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# UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK COLLEGE STUDENTS AND AIDS AND HIV

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UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK  
COLLEGE STUDENTS AND AIDS AND HIV

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Breeanna Edwards

June 2017

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COLLEGE STUDENTS AND AIDS AND HIV

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June 2017

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## ABSTRACT

This proposal discusses some of the stigmas about the transmission of HIV and AIDS, its spread amongst college students and how it can be reduced through the efforts of social work. It attempts to discover these concepts to garner a general view of all unfavorable attitudes, lack of knowledge, perceptions of whether a person is infected or not, risky sexual behaviors and social influence for social workers to better understand the root cause of its rise. The primary problem is the rise of the HIV and AIDS virus amongst the college population. Through surveys and interpreting quantitative data, it is found that there is no relationship between having knowledge of HIV/AIDS and engaging in risky sexual behavior. Based on these findings, a social construct theory is suggested to social workers to be put into practice. Social workers may also conduct outreach events to promote awareness, build rapport and gain an understanding of the information gaps within society.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## BACKGROUND AND ISSUE

### Introduction

The first case of AIDS in the United States of America was discovered in June of 1981. By the following year, AIDS cases had tripled. By 1992, with researchers scrambling to locate a cause and treatment of the disease, AIDS had reached a peak of seventy-eight thousand diagnosed cases. An estimated number of 312,000 are infected in the United States and are completely unaware (NIH, 2010). HIV and AIDS is currently the leading cause of death around the world. HIV and AIDS are known as the silent killers. HIV destroys the lymphocytes which are needed to fight off deadly infections. Once the body has damaged lymphocytes the immune system can no longer fight off deadly infections that the body usually would not contract.

For decades, individuals have been unaware or deceived how the disease is spread. HIV is transmitted through four bodily fluids. If blood is mixed via skin lesions or transfused you can contract the disease. If a child drinks breast milk, they too can contract the disease. Also, the disease is most commonly contracted through drug users and unprotected sex, with exchanging seminal and vaginal fluids. Many people have unprotected sex assuming that they will not get AIDS or HIV. It is commonly believed among youth and young adults that they cannot contract the disease because they only had intercourse once. Also,

drug users frequently share the same needles, further causing the infection to spread. There is a gray area as to why the disease is taken so lightly among different people and cultures around the world.

### Problem Statement

Sadly, this is a prevalent problem not only in people assumed to live immoral lives but also in college students. Over the years, HIV and AIDS has reached an all-time peak in teens and young adults. Overall, 9,800 teens were diagnosed with HIV in 2010. The highest rate occurred in college students ages twenty through twenty-four (NIH, 2010). Because HIV is raising quickly amongst young adults, this presents a problem in the United States. Traditionally leaving high school and riding the new wave of adulthood, undergraduate college students enter college feeling invincible to the world. Casual dating with unprotected sex causes the disease to spread among one another. This affects the society as a whole.

Also, college student's experimentation can be damaging to their future. As an upcoming generation, college students need the proper services and programs to help minimize or decrease the rise of AIDS and HIV. Unfortunately, going into the future with soon to be graduates who will be implanted in the society needs sufficient help and services to make awareness and decrease the transmission of HIV and AIDS as a whole. AIDS is a silent killer and without the help of society and social workers it will quickly tarnish the health of thousands for generations to come.

Social worker agencies do not have a current role in the college community regarding the rise of the pandemic. The roles of social workers have to be better implemented with incoming freshmen in college to make awareness of the disease. It is not found that social workers go into schools and offer specific devices regarding the STD's.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the relationship between the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students' knowledge of the disease. There is a concern for this problem throughout society because the current statistics indicate that the number of new diagnoses are increasing. There is also cause for alarm through different schools and agencies for youth and young adults who have contracted HIV and AIDS. The clients would be students and those who come in for services who are unlearned about the disease itself. Also, practitioners may be concerned with the issue because they serve the population and offer health care services to them.

The findings of this study will better help the social work practice because it will give different agencies and social workers a better understanding of how serious the issue is and which populations the social workers should gear their services to. Also, the social worker will know what approach to take and what areas they need to improve on. College students have a lack and of concern for AIDS and HIV, which, causes the spread to continue. The study looked into the dynamics of the college students understanding of the disease and the risky sexual behavior.

