

Abstract for tropEd website

Author: Elizabeth Sagastegui Gomez, Medical Doctor

Year: 2011

Thesis title: A descriptive cross-sectional study evaluating knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes about HIV/AIDS among adult women of reproductive age in a public lying-in clinic in Pasay, Metro Manila

Key words: HIV/AIDS, Knowledge, Beliefs, Attitudes, Women of reproductive age

Research Institutions: Supervisor Dr. Maria Eufemia C. Yap, MD, MSc. from Health Unit – Ateneo Graduate School of Business, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin.

Problem statement/Objectives: Currently, one of the most important diseases in the world is HIV/AIDS. Many organizations and NGOs have provided resources to tackle this disease, though the number of infections is still increasing. One of the reasons behind this phenomena is that there is still lack of knowledge and/or misconceptions on how to prevent infection among the population. It is necessary to study the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes in every population of interest in order to create the appropriate educational programs and change disease trends in the near future. Making people more aware of the risks, how can they protect themselves, and how they can get tested for the disease is necessary in order to stop further spread of the infection. The objective of this study is to investigate knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes among adult women of reproductive age (WRA) from the poor and middle-income classes of Filipino society.

Methodology: A public lying-in clinic in Pasay, Metro Manila, whose clientele comprises the target population, was selected for the study. Section 9 of the Family Health International Behavioral Surveillance Survey was translated into the local language and used to collect data from 170 respondents.

Findings: The main findings were that 4.71% of respondents have never heard about HIV/AIDS. Misconceptions about the means of transmission still persist among the female population and

only 4 respondents have been tested for HIV. The major misconceptions are that mosquito bites and sharing meal with an infected person can transmit the virus, and only 50% of women are aware that breastfeeding can be a means of transmission. Nevertheless, majority of the respondents are aware of preventive methods, especially condoms and faithfulness.

Discussion and conclusion: Different factors like socio-economic, cultural, stigma, and religion could be leading to these misconceptions. Preventive programs must address these in order to pave the way to better understanding of the disease among WRA.

The recommendations are to reinforce the already existing knowledge about the disease and to correct misconceptions among the population through the improvement of preventive programs.