
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT RESEARCH IN BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

ISSN: 2455-944X

www.darshanpublishers.com

DOI:10.22192/ijcrbm

Volume 2, Issue 6 - 2017

Original Research ArticleDOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijcrbm.2017.02.06.005>

A Study on the assessment of knowledge and attitude of radiographers towards HIV/AIDS patients in Anambra state.

*Ugwuanyi, Daniel¹, Chiegwu, H.U.¹, Eze, J.C.¹, Eze, C.U.², Ogbu, S.² and Okeji, M.²

¹Department of Medical Radiography and Radiological Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nnewi Campus, Anambra State, Nigeria.

²Department of Medical Radiography and Radiological Sciences, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Enugu State, Nigeria.

Abstract

Infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) remains a major global threat to good health and radiographers as part of the team that manages the pandemic. If there is negative feelings among radiographers towards AIDS patients, then, the desired aim of ensuring quality life for them will not be achieved. To assess the knowledge and attitude of radiographers working in both government and private clinics in Anambra State towards HIV/AIDS patients. A convenience sample of 42 radiographers were issued a 25-item self-completion questionnaire. The questionnaire contained questions that assessed the knowledge and attitude of radiographers towards HIV/AIDS patients. The result showed good level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS and positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients among radiographers. The study findings indicated good level of knowledge and positive attitudes towards patients with HIV/AIDS among radiographers in various radiology clinics in Anambra State but some misconceptions can be observed in certain areas of transmission modes and attitude. So the study still indicates the need of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS occupational training program to improve the knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Radiographers, HIV/AIDS, Anambra State.

Introduction

HIV (Human immune deficiency virus) is the virus that causes AIDS. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the final stage of HIV infection. Studies on HIV/AIDS have evolved over the years. In 2012, the HIV prevalence rate among adult ages between 15-49 years was 3.1 percent in Nigeria. Nigeria has the second largest number of people living with HIV (CIA world factbook, 2012). The HIV epidemic in Nigeria is complex and varies widely by region. In some state, the epidemic is more concentrated and driven by high risk behaviours while other state have more generalized epidemics that are sustained primarily by multiple sexual partnership in the general population (CIA world factbook, 2012).

The last decade has seen a 50 percent decline in the number of new HIV infections. In China, the number of people affected by HIV have been estimated between 430,000 and 1.5 million, with similar estimate going much higher. In many rural areas of China during the 1990s, particularly in the province of Henan, hundreds of thousands up to millions of farmers and peasant were infected with HIV through participation in state-run blood collection programs in which contaminated equipment was reused (Steinbrook, 2004)

Health care personnel include employees, volunteers, attending clinicians, students, contractors, and any public safety workers whose activities involve contact

with patients and their environment such that exposure to blood or other body fluids can occur. Nurses, trainees, and students are at especially high risk for significant morbidity from these exposures. Non-health care personnel may be exposed by way of social interaction, sexual encounters (including sexual assault), trauma scenarios, intentional inoculations consistent with contemporary terrorist activity, or drug abuse. Radiographers should be concerned on their exposure to body fluid (blood) because that is the well known method of HIV/AIDS transmission. If radiographers consent to the risk associated with exposure to HIV/AIDS Patient, they should apply a sound knowledge and attitude when undertaking radiological investigations.

The study done by Okaro *et al.* (2010) clearly indicated that there should be a satisfactory level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS and positive attitude among radiographers, but the same study indicated a small segment whose attitudes were negative.

Aim

To assess the level of knowledge and attitude of radiographers working in both government and private clinics in Anambra State towards HIV/AIDS patients.

Research Methodology

Research design

The study was a prospective cross-sectional survey research.

Target population

The target population for this study is composed of practicing radiographers working in both Government and private owned hospitals in Anambra state.

Sample size

A convenience sample of radiographers is chosen for the study. The sample was composed of only radiographers available during the period of data collection and who expressed willingness to participate in the study.

Sampling technique

Non-probability convenience sampling was adopted for the study.

Inclusion criteria

- i A radiographer practicing in Anambra state
- ii Willingness to participate in the study.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval was collected from Faculty of Health Sciences and Technology Nnamdi azikiwe university, Nnewi Campus.