Social workers are concerned about this issue because the increasing transmission rate is of pressing importance. Colleagues wonder what can be done to lower the levels of rising cases. The question of concern is why do college students have a lack of concern for the disease. It is important for social workers to understand the leading cause of the problem in order to advocate for college students that are uninformed and also to help prevent the disease. Since the disease is on the rise, there is a need for intervention methods. Social workers are within society to offer help and support to the people, which is why it is important to receive a clear understanding of the mindset within the college population; with the conclusion of the study there can be a direct approach implemented.

#### Purpose of the Study

Sadly, this is a prevalent problem not only in people assumed to live immoral lives but also in college students. Over the years, HIV and AIDS has reached an all-time peak in teens and young adults. Overall, 9,800 teens were diagnosed with HIV in 2010. The highest rate occurred in college students ages twenty through twenty-four (NIH, 2010). Because HIV is rising quickly amongst young adults, this presents a problem in the United States. Traditionally leaving high school and riding the new wave of adulthood, undergraduate college students enter college feeling invincible to the world. Casual dating with unprotected sex causes the disease to spread amongst students. This affects society as a whole.

Also, college students' experimentation can be damaging to their future. As an upcoming generation, college students need the proper services and programs to help minimize or decrease the rise of AIDS and HIV. Unfortunately, going into the future with soon to be graduates who will be implanted in the society needs sufficient help and services to make awareness and decrease the transmission of HIV and AIDS as a whole. AIDS is a silent killer and without the help of society and social workers it will quickly tarnish the health of thousands for generations to come.

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### Significance of the Study for Social Work

There was a need to conduct this study because there is a lack of awareness and concern for the disease at hand. The researchers concern

stemmed from the rise in HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students. Further analysis was needed to determine if the knowledge of HIV and AIDS coincides with the decision making of college students.

The nature of the work would vary in helping according to the setting and typical duties which include: assessing, counseling and offering advice to clients arranging appropriate care, resources or benefits, liaison with relatives, colleagues and other professionals report writing budgetaries and managerial administration attending or contributing towards court cases and unsociable hours are common and uncertain settings. Promotion is possible through specialization, research options or managerial roles. Ongoing professional development is an important feature of the work. Social workers have to be willing to adapt to the needs of the people which comes with learning new things every day.

Social workers can offer services of intervention and prevention for the rise of the disease which would offer support to college students. Social workers also become more knowledgeable regarding the disease and the thought process of the students. The generalist intervention model of this study evaluated and assessed college students and their thoughts of the disease. Researchers identified the area of need and address the issue specifically. Because many college students lack understanding or care about the consequence of the disease, social workers can offer support services and college community events to create awareness and services for students all around to inform and slow its

advancement. Therefore, does the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergrad social work students have an impact on the knowledge of the disease?

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

Researcher studies to evaluate different participants and subgroup regarding AIDS and HIV. Their reviews added to the purpose of the study.

#### Attitudes

Agrawal (2012) conducted a careful examination of undergraduate college girls to develop a better understanding of their awareness of HIV and AIDS practices. This examination underlines the family dynamics and how it contributes to sex in young women and their outlook on HIV and AIDS. The examination focused on the women's awareness and opinion on sex and its relation to attitudes toward HIV and AIDS.

The participants consisted of 250 unmarried women in college close to graduating or in the process of taking courses to qualify for graduation. The results showed that 167 of the women have lovers of a different sex. One-hundred and three were from nuclear family households. Two hundred and twenty-one of the participants do not believe they should have had sex before marriage (Agrawal, 2012). The participants believed that people should just get married instead of having sex with different people. Fifty percent of the women believed if people had premarital sex, there could have been a communication gap in extended families and 59% believed it was just a communication gap

(p.180). Twenty-six percent agreed that people have premarital sex because of the influence of the media and 25% in nuclear families. Ninety percent of the women feel the best way to stay celibate is by refraining from having friends of the opposite sex.

The ending of the results found by Agarwal showed that family dynamics did not offer sufficient information about HIV and AIDS. Fifty-one percent of the participants first heard about HIV and AIDS from the media. Thirty eight percent learned about it through close friends and six percent learned from their teachers. Two hundred and thirty-one individuals believed it was a possibility they could have AIDS because they had premarital relations and would only get tested if they were forced. Seven percent of the women believed that there is no way possible they could have AIDS. In another study, (Parsons, Perry, Bimbi, and Borkowski (2000) college students were examined to analyze their contraceptive methods and sexual behaviors. This study gives the social workers and agencies a view of the family and how it plays a role in the knowledge and concern of the disease.

