

VEF

www.vefjournal.com

VEF Journal Of Agriculture, Rural and Community
Development

e-ISSN: 2408-7556

P-ISSN: 2408-7546



Vol. 2 No. 1 2015

e - ISSN: 2408-7556

p - ISSN: 2408-7546

VEF JOURNAL

**OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
(VEF JOURNAL)**

VOLUME 2 NO. 1, 2015

**PUBLISHED BY
VULNERABLE LIVES ENHANCEMENT FOUNDATION (VEF)
CORE VALUES OF THE FOUNDATION ARE:
RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT**

**AWARENESS LEVEL OF HIV/AIDS IN NNEWI URBAN AND UTUH
RURAL COMMUNITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS
FOR AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORMULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

HIV/AIDS has been recognized as a major global development crisis. It is so pronounced that the other segments of the nation ought to be concerned hence the concern of agricultural and rural development experts. This study examined the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS among rural dwellers of Utuh and urban dwellers of Nnewi Communities. Data were collected using structured questionnaire and interview schedule to elicit response from fifty respondents selected from both communities respectively using multi-stage random sample techniques. Data were analyzed using mean, frequency distribution and percentages. Hypothesized relationships were established using Z-test and multiple regression techniques. Results of the study show that more attention and campaign were concentrated in urban area of Nnewi more than rural area of Utuh. Promiscuity, ignorance and poverty were very serious factors influencing the spread of HIV/AIDS in both rural and urban while promiscuity appears very pronounced in urban Nnewi. Ignorance and poverty constituted a much more pressing factor in Utuh rural community. Churches, friends and neighbors appeared to be very effective in spreading information about HIV/AIDS in Utuh rural community. The mass media and NGOs appear very effective in Nnewi urban.

Keywords: *HIV/AIDS, Scourge and Awareness level, Agricultural policy Development.*

Introduction

HIV/AIDS has been recognized world over as one of the fatal diseases and a calamity to human existence. It does not discriminate against race, status or profession. It has transcended the confines of health and become a serious development issue which has calls for the attention of all involved in behavioral change, development practitioners, agricultural and rural development experts. The disease burden is such that over 40 million people are infected in sub-Saharan Africa (Anaeto and Emenyonu, 2005). Iloeje (2005) observed that African is the region worst affected by HIV/AIDS, with 70 percent of the world 42 million infected people. He explained that the disease has killed 25 million Africans, orphaned more than 12 million and 8,700 Africans are infected with

the virus every minute. According to spore news (2005), the disease has reduced life expectancy in most countries by nearly 40 years and is the leading cause of death in most continents. The pandemic has emerged clearly as the paramount threat to development in most countries including Nigeria (Iloeje 2005).

In Nigeria, the HIV/AIDS problem is already acknowledged and is equally in the increase in various parts (Urban and Rural) of the country. Lambo (2006) noted that the infection rate of the disease for the North-East of Nigeria stood at 2.3 percent in 2003 and increased to 2.6 percent two years later, the same applied to South-East of Nigeria where the figure jumped from 4.2 percent in 2003 to 4.7 percent in 2005. Lambo (2005) maintained that Nigeria up till now retains its position as the second in the Sub-Saharan African with the highest rate of HIV infection. From the foregoing, it seems possible that HIV/AIDS prevalence and spread rate cannot be the same in rural and urban areas with their different characteristic features which are capable of influencing the spread of the disease. Nnadi and Amaechi (2004) assert that rural dwellers differ in many perspectives from their urban counterpart and that the behavioural patterns of rural and urban people are affected by these differences. Rural area is usually inhabited with people of the same ethnic, cultural and linguistic background thus strangers or non-natives are easily identified in the rural area. Rural area is homogenous in nature while urban area is heterogenous. Rural areas have greater portion of their area open and uninhibited, while most urban areas are choked up for lack of open space because every available land in an urban area is either utilized for commercial, industrial, recreation or residential purposes (Ekong 2003). This has resulted to rural areas having larger expense of land with relatively small population density while larger number of people in urban occupy small unit of land with high population density brining about urban decay. Social Status and Social Control is more pronounced in rural area than in urban area as the behavior of individuals in the rural areas is guided by the societal norms and values. In fact, informal means such as gossips and ostracism are used to effect control on people in the rural area. Weber (1997) observes that the rate, pattern, type and quality of social interaction differ significantly between rural and urban communities. He noted that rural people's means of interaction are face to face contact at farms, churches and mosques, meetings, streams, markets etc and that they are often detached or separated from media and other more sophisticated channels of communication and information. A lot has been said and done on this epidemic in terms of creating awareness about the disease.

