

**KNOWLEDGE ON HIV/AIDS, STI AND SEXUAL
PRACTICE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN KISII COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Early sexual activity among students has remained a challenge in sub-Saharan Africa. The situation is aggravated by the advent of HIV AIDS. A significant proportion of the information students have is inaccurate, partly coming from sources like the media and peers, having undergone modification in the communication and perception process. This study proposes to assess the level of HIV AIDS knowledge, attitude and sexual behavior among secondary school students in Kisii County.

Methods: The study will use a cross-sectional descriptive study. Kisii County was purposively identified for the study based on its familiarity to the investigator. A secondary school was randomly sampled for the study. The respondents were selected by use of systematic probability sampling method with every third student in the student register being included. Total of 105 students were interviewed using self-administered questionnaires. Data collected from the field was cleaned before data analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data at univariate level.

Results: Six in every ten students were female, 45% in Form 2, 79% had their parents and 77.1% lived with them. Most of these parents were either farmers (41%) or owned a small business (36.2%). Ever heard of HIV and AIDS was mentioned by 96.2%, with sexual intercourse being the most known mode of transmission (95.1%). No cure for HIV was mentioned by 95.5% of the students. Pregnancy (77.6%) and STIs (84.2%) were the two commonly known consequences of unsafe sexual intercourse.

Most students (70.5%) had had sexual intercourse at least once in their life time while 32.4% had it within six months prior to the survey. The mean age at first sex was 12.94 years, 80% of those who had had sex had age mates as their partners and 41.9% was by choice. Of the students who had had sex, 4.8% had suffered from an STI, either gonorrhoea or syphilis.

The students (68.7%) think that it was alright for them to have sexual intercourse if they loved each other yet at the same time about 75% believe that both the girls and boys should not have sex until they got married.

Conclusion: Ever heard of HIV and AIDS is near universal and sexual intercourse is the top known mode of transmission. Most of the students know that condoms can be used to protect against pregnancy and was the commonly mentioned consequence of unprotected sexual intercourse. Most students are sexually active and their age mates are the main sex partners and had it by choice. A small proportion have ever suffered from either gonorrhoea or syphilis and all obtained treatment from a health facility. Additional health education on the different modes of HIV transmission, the measures of HIV prevention and related consequences is recommended for informed decision making on sexuality issues among the secondary school students.