Although these articles are important to this research they article should have studied the dynamics that could also be playing a role in their view of AIDS and HIV. Also, the study only examined unmarried women and also could have had widened its scope to participants of different status and backgrounds.

Similarly, Lenr, Dilorio, Dudley & Liapana, (2000) conducted a study on attitudes toward AIDS and HIV. The study was begun three years prior of the

evaluation date. During the beginning of the study it was approved by through the review board for the six institutions that participated. After the approval process was complete, the researchers gathered addresses of the students who completed part of the study during the beginning of the three-year process.

The results show that 55% of the White participants participated in sexual intercourse before the age of 18. Only 66% of the participants were open with the mother their mothers and 39% were open with their father (Lenr, Dilorio, Dudley & Liapana, 2000). Sixty-six percent of the participants participated in sexual intercourse before the age of 18. Seventy-eight percent of the participants were open with their fathers. Thirty-two percent of the male participants did not participate in condom use, 59% did. Forty-six percent of the female participants did not participate in condom use and 53% did. Sixty-eight percent of the African American participants did not have sexual intercourse conversation with their parents and 31% of the participants did. Fifty-five percent of the White participants had sexual intercourse conversations with their parents and 44% did not (p.190). Parents were not fully open with their parents regarding sexual intercourse which caused lack of awareness to become a domino effect. In conclusion, this research founds gives social workers a longer time span of results and research developing a more concrete approach.

Parson, Halkitis, Bimbi and Borkowski, (2000) conducted a study to evaluated the barriers of condom use. The study also analyzed the attitudes of the college students and the use of condoms. The researchers assessed the

impact of the cost of condom use and unprotected sex (Parson et al., 2000). The researcher concluded the study and examined each variable.

The participants were upper division college students. If participants were unmarried they had to be between the ages of 17 and 25. The participants must have had sex in the previous month. A total of 704 from North eastern universities participated in the study (Parson et al., 2000). The recruitment was done by trained professionals. The participants were given questionnaires in the classroom and participants were informed that the study was voluntary. Every department was addressed to prevent biased affiliation. The participants were anonymous. The personal data was not recorded and no student or faculty not willing to participate in the study was present.

The results stated that 696 participants benefited from condom use. Six-hundred and ninety-three don't agree with the cost of condoms six-hundred and seventy-six were tempted to not use condoms (Parson et al., 2000). Twenty-four percent believe condoms were too much maintenance at times. Only 358 of the participants used condoms consistently and 331 did not use condoms consistently. Forty percent believed they should have practiced safer sex and sixteen percent was tempted to remove the condom during sex. Thirteen percent believed the cost of condoms is worth safe sex practice, and 19% believe it was not worth it.

## Risk Taking Behavior

Like the others, Tung, Hu, Efrid, Yu and Su, (2011) conducted an internet study to evaluate Chinese college students attitude toward HIV. The research analyzed relations of HIV and behaviors related to HIV (Tung et al., 2011). The student's sexual behavior will also be evaluated among different colleges instead of one to receive a variety of results.

The researchers used the internet to conducts their study. The researchers used the internet method to give participants privacy and time to answer the questions truthfully. A descriptive cross sectional format was used to collect the data (Tung et al., 2011). The study was approved by the universities Institutional Review Board and the participants were later asked to participate in the study through email. Once the participants began the study they were consenting to participate in future data collection and research. The participants consisted of 475 students from the age of 18 to 35 years old. The researchers collected the data from online and measured the participant's sexual awareness of HIV, sexual activity, sexual partners and how often they used condoms.

The results stated that 77% heard about HIV from friends of the same sex and 45% heard about HIV through there girlfriend or boyfriend. Only 23% of the participants heard about HIV through health care professionals and 22% percent from school teachers (Tung, Hu, Efrid, Yu & Su, 2011). Seventeen percent of the participants believe HIV could be spread through swimming pools, 15% believed it to be spread through sneezing and coughing. Fifteen percent of the participants

believe Asians are not as susceptible to HIV opposed to other inner city races. Eight five of the participants considered themselves sexually experienced and 21% of the participants used condoms every time they had sex (p.612). Overall, only 40% of the students received sex education classes in school. The study concluded that college students are misinformed regarding of the severity of protection and the transmission of HIV. Because student was not educated on the importance of safe-sex college students still continue to participate in risky behavior. The next study conducted analyzes college's student sexual risk taking.

