

Knowledge and attitude of Jaffna University undergraduates towards Human Immunodeficiency Virus(HIV) infection

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Background:The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a critically infectious sexually transmitted virus. In 2015, the total number of HIV patients was 2308 with 235 new HIV cases reported to the National STD/AIDS Control Programme that same year. At present, adolescents and youth are considered vulnerable to HIV infection. Empowering youth with knowledge is considered an effective method of HIV prevention. This study aimed to assess the knowledge and attitude of Jaffna University undergraduates towards HIV infection.

Methods:This is a cross-sectional descriptive study carried out among undergraduates of Jaffna University. The estimated sample size was 427. A self-administered questionnaire, adapted from the WHO Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS), was used to assess the level of knowledge and attitude towards HIV infection. SPSS was used to analyze the data.

Results:427 students participated in the study, giving a response rate of 100%. Sixty-eight (15.9%) students scored 5 out of 9 regarding symptoms of HIV. One hundred and thirty-nine (32.6%) students scored 4 out of 7 regarding spreading of HIV. One hundred and thirty-six (31.9%) students score 2 out of 4 regarding prevention of HIV. The association between knowledge level and sociodemographic factors (faculty, religion, ethnicity, gender) was significant ($p < 0.05$). The association between attitude and sociodemographic factors was not significant.

Keywords:HIV, undergraduates, Jaffna, knowledge, attitude