

The ratio of the two mean score comes out to be with standard error of 0.36 with t-test -0.36 which is lesser than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the 4th hypothesis of the study "There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among arts and science students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of HIV/AIDS awareness among arts and science are found at the average of 26.85 and 28.16.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. The first hypothesis of the study **"There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted** as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among Boys and Girls students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of HIV/AIDS awareness among Boys and Girls are found at the average of 27.35 and 27.67.

2. The second hypothesis of the study **"There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted** as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among arts and science students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of HIV/AIDS awareness among arts and science are found at the average of 26.85 and 28.16.

REMEDIAL MEASURES SUBJECT TO MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. The **first hypothesis** of the study **"There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between boys and girls students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted** as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among Boys and Girls students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of HIV/AIDS awareness among Boys and Girls are found at the average of 27.35 (70.12%) and 27.67(70.94%) . As far as 3rd hypothesis there is little difference between boys and girls students. But awareness through various means is the need of the hours for improvement and focus on improving the overall awareness of all students, not separated by gender.

2. The **second hypothesis** of the study **"There is no significant difference on HIV/AIDS awareness level between arts and science students of higher secondary schools within Imphal district" is accepted** as there is no difference between the HIV/AIDS awareness level among arts and science students of Higher Secondary Schools within Imphal west. The level of HIV/AIDS awareness among arts and science are found at the average of 26.85 (68.84%) and 28.16(72.20%). As far as 4th hypothesis there is little difference between arts and science students. But awareness through various means is the need of the hours for improvement and focus on improving the overall awareness of all students, not separated by stream.

GENERAL SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT OF AN AWARENESS OF HIV/AIDS:

1. All the student needs to know the basic concept of HIV/AIDS.
2. All the student needs to know that HIV is the virus that causes AIDS
3. All the student must know that AIDS weakens the immune system?
4. All the student needs to know that HIV/AIDS can't affect anyone regardless of gender or age.
5. All the student should know that HIV cannot be cured but can be managed with treatment.
6. People with HIV/AIDS can live a long life with proper care.
7. All the student needs to know that difference between HIV and AIDS.
8. All the student must know that HIV infection does not show symptoms immediately.
9. All the student must know that HIV is transmitted through blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk.
10. All the student needs to know that HIV can be transmitted through casual contact like hugging or sharing utensils.
11. All the student needs to know know that unprotected sex increases the risk of HIV transmission.
12. All the student must know that sharing needles or syringes can spread HIV.
13. All the student should know that HIV can be passed from mother to child during birth or breastfeeding.
14. All the student must know that HIV cannot be spread through mosquito bites.
15. All the student should know that blood transfusions are safe if the blood is tested for HIV.
16. All the student should understand that HIV is a virus and not caused by a curse or magic.
17. All the student should understand that people with HIV/AIDS deserve empathy and support.
18. All the student should aware that people with HIV/AIDS should not be isolated or discriminated against.
19. All the student should understand HIV/AIDS is not a punishment for immoral behavior.
20. People should get tested for HIV regularly.
21. All the student should aware that stigma prevents people from getting tested or treated.
22. Students should be educated about HIV/AIDS in school.
23. All the student should understand HIV/AIDS awareness can reduce transmission in society.
24. All the student should feel comfortable talking about HIV/AIDS with peers or teachers.
25. All the student should learn about HIV/AIDS from TV, radio, or social media.
26. All the student should follow social media content related to HIV/AIDS awareness.
27. All the student should read newspaper or magazine articles about HIV/AIDS.
28. All the student should know that mass media plays a role in spreading HIV/AIDS awareness.
29. HIV/AIDS-related posters should be displayed in your school or community.
30. All the student should aware and follow any famous personalities or campaigns promoting HIV awareness.
31. All the student must know that more mass media coverage is needed to educate youth on HIV.
32. All the student should aware that using condoms reduces the risk of HIV infection.
33. All the student must know that regular HIV testing is a part of prevention.
34. All the student must know that the sharing of personal items like razors or toothbrushes help prevent HIV.
35. All the student needs to know that abstinence or mutual monogamy can help prevent HIV.
36. All the student needs to know that pre-marital HIV testing is recommended by many health experts can help prevent HIV.
37. All the student should aware of any HIV prevention programs in your area.
38. All the student should know about antiretroviral therapy (ART) as a treatment for HIV.
39. All the student should aware that early detection and treatment can prevent AIDS progression.

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