Winfield and Whaley (2005) conducted a study to examine college student's relationship and their sexual risk taking behavior. The purpose of the study was to specifically investigate condom use and preventative methods. The researchers hypothesized that college students who are in relations with someone else will participate in risky sexual behavior (Winfield & Whale, 2005).

The method of the study used 233 college students in Black American classes. The participants must have not participated in any vaginal intercourse for the last 6 months. Eighty percent of the participants were under 21 years old and 20% was over 21(Winfield & Whale, 2005). The study used 112 questionnaires. Scales were used to collect accurate data of different sexual behaviors. The questionnaires were given to participants in groups of 10 to 30. The questionnaires were number coded and ranged from 30 to 45 minutes.

The results of the participants showed that 36% of the college students participate in safe sex behavior. Sixty-three percent of the female students did not use condoms and 37% of the male students did not use condoms. Females were inconsistent condom users at 55% and males were inconsistent condom users at 33% (Winfield & Whale, 2005). Sixty-eight percent of the students were married and out of all the participants none of them were single. Overall only 0.5% had complete knowledge of the importance of safe sex and the leading causes of HIV (p.197).

Concluding, these articles analyzed the college students risk taking behaviors which can be a great asset to the study to weigh their risk-taking behavior with the research question. A negative to social workers can be the research design and the broadness of the studies.

The next study was conducted evaluated college students and their knowledge of the virus. This literature can be a great attribute to bring up a barrier that can also be causing the disease to be on the rise. If college students believe condoms are not comfortable or unnecessary this is very important findings for the social worker that can be evident in advocating effectively.

Hightow et al. (2004) conducted a study because two male students were diagnosed with the virus. The purpose of this study is to receive an understanding of the diagnosed HIV infections. The researchers wanted to find out the number of those infected with the disease at the school. The study concluded the prevalence of the disease among college students.

The methods of the study were to review and evaluate North Carolina HIV/AIDS surveillance records (Hightow et al.2004). The participants were males between the ages of 18 and 30 years old. The researchers collected data counseling and testing sites on patients who were already diagnosed with HIV. The researchers reviewed records of the highest prevalence and largest number of students who have already contracted the disease. The researchers used cross-sectional and demographics from the male participants. Results were calculated using percent's and data was written down.

Nine- hundred and ninety-eight men had been diagnosed with HIV (Hightow et al.2004). Twelve of the cases first receive negative anti body tests and six months after received positive results. Twenty-eight percent of the participants had sex with their male partner after the diagnosis and 192 of the men had sex with their female partner's one year after their diagnosis. The highest rate of HIV infections was among African American male students. Eighty-four of the men infected attended schools close by each other in North Carolina and had more than eight sexual partners. Three of the schools had 110 students infected over the years. In total, 21 colleges had the highest amount of HIV infected students. Another study was conducted to analyze college student's anticipation regarding HIV.

Furthermore, Barth, Cook, Downs, Switzer and Fischhoff, (2010) conducted a study to analyze why college students would rather not be tested for

HIV. This study also examined why some college students did not mind taking the HIV test. The study also evaluated the behavior of college students.

The method of this study used the qualitative research. The researchers used open ended questions so the participants had time to express themselves. The researchers used the pilot test method for the interview. The study used undergraduate college students from the age of 18 to 22 years old (Barth 0et al., 2010). A total of 130 participants participated in the study. There participants were mailed packets asking for their voluntary participation. The participant was interviewed based on the informed consent response (p.156). The interviews used the hypothetical scenario regarding a friend who had sex with someone for the first time. The study evaluated the participants additional and what they believed was needed to help the friend decide what to do.

The results showed that the participants were younger than 21 years old. One fourth of the participants had more than 5 sexual partners. Sixty-one percent of the participants refused HIV testing because of embarrassment. The participants also were afraid of receiving positive test results. Eighty-eight percent cared about what other people would think. Twenty-nine percent had negative emotions and 24% was afraid to go through with the procedure. Forty four percent believed it was better not to know and only 10% have concern for the partner (Barth, Cook, Down's, Switzer & Fischhoff, 2010). Eighty-eight percent of the participants experienced symptoms of the HIV virus. Seventy-three percent of the participants had sexual intercourse and 10% did not have sexual

exposure. Seventy-eight percent of the participants believed their friends should not get tested because it would have ruined their reputation (p.157). Twenty-two percent were unsure of where their friend should go and fifty-six believed it was just something convenient at the time and that it would not hurt. In development of this research paper, this case study would be an adequate asset to the research question, but the article lacks the representation of other cultures and genders.

