

Knowledge Regarding Awareness of HIV/AIDS among Barbers of Selected Salons in Rohtas, Bihar

Shweta Kumari¹, Dr. K. Latha², Satish Kumar³, Smrity Anand⁴, Suryakant Kumar⁵, Afsana Parween⁶
Sheetal Kumari⁷

¹Lecturer, Department of Community Health Nursing, Narayan Nursing College, Gopal Narayan Singh University, Sasaram, Bihar, India

²Dean cum Principal, Narayan Nursing College, Gopal Narayan Singh University, Sasaram, Bihar, India

³⁻⁷B.Sc. Nursing 8th Semester Students, Narayan Nursing College, Gopal Narayan Singh University, Sasaram, Bihar, India

Abstract- Background: Barbers are at occupational risk of transmitting blood-borne infections such as HIV/AIDS due to frequent use of sharp instruments. In semi-urban and rural Bihar, limited awareness and improper sterilization practices may increase this risk. **Objectives:** To assess the knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS among barbers in Rohtas district, Bihar, and to provide an information booklet to improve awareness. **Methods:** A descriptive study was conducted among 60 barbers selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected through a structured knowledge questionnaire (17 items). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. **Results:** Majority of barbers (56.7%) had only average knowledge, 33.3% had good knowledge, and 10% had excellent knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Knowledge was significantly associated with educational level ($\chi^2=8.65$, $p<0.05$) and mode of learning ($\chi^2=9.02$, $p<0.05$), but not with age or work experience. **Conclusion:** Barbers demonstrated inadequate awareness of HIV/AIDS, highlighting their vulnerability to occupational hazards. Educational level and formal training influenced knowledge. Distribution of information booklets can serve as an effective, low-cost strategy to improve awareness and promote safe practices.

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, barbers, awareness, occupational risk, Bihar, infection control.

INTRODUCTION

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) remain major public health challenges. Despite awareness campaigns, misconceptions and poor occupational practices persist in India. Barbers are at increased risk of transmitting HIV and other blood-borne infections

due to frequent use of razors and scissors, particularly in rural areas where sterilization practices are inadequate. This study was conducted to assess HIV/AIDS awareness among barbers in Rohtas, Bihar, and to distribute an information booklet for improving knowledge.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive research design was adopted. The study was conducted among 60 barbers from selected salons in Rohtas district using non-probability convenience sampling. A structured questionnaire (17 items) assessed demographic variables and HIV/AIDS knowledge. Scoring was categorized as: Excellent (13–17), Good (6–12), Average (1–5). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square test.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile

- Majority of barbers were aged 20–29 years (46.7%).
- Most were married (66.7%).
- Half (50%) had primary education.
- Work experience ranged widely, with 43.3% having 5–10 years.
- Most learned barbering via apprenticeship (73.3%).

Table 1. Distribution of Barbers by Knowledge Level (N=60)

Knowledge Level	Score Range	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Excellent	13–17	6	10.0%
Good	6–12	20	33.3%
Average	1–5	34	56.7%

Association with Demographic Variables

Education level and mode of learning were significantly associated with knowledge ($p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The majority of barbers demonstrated only average awareness of HIV/AIDS, consistent with findings from Rajasthan and Odisha where inadequate sterilization practices and low knowledge were reported. Barbers with secondary education and formal barbering school training showed significantly better awareness compared to those trained via apprenticeship. This supports the role of structured training in improving occupational safety.

CONCLUSION

Barbers in Rohtas, Bihar, exhibit limited knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS, which may increase occupational and community risk of transmission. Educational interventions, such as distribution of information booklets, are simple yet effective strategies to enhance awareness and promote safe practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct regular awareness and training programs for barbers.
- Include barbers as a target group in government HIV prevention campaigns.
- Future studies should assess actual practices alongside knowledge.
- No significant association with age or work experience.

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