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Comparison and associations of comprehensive knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among women 15-49 years old in three East African countries: Burundi, Ethiopia and Kenya

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Background: Women living in Sub-Saharan Africa bear disproportionate burden of HIV/AIDS, which comprises 58 percent of the people living with HIV/AIDS. Correct knowledge can change attitudes and behaviors related to HIV markedly. The aim of this study was to investigate associates and compare comprehensive knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS among women 15-49 years old in three East African countries.

Methods: Women data (Burundi, 2010; Ethiopia, 2011; and Kenya, 2009) was taken from Demographic and Health Surveys and analyzed in SPSS, using multivariate logistic regression.

Results: Awareness was more than 96% in the three countries. The predictor variables, age (except Ethiopia), residence (except Kenya), educational level, religion, marital status (except Ethiopia and Kenya) and wealth index were significant associates of comprehensive knowledge. Similarly, age (except Ethiopia), residence (except Burundi and Kenya), educational level, religion, marital status, wealth index and comprehensive knowledge showed significant associations with accepting attitude. After controlling the socio-demographic characteristics, higher comprehensive knowledge was observed among women in Burundi (OR=4.01, p-value=0.000; OR=1.11, p-value=0.000) than in Ethiopia and Kenya respectively and among women in Kenya (OR=3.62, p-value=0.000) than in Ethiopia. Similarly, more accepting attitude was observed among women in Burundi (OR=3.39, p-value= 0.000; OR=1.93, p-value=0.000) than in Ethiopia and Kenya respectively and among women in Kenya (OR=1.75, p-value=0.000) than in Ethiopia.

Conclusion: The level of comprehensive knowledge and accepting attitude varied significantly among women of the three countries, though predictor variables were similar. Despite awareness of the disease, respondents lack comprehensive knowledge and attitude towards the epidemic and hence HIV/AIDS education and communication activities are recommended.

Biography

Russom Teshome Welday is Assistant Lecturer in Asmara College of Health sciences, Asmara Eritrea, for the Past 4 years. Currently, he is studying Master of Public Health, in Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Tongji Medical College, School of Public Health, Wuhan, China.

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