### Theories Guiding Conceptualization

A theory used to guide the current study was the social construct theory. This theory concluded that society shapes peoples' thoughts of what is correct and how undergraduates view things. Social work college students can form ideas of how something is supposed to be, or they infer the importance of something based upon the molding of society. Strebel, (2006) believes that developing community interventions and realities about HIV and AIDS can help shape the college students thought process. Strebel, (2006) found that society can first start with the construction of gender roles and who is developing a better identification of self and self-worth. Also, the social constructs can mold social workers to be able to identify the issue in the college community and work to make a change for the health and knowledge of college students.

Another theory that guided conceptualization was the community development theory. Schiele (2005) summarizes the work of Community Development as collective problem solving, self-help, and empowerment and is

the developing capital, social inclusion and exclusion, and capacity building. The general truths are common in all of their work and descriptions of the theories tenets.

While there may be any number of macro level theories with the implications for direct practice, it is believed that the theory of community development is perhaps the most practical framework for social workers seeking lasting change for individuals and the communities and societies in which they live in. Overall, the community development theory can help the social workers advocate effectively for those who have contracted the disease, history and knowledge of the disease and concrete evidence of where the change needs to be made in the school setting.

The questions answered are: Will the participants be honest and willing to do the study? It is important to pick a subgroup or population of people that's fitting to this demographic. Although college students vary in age, most undergraduate students are usually just beginning college or are straight out of high school. This study will be very feasible and doable. The participation for this study will be sufficient in the college atmosphere. The population for this study is feasible and convenient. A minor difficulty will be finding willing participants due to the subject of the research. Another feasibility is seeing if the study is practical, easily attainable and if the participants can possibly interview.

## Summary

Overall, the research was very feasible for social workers. Social workers must focus on the root issues in the lack of awareness and concern for the spread of HIV and AIDS. Also, social workers can easily develop plans for research studies and results. It is also very practicable for the social workers to conveniently sample for different sub groups and cultures to give a better understanding and dynamic of the issues as a whole. Furthermore, because the research has proven that the epidemic is on the rise among college students; social workers were able to gain more knowledge and offer support services.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

This study describes and evaluates undergraduate social work college students and their lack of concern for AIDS and HIV. Additionally, this study gave understanding to social workers and the approach that should be taken to minimize the expanse of the disease. This chapter contains the details on how this study was carried out. The sections discussed will be study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects and data analysis.

#### Study Design

The objective of this study was to explore undergraduate social work students' knowledge and understand of AIDS and HIV admits correlation to risky sexual behavior. Additionally, this study gave understanding to social workers of how serious the pandemic is and why college students have a lack of concern or understanding for the disease. This research was an exploratory research project that found out how much the average college student knows about the disease and the social worker's role regarding it. This was a quantitative study. The sample was chosen to evaluate how much college students know and their understanding.

The quantitative approach explored the understanding and thoughts of the undergraduate social work college students. Also, questions were asked to identify their own personal experiences rather than being limited to certain answers. Through the social work perspective there has not been a lot of research conducted regarding the issues as a whole. Because of this research approach social workers will be able to identify and evaluate college students understanding and evaluate their perceptions of the disease and their thought process of HIV and AIDS. Also, evaluating if it is a correlation between the behaviors. The social worker can provide new approaches within the field, insights and programs regarding the expanse of HIV and AIDS. Surveys unfold the knowledge college students have regarding the disease and evidence to follow during the research.

A limitation of using surveys is that by human understanding it is natural to change feelings, emotions and behaviors until answering the questions. The quantitative study took a limited amount of information but could not sum everything up in one questionnaire. Surveys can lack validity because there is no accurate way to assure that the respondent is being truthful. Other limitations are respondent maybe forgetful and not thinking in the full context of different situations, people may also read differently into each question ad give a response based on their own understanding or interpretation of the questions. Lastly, researcher is making his own decisions and assumptions as to what is and what us not important. Therefore, the finds of this are not intended to say all

college students are inadequately taught or lack complete understanding of AIDS and HIV. This research gives social worker data to better assist and offer their services. Overall, the quantitative survey approach can offer gray areas because researchers are not able to measure each participant's individual thought process.

