



Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviour and Beliefs of Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University Undergraduate Students Regarding Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

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ABSTRACT Young adults in the age group 18-24 years have the highest incidence of HIV in South Africa. University students, who fall in this age group, have poor knowledge about HIV and engage in risky sexual behaviours. This study sought to explore health sciences students' self-reported beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) at the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. This was mixed methods study with stratified sampling. Most of the respondents were in the age range of 18 to 20 years and were generally well informed about HIV and AIDS. The majority believed that if you had sex with an HIV-positive individual the chance of contracting the disease was hundred percent and that babies from HIV-positive women will certainly have the disease. For eighty-three percent of the participants AIDS is a health-scare they take seriously. Many felt more should be done at the university to prevent the spread of HIV. Although most students have sufficient knowledge of HIV, some still have misconceptions. Most felt that they were practicing safe sex, yet it was concerning that a considerable number of this sample feel they had a good chance of contracting HIV.