Campaigns and publicity of different types have been organized on the symptoms, mode of transmission and means of controlling the disease by different organizations including NGOs, church organization, and HIV/AIDS Clubs by youths as well as the NYSC Members working in different part of the country. It is unfortunate that the public awareness of this pandemic has not led to any measurable changes in people's behavior

and attitude. It is evident from the available literature that studies have been carried out on HIV/AIDS but little or no study has so far been conducted on the comparison of awareness level, prevalence and spread of HIV/AIDS among the urban and rural dwellers in sub-Saharan African countries including Nigeria. It is therefore not clear as to whether the disease exist and spreads more rapidly in the rural areas than in the urban areas or vice versa or which group is more aware of the disease and why. It is against this background that this study compared the awareness level of incidence of spread of HIV/AIDS among the rural and urban dwellers with particular focus on Nnewi urban and Utuh rural Communities of Anambra State. The study provided answers to the following research questions.

1. What are the socio-economic characteristic of the Nnewi urban and Utuh rural dwellers
2. What is the awareness level of the incidence of spread of HIV/AIDS among both the urban and rural dwellers
3. Where are the incidence of spread of HIV/AIDS more prevalent
4. What are the sources of information available to both urban and rural dwellers on HIV/AIDS and the effectiveness of the sources in spreading the information
5. What factors encourage the spread of HIV/AIDS among the rural and urban dwellers

Answers to these research questions provided the focus of this study. The broad objective of the study is to examine the awareness level of HIV/AIDS among the rural and urban dwellers with particular reference to Nnewi urban and Utuh rural areas of Anambra State.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- a. Identify the socio-economic characteristics of the Nnewi urban and Utuh rural dwellers
- b. Identify the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS among the Nnewi urban and Utuh rural dwellers
- c. Identify the sources of information on HIV/AIDS available to Nnewi urban and Utuh rural dwellers

The following hypothesized relationships were tested

- H₀:** There is no significant difference between the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS among the Nnewi urban dwellers and Utuh rural dwellers
- H₀:** There is no significant relationship between the awareness level of HIV/AIDS and the socio-economic characteristics of rural/urban dwellers.

Materials and Methods:

This study covered the Nnewi urban and Utuh rural communities of Anambra State. The two communities were purposively selected based on their population and close proximity. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 10 villages from each of the community. The sampling frame was the list of the inhabitants from the study areas as provided by the chief of the communities and the Development officers in LGA housing in the study area. From the list, 5 urban dwellers and 5 rural dwellers were randomly selected thus giving a sample size of 50 rural dwellers and 50 urban dwellers used for this study. Data for this study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Field survey constituted the primary data while research reports, journals, oral information and publications make up the secondary data.

Structured interview schedule was used to collect information from the respondents. In the course of collection of data, personal observations were noted. Data for this study were collected between January to December 2007.

Descriptive statistical tools such as percentages, frequency distributions and means were used to analyse the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Other quantitative data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Example, the relationship between the dwellers level of awareness of HIV/AIDS and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents was analyzed using ordinary least squares regression model (OLS). The model is mathematically represented as:

$$Y = f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5, \dots, e) \text{ where } y = \text{level of awareness}$$

x_1 = Sex

x_2 = Age

x_3 = Material Status

x_4 = Education

x_5 = Social Organization

e = Error term

The relationship between the dependent and each of the independent variables was examined using the four functional forms: linear, semi-log, exponential and double- log.

$$\text{Linear: } Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + e$$

$$\text{Semi-Log: } Y = B_0 + B_1 \log X_1 + B_2 \log X_2 + B_3 \log X_3 + B_4 \log X_4 + B_5 \log X_5 + e$$

$$\text{Exponential: } \log Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + e$$

$$\text{Double Log: } \log Y = B_0 + B_1 \log X_1 + B_2 \log X_2 + B_3 \log X_3 + B_4 \log X_4 + B_5 \log X_5 + e$$

B_0 = intercept

B_1, B_2, \dots, B_5 = estimated coefficients

The significant difference between the levels of awareness of HIV/AIDS among the dwellers was tested using Z – test.
The test is represented by the formular

$$Z = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{\sqrt{\frac{n_1 S_1^2 + n_2 S_2^2}{n_1 + n_2}}}$$

Where Z = the value by which the statistical significant of the mean difference is to be judge