This study sought to answer does the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students have an impact on their knowledge of the disease?

### Sampling

The study utilized a convenience sampling method of research using surveys to collect data. Research was collected at California State University, San Bernardino. Approval was given from teacher and participant. There was a total of 50 surveys given to participants. The surveys were distributed inside the classroom. The requirements include that participants had to be social work college students, were 18 years or older and must live currently on campus. Each participant represented different subgroups, cultures, and backgrounds.

### Data Collection and Instruments

Quantitative data was collected through surveys. The survey questionnaire was used to collect data. Demographic and cultural questions was provided in the beginning of the survey. The information consisted of age, gender identification, and that's with the identification, achieved in the cage education

level, and whether this subject is a person or not. The researcher conducted the survey. The dependent variable was the concern of HIV and AIDS and risky sexual behavior which will be scored on the survey questionnaire which is the interval level of measurement. The independent variable was the knowledge of the disease which is the number of correct responses which would be the interval variable of measurement.

The survey questions were divided into three sections. The first section asked demographic questions; the second section inquired of tests for knowledge of AIDS and HIV; the final section assessed sexual behaviors.

### Procedures

Emails were sent out regarding the purpose and goals of the study as well as the need for undergraduate college students. The emails contained dates of the survey and appropriate times for me to pass them out inside the classroom. The professor informed the participants of the survey and if they would be willing to participate. The professor gave the researcher an opportunity to explain the survey and the purpose of the survey. Secondly, students were given the opportunity to choose to do the survey. Also, researchers left the classrooms when participants were taking the survey.

### Protection of Human Rights

The identity of the participants was kept confidential from other individuals. The participant's surveys were placed into folders and sealed. It was explained to the participants that their confidentiality and anonymity is secure. The study was

only being evaluated and analyzed by the researcher. Surveys were placed in a locked drawer. Once the data was entered into SPSS, the surveys were shredded and the data will not be accessed by parties outside of the researcher and administration. Participants' informed consent required to sign with an "X to ensure anonymity (Appendix B) before starting the survey.

### Data Analysis

All data was gathered and analyzed with quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics were completed to identify the demographic profile of the sample. Pearson First survey questions will be reviewed to make sure questions were answered. Also, there was a review to see how many participants were able to complete the survey in its entirety. Correlational analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between HIV/AIDS knowledge and engaging in risky sexual behavior. All analyses were conducted on SPSS, version 22.

### Summary

The study was purposed to analyze and evaluate the following question: Does the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students have an impact on their knowledge of the disease? Additionally, it gave understanding to social workers and the approach that should be taken to minimize the disease. The study was quantitative research and completely confidential and used for research purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The results of this study were determined through convenient sampling method. Research was collected at California State San Bernardino University. The results showed findings of data in different cultures and demographics. The results searched through correlation between the knowledge of the disease and risky sexual behavior of the social work college students.

#### Results

There was a total of 50 participants. Twenty-seven participants were male and 23 participants were female. The ethnicities of the sample were 26% African American, 26% Caucasian, 16% Asian, 12% Hispanic, and 4% other. The age range of the participants was between 22 and 51 years old. Six percent of the participants were in their second year, 26% in their third year, and 20% were fifth year and above.

The results found that 48% percent of the participants heard of the disease in school, 14% heard from a friend, 10% from work, 20% from family and 8% from social workers. The interval measurements of risky sexual behavior and knowledge of the disease. A Pearson correlation coefficient found no relationship between knowledge of HIV/AIDS and engaging in risky sexual behavior,  $r = .75$ ,  $n=50$ ,  $p=.60$ .

## Summary

The knowledge of the disease does not determine whether an individual participates in risky sexual behavior. It is further assessed that each individual knows different things about the disease, but it has not shaped their behavior.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This study was conducted to analyze and the relationship between the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students' knowledge of the disease. This research conducted was to give social workers in the field can see if there was a correlation in the knowledge of the disease and the risky sexual behavior. The disease is prevalently on the rise in teen and young adults. It is imperative to asses all avenue to find the root issue.

