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**Knowledge and attitude about HIV transmission among homeless women in India**

**Mithlesh Chourase**

International Institute for Population Sciences, India

**Introduction:** HIV/AIDS continues to be center of focus in India. According to the National Aids Control Organization (NACO), the prevalence of HIV was an estimated 0.26%, which is the third largest HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) epidemic in the world. Among the homeless, the women are highly vulnerable to risky sexual behavior and its negative health consequences due to adverse conditions of street life. Many homeless women are confronted with environmental conditions that may further exacerbate drug and sexual practices, placing them at higher risk for Sexual Tract Infections (STI) and HIV infection. It is observed that the homeless have a greater chance of having higher number of sexual partners, engagement in unprotected sex and involvement in sex work which pose the homeless women to have higher HIV rates compared to the ones living in house.

**Objective:** Limited information is collected about the awareness and attitude about HIV and AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) among the homeless women in India, this study attempted to understand the familiarity of term HIV/AIDS, correct knowledge about the modes of transmissions and ways of prevention.

**Method:** The study used the primary data that was collected among 300 homeless women in New Delhi, India. A structured questionnaire was used to collect various information related to knowledge and attitude towards HIV/AIDS. Correct knowledge was assessed using 8 items, while the attitude towards HIV/AIDS assessed using 6 preventing measures related questions.

**Result:** The study shows that majority of the homeless women (64%) are not familiar with the term HIV/AIDS. The level of correct knowledge across the questions is low as only 5.3% had high knowledge (correct answer to at least 7 items out of 8). Similarly, only 7% had positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS.

**Conclusion:** As the homeless women are one of the most vulnerable population groups, an urgent need to awareness camps and free distribution of condom is necessary.

mithlesh.1303@gmail.com

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