

## AWARENESS REGARDING MODES OF TRANSMISSION AND RELATED MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT HIV/AIDS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL GOING FEMALES OF PUBLIC AND GOVT. SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT:

**Research Question:** *What is the level of awareness about different modes of transmission and related misconception about HIV/AIDS among secondary school going females of public and Govt. Schools of Kanpur city.*

**Study Area:** *Public and Govt. Schools of Kanpur city.*

**Participants:** *120 Govt. and 120 Public secondary School females students.*

**Results:** *100% Public school female students knew about heterosexual mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS as compared to 80% of Govt. School students. Among Public School students knowledge about transmission of HIV/AIDS by contaminated needle and syringe, intravenous drug abuse, blood transfusion and mother to child was known to almost 80% student. Among Govt. School students except for knowledge about transmission by contaminated needle and syringe (60%) and mother to child transmission (55%) the other modes were poorly known (<50%).*

**Key word:** *HIV/AIDS, Public School, Govt. School.*

### Introduction:

HIV/AIDS is undoubtedly the most talked about disease of our times. Its unabated spread and lack of cure has made this disease to the magnitude of an epidemic. WHO predicts that HIV infected cases in India by 2010 AD would be around 6 million. Since neither treatment nor vaccine is available for this incurable disease, the best approach remains prevention of this infection.

WHO estimated that at least half of the infected people worldwide are of 15-24 years of age. So judging from the seriousness of the problem and vulnerability of this age group, it is necessary that adolescent and youth should have proper knowledge and understanding regarding this disastrous disease. The only alternative left to us at this moment is to minimize the possibility of HIV transmission through behavioral modification and this could be achieved by encouraging AIDS education programmes especially in educational institutions, i.e. schools and universities.

Women account for 44% of the 52 million adults now living with HIV. Because of biological and socio-economic vulnerability of women, the risk of women contracting HIV is

rising worldwide. The sex ratio of AIDS cases in the South East Asia region is reported to be 4 males to 1 female.

In light of above facts the present study was conducted with the objective to assess the awareness regarding modes of transmission and related misconception about HIV/AIDS among secondary school going females of public and government schools.

### Material and Methods:

Present study was carried out in one public school and one Govt. School of Kanpur City selected by **Multistage stratified random sampling technique**. In **stage 1** selection of school's was done. For this purpose two strata i.e. Public and Govt. School were identified. From the list of secondary Public Schools and Govt. Schools, one school from each was selected. In **stage 2** using random sampling technique 120 secondary school going females from each school were selected. In all, 240 students were taken as study sample. Pre designed and pre tested HIV/AIDS awareness questionnaire was administered. Data collected was analysed quantitatively using percentages.

Table 1  
KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MODES OF TRANSMISSION OF HIV/AIDS

S. No.	Items	Public School (n=120) Correct responses		Govt. School (n=120) Correct responses	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Heterosexual relationship	120	100	102	85.0
2.	Homo sexual relationship	62	51.7	31	25.8
3.	Blood transfusion	97	80.8	48	40.0
4.	Intravenous drug abuse	85	70.8	46	38.3
5.	Contaminated needles and syringes	98	81.7	72	60.0
6.	Mother to child	96	80.0	66	55.0
7.	Ear and nose piercing	48	40.0	27	22.5
8.	Acupuncture	46	38.3	23	19.2
9.	Tattooing	46	38.3	21	17.5
10.	Breast feeding	71	59.2	35	29.2
11.	Sharing of razors and blades	63	52.5	45	37.5

From Table 1, it is observed that all 100% Public school female students knew about heterosexual mode of transmission of HIV/AIDS as compared to 80% of Govt. School students. Among Public School students knowledge about transmission of HIV/AIDS by contaminated needle and syringe, intravenous drug abuse, blood transfusion and mother to child was known to almost 80% student. Among Govt. School students except for knowledge about transmission by contaminated needle and syringe (60%) and mother to child transmission (55%) the other modes were poorly known (<50%).

Table 2  
MISCONCEPTION ABOUT HIV/AIDS TRANSMISSION

S. No.	Items	Public School (n=120) Correct responses		Govt. School (n=120) Correct responses	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Kissing	47	39.2	71	59.2
2.	Sharing utensils	26	21.7	61	50.8
3.	Mosquito bites	13	10.8	66	55.8
4.	Playing and working	18	15.0	52	43.3
5.	Blood donation	49	40.8	81	67.5
6.	Sneezing and coughing	29	24.2	54	45.0
7.	Hugging	13	10.8	63	52.5
8.	Sharing toilets	45	37.5	78	65.0
9.	Sharing food	31	25.8	63	52.5
10.	Sharing clothes	17	14.0	58	48.3

Table 2 Shows that most prevalent misconceptions about transmission of HIV/AIDS among students of public school were by blood donation (40.8%), by kissing (39.2%) and by sharing toilets (37.7%). However misconception about HIV/AIDS transmission by mosquito bite, hugging, sharing clothes and towels and playing-working together was less prevalent. Among Govt. students in comparison to public school student, higher prevalence of misconception about HIV/AIDS was observed which was more than 50% for all the myths.

**Discussion & Conclusions :**

Public school students had poor knowledge about tattooing (38.3%) acupuncture (38.3%) and ear/nose piercing (40%) as possible modes of transmission of HIV/AIDS and this knowledge was comparatively lesser among Government School female students.

Misconception about transmission of HIV / AIDS was more prevalent among Govt. School females than Public School Female students. Majority of students had misconception about transmission by kissing, blood donation and by sharing toilets.

On the basis of major findings of the study it can be concluded that students seeking secondary level of education in Govt. School areas are grossly deficient in HIV/AIDS related awareness and constitute a specific target group for school level educational interventions specially designed to sensitize them for the importance of the HIV/AIDS related issues.

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*Team work divides the task  
and doubles the success.*