Material used for data collection

The material used for data was a validated questionnaire designed in line with the study from a study conducted by Okaro *et al.* (2010).

Method of data collection

A prospective respondent who had satisfied the inclusive criteria is approached for data collection. The data collection instrument is a 25 item structured completion questionnaire designed in time with the objectives of the study

The researcher issued the questionnaire personally to the respondents, waited and collected the filled questionnaire from them.

Sources of data collection

Primary source of data was obtained from different radiological department/centres that are part of the study.

Data analysis

The data was analysed using statistical package for social sciences version 20.0.

The values was expressed using percentages and frequency. The result was represented in tables and charts.

Results

A total of forty-two questionnaires were printed and distributed to radiographers working in various hospitals and radio-diagnostic centers located in Anambra state. All of the forty-two questionnaires were returned, giving a return rate of 100%

Table 1: Age distribution of the respondents

Age(yrs)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-24	4	9.5
25-29	22	52.4
30-34	10	23.8
35-39	2	4.8
40-44	4	9.5
TOTAL	42	100

Fig. 1 :Educational qualification

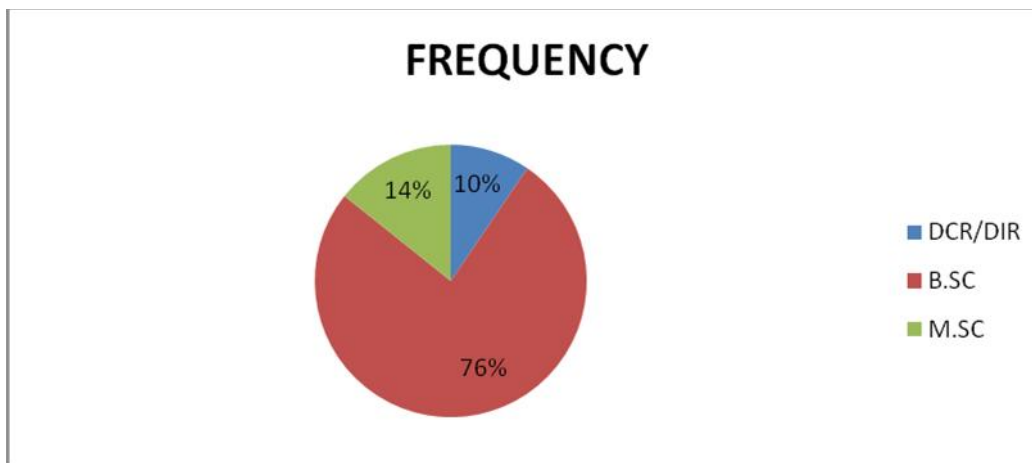


Table 2: Place of work

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teaching hospital	34	81
General/specialist hospital	2	4.8
University	2	4.8
Private clinic	4	9.5
Total	42	100

Fig 2 :Years of practice

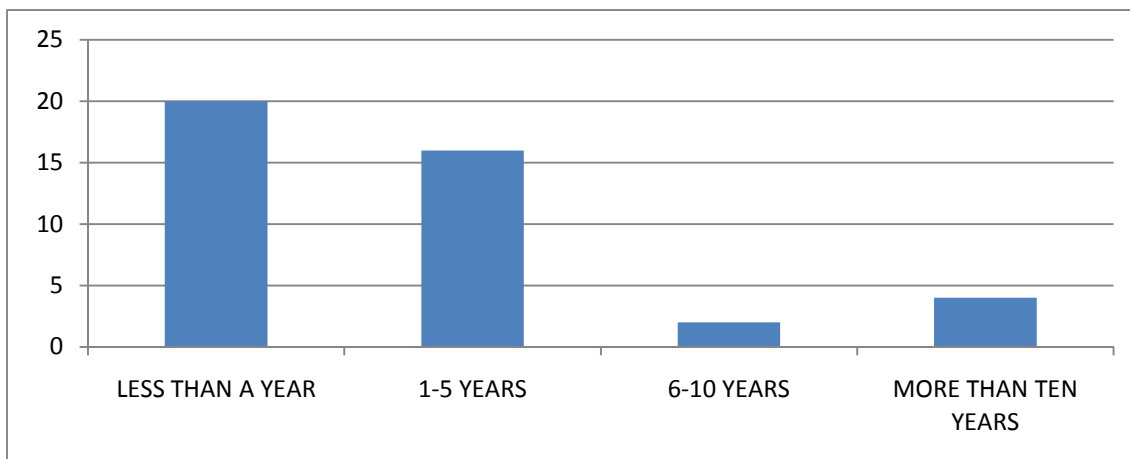


Table 3: rate of knowledge about HIV/AIDS

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Moderate	14	33.3
Good	16	38.1
Very good	12	28.6
Total	42	100