### Discussion

Based on the correlation of this study there were no significant findings regarding a correlation amongst the rise of the disease and the social college student's risky sexual behavior and knowledge. The sample size was not large enough to obtain definitive findings and is subject to error. The survey used to test knowledge of HIV/AIDS and engaging in precarious sexual behaviors were not adequately tested for validity and reliability, thus these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Over the years, HIV and AIDS has reached an all-time peak in teens and young adults. Overall 9,800 teens were diagnosed with HIV in 2010. The highest rate occurred in college students ages twenty through twenty-four (NIH, 2010). Undergraduate social work students have knowledge of the disease but it has no correlation their risky sexual behavior. This correlation was formed to see if the

root cause was the students' lack of awareness or concern, which caused them to engage in risky sexual behavior. Furthermore, the social construct theory is an approach that social workers can take. Based on social construct theory the thoughts of the social work undergraduate student could possibly be shaped by society itself.

#### Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research

Recommendations for social work practice was for social workers to identify the gaps within society and accommodate the dynamics of present issues. More research needs to be conducted regarding the cause of the rise of the disease and the cause of risky sexual behavior. Intervention via social platforms, campus meetings and outreach can further help reduce the spread of the disease and in turn reduce the number of newly diagnosed.

#### Conclusion

The approach of this study was for better understanding and evaluation of why the disease is on the upswing. Although there is no correlation of risky sexual behavior and levels of knowledge of the disease it is imperative for social workers to continue the research and find the root of why the disease is so prevalent among younger adult college students. Currently there is a gray area in the understanding of the disease. Although there was no correlation the study has shown that college students are participating in risky sexual behavior but that

college students can be participating in the behavior regards of what they know about the disease and what they don't know about the disease.

APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire (Please circle where applicable)

1. What is your sexual orientation?

Male      Female

2. What is your nationality?

African American/Black

Caucasian/White

Asian

Hispanic

Other

3. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What year are you in school?

1 year

2<sup>nd</sup> year

3<sup>rd</sup> year

4<sup>th</sup> year

5<sup>th</sup> year and above

5. Where did you first learn about AIDS and HIV?

School

Friend

Work

Family

Social Worker

Please circle True or False:

6. AIDS is acquired before HIV.

True          False

7. HIV is transmitted the saliva.

True          False

8. AIDS is curable.

True          False

9. The leading cause is sex.

True          False

10. Condoms can prevent AIDS and HIV.

True          False

11. Infants are not always born with HIV if the mother and/or father has the disease.

True          False

12. HIV can be transmitted through 3 bodily fluids, semen, breast milk, and saliva.

True          False

Scale:

13. Are you aware of 1980's HIV and AIDS epidemic?

Very Aware    Aware                      Somewhat aware    Not at all aware

14. How many sexual partners have you had?

0-1                      2                      3                      4                      5 or more

15. How often do you use protection?

Always                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

16. I worry about being infected with a sexually transmitted disease.

Not at all                      Very true

17. I frequently engage in risky sexual behavior (no protection, multiple sexual partners).

Always                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

Created by Breeanna Edwards.

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to evaluate and analyze awareness of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students this study is being conducted by Breeanna Edwards, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Armando Barragan, Assistant Professor in the school of Social Work at California State University of San Bernardino (CSUSB). The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-committee at CSUSB.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate the relationship between the concern of HIV and AIDS among undergraduate social work students' knowledge of the disease.

**DESCRIPTION:** Participants will be asked questions on a survey regarding demographics and knowledge and attitudes of AIDS and HIV.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without any consequences.

**CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONMITY:** Your responses will remain anonymous and surveys will be destroyed once the data has been analyzed.

**DURATION:** It will take 5 to 10 minutes to complete the survey.

**RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks to the participant's

**BENEFITS:** there will be no benefits to the participants but participants will gain knowledge about AIDS and HIV.

**CONTACT:** if you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Barragan at (909) 537-3501.

**RESULTS:** Results of the study can be obtained from Pfau Library Scholar Works database ( <http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2017.

This is to certify that I have read the above and I am 18 years or older

\_\_\_\_\_

Place an X mark here

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

APPENDIX C  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FORM

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

*D. Pugh*

Researcher(s) Breanna Edwards

Proposal Title Undergraduate Social Work Students  
and AIDS and HIV

# SW1656 *you can change your proposal title*

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

-----  
Proposal is:

- approved
- to be resubmitted with revisions listed below
- to be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

- faculty signature missing
- missing informed consent  debriefing statement
- revisions needed in informed consent  debriefing
- data collection instruments missing
- agency approval letter missing
- CITI missing
- revisions in design needed (specified below)

*10/31/16*  
*SW1656* *Jan 20 2016*

*[Signature]* Committee Chair Signature 10/31/2016 Date

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

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