

Mapping indigenous knowledge sources for HIV prevention among in-school adolescents in Uganda

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Problem: Over 80% of rural African people's primary health care needs are dependent on Indigenous Knowledge (IK) health systems. Uganda is one of the countries that have been greatly affected by HIV/AIDS with young people driving new infections. Lack of comprehensive HIV information has been recognized as a challenge. Minimal studies have been conducted to map out where adolescents access IK for HIV prevention. Knowing IK information sources will assist in provision of targeted and accurate information. This paper presents study findings on where adolescents access IK for HIV prevention.

Materials and Methods: Using a survey research design, 399 secondary school students in Kampala were studied. Data on information sources and access was collected using a questionnaire. Documentary review was also employed. Data was analysed by use of descriptive statistics and content analysis.

Results: Adolescents receive information mainly from family, school and mass media. The information sources from family were mothers (43%) and fathers (21%); from school senior women teachers (35%) and senior men teachers (17%) and from mass media internet (14%) and TV (13). Only 28% of respondents interacted very frequently with their teachers on IK and HIV prevention. 39% of respondents accessed IK from PIASCY the national strategy for increasing HIV information to learners.

Conclusion and Significance: Mothers, fathers, senior teachers, internet and TV are the key information sources on IK for HIV prevention. IK is rarely disseminated to learners by teachers. The influence of PIASCY is limited by its minimal focus on IK. Given the centrality of teachers in learning process, this is a lost opportunity for adolescents' access to comprehensive information.

Recommendation: Joint community-school sexuality and HIV prevention activities need to be scaled up in schools. PIASCY books need to be enriched with more IK on sexuality and HIV prevention and IK should be mainstreamed in school curriculum.

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.