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Original Article

Seroprevalence of HIV/AIDS and HIV risk factors among prison inmates in Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background: Prevalence of HIV in Ogun State has remained low since the history of HIV infection in Nigeria. Nevertheless, there have been evidences of higher HIV prevalence in some populations within the state but studies among inmates in the state have not been comprehensive. In the present study, we report data to bridge this gap in knowledge.

Methods: A total of 340 inmates comprising of 101 and 239 consenting inmates from the Sagamu and the Abeokuta prisons (respectively) participated in this study. Trained personnels interviewed consented inmates using structured questionnaires. Blood samples collected from all participants were tested for HIV antibodies on a one-on-one basis using Determine[®] and Starpac[®] test kits (for the HIV test and the confirmatory test respectively). Descriptive statistics, chi-square test and the logistic regressions were used to analyze the data using SPSS version 13.

Results: We found that 10.6% of the inmates had been involved in same sex. Although the overall HIV prevalence among inmates in this study was found to be 2.4%, HIV prevalence was 2.6% and 2.1% among inmates who don't use and those who use condom during casual sex respectively. The odds of not using condom and their respective 95% confidence interval (CI) were found to be 2.03 (1.19–3.46) and 3.68 (1.17–11.57) among inmates in the 31–60 age category and among inmates who were students respectively.

Conclusions: The presence of same sex practices among the inmates is a potential precursor for future explosion of HIV infection in these prisons, particularly that some of them were HIV positive.

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1. Introduction

Although prevalence of HIV/AIDS is known to be worse in sub-Saharan Africa than any other region of the world, statistics have shown that the situation in Nigeria is declining in recent time. In particular, from 5.8% in 2001 through 5% in 2003 to 4.6% in 2008, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria has declined to 4.1% in 2010 [1]. According to the 2010 HIV/AIDS Sentinel Surveillance Survey (HSSS) conducted (among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics in Nigeria) by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMH) in Nigeria, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Ogun state was 3.1% and the state was listed among 10 states recording the least prevalence of the disease in Nigeria [1].

The population of inmates in any country presents unique characteristics that could impact on the transmission of HIV infection within and outside the prison. For instance, the population, even though confined, is actually a relatively open (and a moving) population since it is possible to determine the number of the

incoming and the outgoing persons from the population in a given interval/period of time. This probably is one of the most critical characteristics of this population. It is also possible for infected person(s) to be introduced to a prison consisting of susceptible inmates, resulting in an onset of a potential epidemic, should there be any effective contact.

There have also been occasions when infected inmates having served their terms, were released into the general population [2]; a precursor to HIV epidemic in a generalised HIV setting. Also, due to the confined nature of the Prison community, Inmates engage in risky behaviours ranging from unprotected sex to same sex [3,4] which could increase the rate of HIV transmission among them. In fact, studies have shown that populations of inmates are vulnerable to HIV, and globally tend to have significantly higher HIV prevalence rate than non-inmate populations [4–7]. Nevertheless, HIV prevention programmes and data characterizing the epidemic in this group are largely lacking particularly in the developing countries [2,8]. In Ogun state, Nigeria, a literature search yielded no result for HIV related studies conducted specifically among inmates. Consequently, the present study provide not only data for future policy decisions making but also, to bridge the gap in knowledge as well as an avenue to significantly impact on the health of the inmates

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