X_1 = Mean awareness level of the urban dwellers

X_2 = Mean awareness level of the rural dwellers

Results and Discussions

Socioeconomic characteristics of the rural dwellers

The socio-economic characteristics of the dwellers studied include; age, educational level, sex, marital status and membership of social organizations. Table 1 shows that in Nnewi urban, 58 percent of the respondents were male while 42 percent were female while in the rural Utuh community, 76 percent of the respondents were male and 24 percent female. This shows therefore that the samples in both areas were domination by male dwellers. It is most likely that because of the secretive nature of women and apparent domination of women by man, women often need to take permission from their male partner before any major decision can be taken including answering questions on HIV/AIDS. As regards marital status, it was shown that the samples in both the urban and rural communities were dominated by married respondents. The implication of this is that they are expected to exhibit high sense of maturity and responsibility thus should be expected to be aware of HIV/AIDS. In addition, Table 1 shows that the mean age of dwellers in Nnewi Urban is 34-5 years while that of Utuh rural is 33-7 years. This shows that the respondents are mainly active people. It is therefore expected that the issue of HIV/AIDS would not be a new thing in the area. Furthermore, Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents in both the urban and rural areas had one form of education or the other. Since education is a veritable vehicle for change, it is expected that the respondents should be aware of the HIV/AIDS disaster. As regards membership of church organization shown in Table 2, it was shown that majority of the respondents in both urban and rural areas belong to church organization. This means therefore that the churches could be used effectively for creation of awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their socio-economics characteristics

Socio-economics characteristics	Nnewi Urban		Utuh Rural	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Sex				
Male	29	58	38	76
Female	21	42	12	24
Marital Status				
Single	14	28	18	36
Divorced	8	16	1	2
Separated	0	0.00	5	10
Widowed	2	4	1	2
Married	26	52	25	50
Age				
0-29	12	24.00	14	28.00
30-39	18	36.00	14	28.00
40-49	17	34.00	20	40.00
50-59	2	4.00	2	4.00
60-69	1	2.00	0	0.00
70 and above	0	0.00	0	0.00
Primary School not completed	1	2.00	5	10.00
Primary school completed	6	12.00	15	30.00
Secondary school completed	8	16.00	20	40.00
Secondary school not completed	10	20.00	10	20.00
Tertiary Institution (Specify)	25	50.00	0	0.00

Mean Age for Nnewi Urban Area = 34.5 \approx 35 yrs

Mean Age for Utuh Rural Area = 33.7 \approx 34 yrs

Sources: Field Survey Data, (2007)

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Membership of Social Organization

Social Organisation	Nnewi Urban		Utuh Rural	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Social Organization				
Farmers' Council	3	6.00	4	8.00
Fanners' Fora	1	2.00	5	10.00
Farmers' co-operative social	4	8.00	5	6.00
Ministry of Agriculture registered farmers	4	8.00	0	0.00
Church Organization	30	60.00	32	64.00
Age grades/Town union associations	3	6.00	4	8.00
Motor/Motorcycle Transport Union	0	0.00	0	0.00
Others, specify	5	10.00	2	4.00
Total	50	100	50	100

Source: Field Survey Data, (2007)

Table 3: Result of Z-Test on Differential Levels of Awareness of HIV/AIDS in Urban and Rural Area

Group	No	Mean	Standard deviation	DF	Z-value	Decision
Level of awareness of HIV/AIDS in urban Area (X1)	50	3.294	1.201	47	6.648*	Reject the hypothesis
Level of Awareness of HIV/AIDS in rural Area (X2)	50	2.031	0.871			

Source: Computed From Survey Data 2007

* = significant at 5%

The differential levels of awareness of HIV/AIDS in urban and rural areas were presented in Table 3. The result shows that the Z-test comprises of 3.294 mean and 1.201 standard deviation for level of awareness in urban area, and 2.031 mean and 0.871 standard deviation in rural area. The test of significant difference produce a Z-value of 6.648 compared with critical Z-value of 1.96 for a two-tail test. Therefore the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS in urban and rural area is here-by rejected. This result has confirmed the fact that much attention and information on HIV/AIDS are shifted often to urban areas at the detriment of the rural areas.

Table 4: Relationship between level of Awareness of HIV/AIDS and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Rural and Urban Dwellers

Explanatory Function	Linear Function	Semi Log Function	Double Log Function	Exponential Function	Decision
Constant	189.4026	103.2949	82.1069	63.4813	
Sex (X)	-21.3093 (-1.1148)	-2.0618 (-1.0517)	-0.0737 (-2.3471*)	-0.0084 (-2.8966**)	reject hypothesis
Age (x)	17.1146 (3.2343**)	3.9426 (3.59937**)	0.0912 (2.9515**)	0.0047 (2.2188*)	reject hypothesis

Marital status (x)	14.3903 (1.1057)	1.3317 (1.1084)	0.0681 (2.8025**)	0.0092 (2.4865*)	reject hypothesis
Education (x)	19.3017 (2.9833**)	3.4026 (1.2559)	0.0318 (3.3152**)	0.0064 (3.2083**)	reject hypothesis
Social Org (x)	14.2013 (1.0919)	3.9413 (1.3044)	0.0711 (3.4019**)	-0.0093 (3.3214**)	reject hypothesis
R ²	0.4603	0.3812	0.7094	0.5213	
F-Value	9.7028	7.0074	27.7978	12.3883	
N	100			100	

