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**An Assessment of the Knowledge, Attitude and Risk Perception  
of the of Pharmacist regarding HIV / AIDS  
In Jodhpur (Rajasthan, India)**

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**Abstract:-**

In India the role of pharmacist in improving public health is somewhat neglected. They have not been given proper education & training neither government official gives proper attention towards their role in improving public health. Pharmacists are directly in contact with public or masses & they can act as a first information center. With less number of health care providers & health educationist for mass, pharmacists are big untapped source for spreading knowledge about diseases of Public Health importance. The main aim of the study is to find out the Knowledge, Attitude & Risk Perception of the pharmacist, to establish that there is an immediate need to provide diseases related knowledge to Pharmacist in this region. Overall knowledge about HIV/AIDS (Human immunodeficiency virus / Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome) is very poor in pharmacists; due to this their attitude towards HIV/AIDS suffering people are also very strange. The awareness about ART (Anti Retroviral Therapy) & PEP (Post Exposure Prophylaxis) is very low in pharmacist. Most of the pharmacists are still willing to learn about HIV/AIDS and want to work for public health.

**Key Words:** - HIV/AIDS, Pharmacist Knowledge, Pharmacist Attitude, Role of Pharmacist in Public Health.

**Introduction:-**

HIV/AIDS has been a leading killer in developing countries and it has been a public health problem since last two decades. The only way to prevent it, is spreading knowledge about the disease and making people aware about how it spreads and how can we prevent the spread of this disease as this disease is more about preventing rather than treating it. The other major problem with HIV/AIDS is a social stigma attached to it, the behavior of people changes towards the HIV/AIDS suffering people. Pharmacists more often than not work at the first information center of the common mass, so they can play an important role in curbing the HIV/AIDS. So their knowledge, attitude and risk behavior about HIV/AIDS also play a major role in it.

In Rajasthan there were some districts where the HIV prevalence among the general population was over 1%. Districts like Chittorgarh and Rajsamand had a prevalence of 1.25%. Few districts like Dholpur, Jaipur, Jalore, Kota is giving alarm with an ANC (Anti Natal Clinic) prevalence of 0.75%. Out of 28 ANC sites total eight sites are showing more than 0.50% prevalence.<sup>i</sup> Today, as there is big scarcity of health service provider and health educator. Pharmacists who are very big in numbers, can be used as a public health service provider, especially as a guide to health and as they are in direct contact to public and have a straight dialogue in public they can be used as a knowledge spreader.

**Objectives:-**

The main objectives of the study were to assess the knowledge, attitude and risk perception of pharmacist about HIV / AIDS of Jodhpur City (Rajasthan) with respect to years of experience and their education level & their willingness to serve HIV / AIDS people.

**Materials & Methods:-**

*Place of Study:* Jodhpur City

*Study Design:* Cross-Sectional

*Study Population:* Pharmacist working in pharmacies in Jodhpur City. 200 pharmacies were selected by Simple Random Sampling method, out of 800 pharmacies available in town, omitting the pharmacies working in private & corporate hospitals.

**Data Collection & analysis:-**

Each selected pharmacist was given the questionnaire and, was asked to fill the questionnaire consists of a series of close ended questions, after getting their consent. The questionnaire was divided in 4 parts mainly, Demographic Details, Knowledge assessment, Attitude Assessment & Risk Perception. There was no time limit given to fill the form as they need to cater their customers also in between too. The average time per interview was 15 minutes approx. Data collected were analyzed through Excel. Mostly proportions were used to analyze the data.

**Results: -**

1. 41.5% pharmacists didn't know the difference between HIV & AIDS
2. 19.5% pharmacists thought that HIV can spread through saliva
3. 23.5% pharmacists thought that Urine can transmit the HIV virus.
4. 68.5 % pharmacists thought that HIV / AIDS patients should be treated separately.
5. 18.5% thought that HIV / AIDS positive children should be taught in separate schools.
6. 44% percent pharmacists had never heard about ART.
7. Only 17.5 % had heard about PEP.
8. 27.5 % pharmacists didn't want to go for self HIV test.
9. 13.5 % pharmacists didn't want to have relationship with HIV/AIDS suffering people.
10. 87.5% have suggested customer to buy condoms for safe sex.
11. 64% pharmacists wanted to sell HIV test kits.
12. 85% pharmacists had never received any kind of training on HIV/AIDS
13. 79.5% pharmacists wanted to get some kind of training on HIV/AIDS
14. Only 19% pharmacists had received information about HIV/AIDS during their professional educations
15. Freshly graduated pharmacists have more knowledge and awareness about HIV/AIDS.

**Conclusions:**

1. Overall knowledge about HIV/AIDS is very poor in pharmacists.
2. The awareness about ART & PEP also very low.
3. The most of the pharmacists are still willing to learn about HIV/AIDS and want to work for public Health.

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