Fig. 3: manifestations of HIV/AIDS

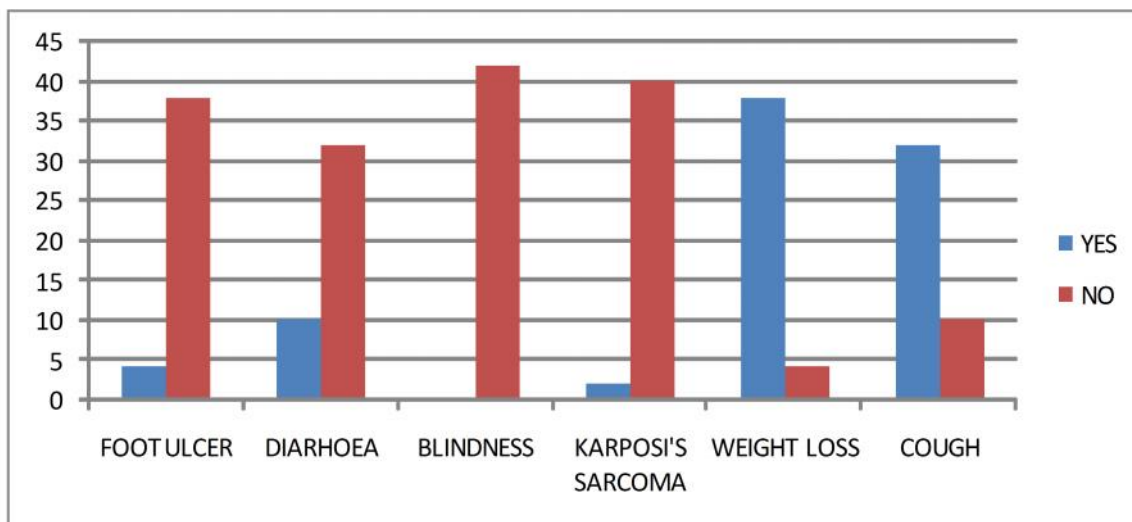


Table 4: responses on radiographers feeling towards HIV patients

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sorry	6	15.8
Pity	16	42.1
Bad	4	10.5
No feeling	12	31.6
Total	38	100

Table 5 :HIV patients attended in a day

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-2	12	28.6
3-4	10	23.6
5-6	8	19.0
>6	12	28.6
TOTAL	42	100

