

Knowledge Attitudes and Behavior Towards HIV/AIDS Among Males and Females

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HIV is a Human Immunodeficiency Virus that leads to HIV infection. AIDS is an Acquired Immunodeficiency Virus, one of the most life-threatening stages of HIV infection. The virus destroys the immune system of the human body, leading to life-threatening conditions in later stages. (World Health Organization, 2025)

The PDHS 2012-13 reports the knowledge, attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS, and behavior towards HIV/AIDS in the population of Pakistan. The respondents were asked about knowledge, their accepting attitudes, and behavior toward the Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) /AIDS. The respondents were ever-married men and women of age groups between 15 to 49 years were included, and they were inquired if they had ever heard of HIV/AIDs. The respondents who responded yes were asked further questions regarding knowledge and preventive measures for [HIV/AIDS transmission](#).

Comparison Of Knowledge Of HIV/AIDS In The Population Of Pakistan

AIDS-related Knowledge (% who have heard)

The PDHS shows that there was 42.1 percent of ever-married women and there was 69.2 percent of ever-married men in Pakistan had heard about AIDs. It was seen that women and men belonging to Islamabad (ICT) had the highest level of knowledge regarding AIDS, which were 82.9 percent and 91.2 percent, respectively. However, knowledge about AIDs was lowest in Gilgit Baltistan, which was 12.1 % for women and 43.9 % for men, followed by Balochistan (21.8 % for women and 58.2 % for men). Figure 1 shows percentages of women and men who had knowledge of AIDS.

The survey showed that there was the same pattern for comprehensive knowledge of AIDS-like for the knowledge of AIDS (% of those who have heard of it) among different populations in Pakistan. Islamabad had the highest percentage of knowledge regarding AIDs. Gilgit Baltistan had the lowest percentage of knowledge.

Knowledge of HIV prevention methods

Pakistan had one program at the national level for the prevention of HIV named Pakistan's National AIDS Control Program with the aim of reducing AIDS Virus transmission by creating awareness among

the masses. The respondents were asked about key education messages provided by the National AIDS Control Program, that was prevention by using condoms, prevention by limiting sex, and prevention by using condoms and limiting sex. Islamabad showed the highest no. of individuals of both genders who had knowledge of HIV prevention methods.

Knowledge regarding Transmission of HIV from Mother to Child

For assessing the knowledge of transmission from Mother to Child, the respondents asked questions about whether transmission of the virus can occur from a mother to a child through breastfeeding and whether there is any potential risk of transmission, which can be reduced if the mother takes special medications during pregnancy or whether both of them can reduce transmission of HIV. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.)

Gilgit Baltistan reported the lowest percentages for knowledge regarding the transmission of HIV from this route.

Attitudes of Acceptance towards Individuals with HIV and AIDS

The Pakistani population has many fears regarding HIV/AIDs transmission because HIV-infected individuals are stigmatized and discriminated against in society. These attitudes toward an infected individual bring very adverse effects on his mental health. The respondents, who were ever married men and women of ages in between ages between 15- 49 years with knowledge of AIDS, were inquired about a few more questions to determine the level of acceptance for an infected individual.

The attitudes of acceptance toward those living with HIV/AIDS increase in both genders with increased educational and socioeconomic status. In Balochistan, women and men both showed the lowest percentages of acceptance, i.e., 9.5 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively. However, men from Sindh showed the lowest percentage of acceptance, i.e., 8.1 percent.

Knowledge about Testing for HIV

Percentages of women and men ages 15-49 years who were ever married were assessed for their knowledge regarding test services. Islamabad showed the highest percentages of women and men who had knowledge of where to get HIV testing, i.e., 38.5 percent and 49.1 percent, respectively, possibly because of better educational and socio-economic status and better health facilities in the region. Gilgit Baltistan had the lowest percentages, 4.4 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively, for women and men.

Individuals reporting *Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in the past 12 months*

In PDHS 2012-13, it was shown that the number of individuals who self-reported sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) is very low for both genders in Pakistan, thus leading to an underestimation of the actual burden of disease. However, ever-married women 15 -19 years ago from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reported the highest percentage all over Pakistan, i.e. 8.3 percent for reporting Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Prevalence of exposure to medical injections

Exposure to medical injections that are non-sterile may lead to the potential risk of transmission of infections like HIV/AIDS. In PDHS 2012-13, there was a set of questions in order to assess the exposure to non-sterile medical injections in the past 12 months and also assess that they might have a chance of getting HIV/AIDS. Gilgit Baltistan showed the lowest percentages for receiving medical injections in the last 12 months for both genders. (UNAIDS, 2025)

References

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