

## **Indigenous knowledge management: The forgotten strategy to HIV prevention among in-school adolescents in Uganda**

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**Problem:** HIV/AIDS is still a major killer disease among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa and Uganda in particular. In the consecutive years of 2015 to 2019 HIV infections among adolescents aged 10-19 have been persistently high. Several researchers have attributed the high HIV infections to multiple sexual partners, low condom use, those born with HIV and poverty. However, minimal studies have been conducted on the role of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) health information and high HIV infections among adolescents in Uganda. Indigenous information on HIV prevention also remains under documented. Yet, indigenous knowledge is a major critical information source adolescents depend on for health choices on HIV prevention in Uganda.

**Materials and Methods:** Using a qualitative Case study research design, students in ten secondary schools in Kampala District were studied. Focus Group Discussions and key informant interviews were conducted with teachers, students, students' aunts and uncles to find out their indigenous representations of HIV/AIDS, causes of HIV infections and ways of preventing HIV infections.

**Results:** Adolescents are vulnerable to HIV infections because they have a lot of misinformation emanating from some of the indigenous beliefs on HIV/AIDS. Undocumented IK on HIV/AIDS resides in people's minds and there are conflicts between biomedical and traditional practices on HIV prevention.

**Conclusion and Significance:** IK informs health interventions for HIV prevention among young people in many African communities and is relied on for making health choices. This paper adds voice to scholars who have emphasized that successful HIV/AIDS programs must combine biomedical and indigenous representations to be effective.

**Recommendation:** Adolescents have a lot of misinformation emanating from some indigenous beliefs associated with HIV/AIDS, and the knowledge is still under documented. This study recommends that this IK is identified, processed and repackaged in appropriate formats to empower adolescents to be able to make timely health choices based on accurate information on HIV prevention.

### **Biography**

Nina Olivia Rugambwa is a lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science at Kyambogo University in Kampala Uganda. She is both an educationist and Information scientist. Nina has 11 years of University teaching experience. She is passionate about teaching and her research interests are information seeking behavior, Indigenous Knowledge systems management, knowledge Management, curriculum design and development, collection-development and health information. She is also a student mentor with MasterCard Foundation where she mentors University students.