Fig 4: mode of communication with HIV patients

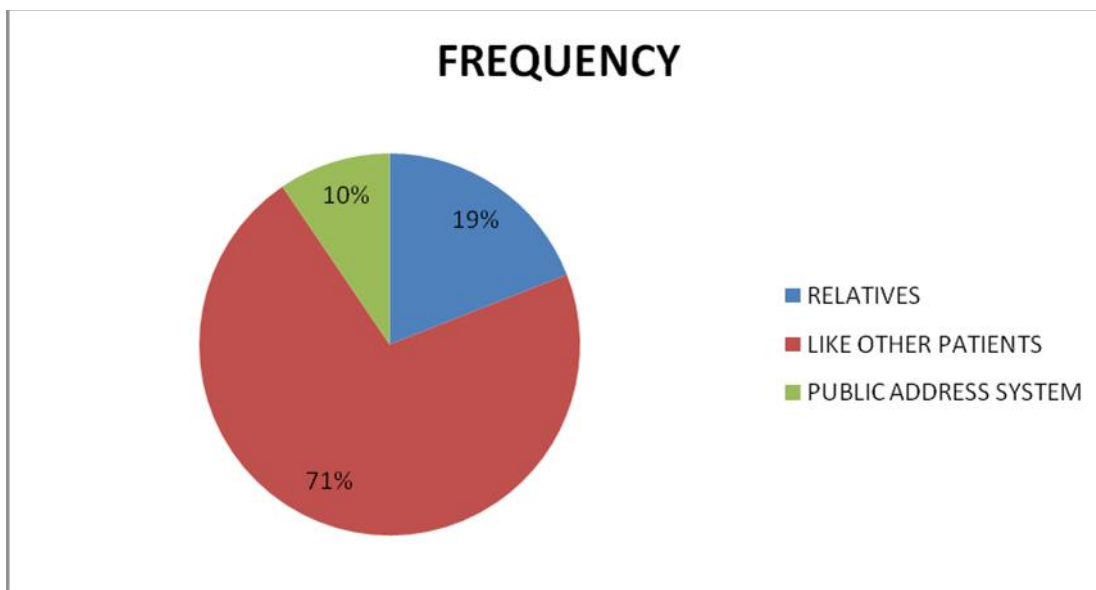


Fig 5 :Universal precaution

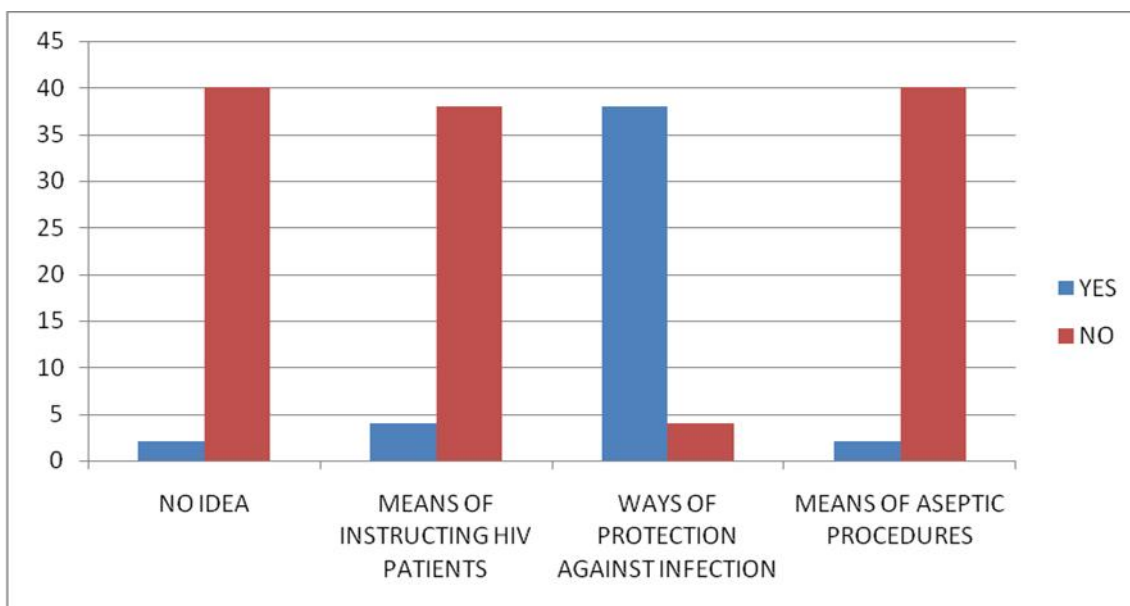


Table 6 : clean couch,cassette and wash hands

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
After the day's job	2	4.8
After examining patient's with open wounds	8	19.0
Only after examining patient's with open wounds	8	19.0
Before and after work	16	38.1
Others	8	19.0
TOTAL	42	100

Discussion

Contamination of HIV/AIDS is a critical occupational cogitate for healthcare workers and the radiographers also have the great tendency for contamination during their course of duties. It is believed that a paucity of knowledge and attitude about HIV/AIDS etiology and mode of the transmission constitutes a major challenge to control this scourge (Jayasinghe *et al.*, 2014). Dissemination of proper knowledge to protect themselves is particularly important in the battle against HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2003). As a radiographer it is important to be well equipped with knowledge, current facts, and treatment options about HIV/AIDS. With the risk of the contacting HIV/AIDS in the work place, there could be a tendency among radiographers to discriminate the HIV infected patients.

