

ABSTRACT

The Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of Church Members to the HIV Infection and AIDS

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A convenient study was conducted to determine the knowledge, attitude and practices of church members from two prominent denominations in Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica. Data was collected through the use of self-administered questionnaires and two focus group discussions.

Knowledge on HIV/AIDS was very high with members obtaining a mean score of 23.4 out of a maximum of 27 marks. Overall, knowledge scores were similar for different sub-groups, except for members who had higher level of education and catholic members who got higher knowledge scores.

Attitudes towards HIV/AIDS were generally positive, however, differences were observed towards particular groups such as homosexuals. Overall, there was little variation in attitude between the two church groups.

Overall, the members' reported sexual practices were conservative, however, some of the members seem to be at higher risk, especially the single ones. The Catholic members, reported a higher level of sexual activity in both married and single persons. The majority of the members responded that they would get involved in

activities geared towards HIV/AIDS prevention and control. They also said that the church should educate their members about HIV/AIDS.

The results of this study suggests that there be greater collaboration between the government, the private sector, the community, other interest groups, the church and other non-governmental organizations towards the more effective education and sensitization of church members and by extension the wider society about this disease.

Keywords: Christopher Curtis; HIV/AIDS; church members, knowledge, attitude, practice