Source: Computed From Survey Data 2007

Figures in parenthesis are t-ratios

* = significant at 0.5%

** = significant at 1%

The result of the four functional forms of the multiple regression analysis on the relationship between the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS and socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the urban and rural area are shown in Table 4 above. The double log functional form gave the lead equation having produced the highest value of co-efficient of multiple determinations (R²), the highest number of significant variables. The co-efficient of multiple variations in people's level of awareness of HIV/AIDS is accounted for by the joint account of the socio-economic variables investigated. The co-efficient of Age (X2), marital status (X3), Education (X4), and Social Organization (X5) are positive and significant at 1% level while the co-efficient of sex (X1) is negative and significant at 5% level. This means that these variables are influencing the people level of awareness on HIV/AIDS in the study area. Therefore hypothesis which says that there is no significant relationship between level of awareness of HIV/AIDS and socio-economic characteristics of rural and urban dweller is here-by rejected with respect to the significant variables. The co-efficient of age, marital status, education and social organization membership was positive and significant implying that increase in the magnitude of these variables lead to increase in the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS. The co-efficient of sex is negative but significant showing that men appeared to be more aware of the disease than their female counterpart.

Conclusion and Recommendation/implication for Agricultural policy formulation and development.

The level of incidence of HIV/AIDS in both the rural and urban areas poses a serious threat to humanity. HIV/AIDS deepens poverty making it even harder to escape. It increases the risk of food insecurity and malnutrition, increases health care expenses, loss of manpower, cuts off the transfer of essential skill and increases death rate

especially among the active work force. This therefore calls for joint efforts by all, so that this threat to humanity can be reduced to the barest minimum. It is against this background that this study compares the awareness level of the incidence of HIV/AIDS among the urban and rural dwellers using Nnewi urban and Ufuh rural communities as focal points. It is clear from the study that most of the campaign on HIV/AIDS is centred more on the urban areas with scanty information passed to the rural areas and these subjects the rural area where majority of agricultural labour force are into ignorance about the disease. The study therefore concluded that efforts should be geared towards increasing the awareness level of HIV/AIDS among rural dwellers while at the same time maintaining the high level of awareness already existing in the urban areas. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Government should in all honesty, monitor effectively the activities of the NGOs who are fighting the cause of HIV/AIDS. This is necessary so as to be sure that the monies collected by these NGOs are properly used for what it is meant for. It is not unlikely that most of these NGOs see the issue of HIV/AIDS as an avenue to make money and enrich themselves.
2. Although the HIV/AIDS poses a very serious threat to humanity and should be fought with every weapon available, there is need for harmonization of efforts by all the groups involved, since they are fighting a common goal. This will make the target audience to appreciate their message - united we stand but divided we fall.
3. All the rural development agencies such as rural health workers, Agricultural extension service, adult educators, community development practitioners, co-operators etc should be involved directly in the fight and encouraged handsomely to be able to appreciate their roles in the fight against the HIV/AIDS scourge.
4. The HIV/AIDS activities have been concentrated on the urban areas while rural areas are left unattended to. It is therefore very necessary that the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign should also be spread to the rural areas where the bulk of labour force in Agriculture are.
5. A multi-disciplinary approach should also be used in this fight. This means using of a comprehensive multi-sectoral strategy which involves mobilization of the society at all levels that would embrace community based organizations, civil societies, Non – Governmental Organizations (NGOs), trade unions, the private sector, media, religious organizations, schools, youths organizations, local leaders and women organizations. This would help greatly in the fight.
6. If government is to be an effective instrument in programme of change, it must work through local officers/leaders who are really true leaders in their local

areas. Progress comes faster and is sure when these officials are properly informed about programmes and given heavy responsibilities.

7. The channels and techniques of communication in use should be modified. Each culture, region or community within a culture has its peculiar means of communication. It must not be taken for granted that the channels/techniques of one culture necessarily exist in another, or that they function effectively if they were introduced. Example, written literature is of little value among groups that are highly illiterate while use of open demonstration; audio-visual presentation, face-to-face contact and use of town criers could be of immense importance in such highly illiterate culture.
8. Establishment of co-operative societies is usually considered an instrument of community action and can also serve as an instrument of community organization for planning and implementing programmes of action. It could also serve as an effective types of organization through which rural people analyze their problems, decide what they want to do and carry out plans.
9. There is need for the NGOs involved in the fight to understand and appreciate the role of one another.

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