This study was carried out to assess the knowledge and attitude of the radiographers working in various radiology clinics towards HIV/AIDS patients. In the study, every effort was taken to reach all the radiographers working in both government and private sectors in Anambra state.

No other similar studies was conducted regarding the knowledge and attitudes of HIV/AIDS among radiographers in Anambra state thus making comparisons is difficult but comparable to the studies (Okaro *et al.*, 2010 ; Çekin *et al.*, 2013) done in Enugu State and other country respectively, the response rate of the present study is very low. As the response rate was low in this study, non respondent bias cannot be completely eliminated from the results obtained.

The current study findings revealed that most of the respondents had the good knowledge which reflects an accurate understanding of the mechanisms of HIV infection, with positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients regardless of their place of work or duration of experience. A study done by Okaro *et al.* (2010) among healthcare professionals in Enugu state pointed out the similar observation in the aspect of knowledge and also aspect of attitudes. They had found positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients. The same results can also be observed in Park's study (Park *et al.*, 2011). Very few studies indicate moderate degree of knowledge ratings. Çekin's study (Çekin *et al.*, 2013) on 'knowledge and attitude towards HIV

among healthcare professionals ' has reported moderate level of knowledge with positive attitude. Pilyugina *et al.* (2000) in Ukraine had conducted a similar study among a sample of 321 health care workers and had concluded as moderate degree of knowledge (48%) level, and Ugochukwu (2003) also stated the same results .

The participants in the present study were good at giving the correct answers to the routes of HIV transmission except certain modes. Having in mind the fact that the participants in this study are health professionals, it was no surprise that they had a good level of knowledge. Almost all the respondents (96.71%) have recognized that sexual intercourse and blood contamination as modes of transmission of HIV/AIDS. Many studies pointed out that hospital workers were at the risk of contacting. More than half of the respondents (59.62%) thought if a person had contacted the virus it must necessarily manifest physically but some of the previous study results were not in the agreement with this (Ugochukwu ,2003). In the current study there were 93.4% who have never attended any occupational training program regarding AIDS or HIV prevention. The findings compare favourably with those reported from other research (Adelekan *et al.*, 1995; Ugochukwu ,2003; Lui *et al.* ,2012) . They had also found that important knowledge gaps and appreciation of occupational training programs in all health categories which they considered.

So many studies have been done which were aimed to assess the attitude towards HIV/AIDS. Most of the literature indicated negative findings (Lui *et al.*, 2012; Dieleman *et al.*, 2007) and few others gave the positive findings.

Still there is no cure for HIV, treatment is now effective at allowing people with HIV to live their lives as normally as possible. Since the introduction of medicines to treat HIV, the death rate from AIDS has reduced dramatically. With effective treatment, very few people go on to develop AIDS. So the attitude of health care workers who will be involved with the treatment process is really important. Even though the respondents of some studies (Okaro *et al.*, 2010) acknowledged that they were obliged to offer the service to HIV/AIDS patients just like other patients ,in the current study (81%) were desired to treat AIDS/HIV patients with the same care as any other patients .

Knowledge through education is a good tool to change negative attitudes of some radiographers towards HIV/AIDS patients. Though, it is our view that enhanced education of health care workers about HIV/AIDS will positively affect their attitude towards

HIV/AIDS patients. We are of the opinion that adequate education about the virus can improve the attitude of this small segment. Awusabo-Awusabo-Asare and Marfo (1997) confirmed that the existence of fear among health care workers was due to working conditions such as insufficient supply of protective items and inadequate information on the status of patients sent to them.

Conclusion

The study findings indicate the good level of knowledge and positive attitudes towards the patients with HIV/AIDS among radiographers in various radiology clinics in Anambra State but some misconceptions can be observed in certain areas of transmission modes and attitude. So the study still indicates the need of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS occupational training program to improve the knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS patients.

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How to cite this article:

Ugwuanyi, Daniel, Chiegwu, H.U., Eze, J.C., Eze, C.U., Ogbu, S. and Okeji, M. (2017) A Study on the assessment of knowledge and attitude of radiographers towards HIV/AIDS patients in Anambra state. Int. J. Curr. Res. Biol. Med. 2(6): 24-31.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijcrbm.2017.02.06.005>