

## Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Hiv/Aids Counseling and Testing among Nursing Science Students in Imo State University

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### Abstract

HIV/AIDS counseling and testing is a very significant strategy used in the prevention, treatment and control of HIV/AIDS. This study assessed the knowledge, attitude and practice of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing among nursing science students in Imo State University Owerri, Orlu Campus. Target population is 400 level students. Data “were collected using semi-structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed, described and presented using frequency and percentage table.

#### Result

Findings showed that majority of the nursing students 79(100%) had heard good of the knowledge of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing 20(25.3%) said they heard about HIV/AIDS counseling and testing from school, 55(69.6%) of the respondents agreed that it is important for nursing students

to know their HIV/AIDS status also on the practice of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing 58(73.4%) of nursing science students said that they are worried about contacting HIV/AIDS infection while 32(40.5%) said that they are not worried about contacting it. In determining attitude towards knowing ones HIV status 55(69.6%) 90 Agreed, 14(17.7%) Disagree, 10(12.7%) were undecided about it. In respondents 30(38%) Agreed that HIV testing counseling reduce infection while 27(34.2%) disagreed and 22(27.9%) where undecided about it. Respondents showing that they are at risk of acquiring HIV infection in their career is 47(59.5%) while 32(40.5%) respondents said they are not. Respondents showing those that are worried about HIV/AIDS infection are 58(73.4%) while 21(26.6%) are not worried about it. Respondents that said yes that it is good for nursing students to go for HIV/AIDS testing was 51(64.6%) while 11(13.9%) said no and 17(21%) don't know. 400 level students that have gone for HIV/AIDS testing 47(59.5%) while 32(40.59%) have not yet. Respondents that have heard about HIV/AIDS is 79(100%), 13(16.5%) have heard about HIV/AIDS counseling and testing 13(16.5%) from radio, 8(10.1%) from television, 3(3.8%) from newspaper, 2(2.5%) from magazine, 6(7.6%) from books, 5(6.3%) from posters, 7(8.9%) from clothing, 4(5.1%) from drama, 20(25.3%) from school and 11(13.9%) from hospital.

### Conclusion

Based on these findings, the researcher concludes that nursing students in Imo State University Owerri, Orlu Campus have good knowledge of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing. They have positive attitude but their practice of HIV/AIDS counseling need to be improved. Therefore, it important that the management of Imo State University, Owerri provide continuing educational programme such as seminars and workshops in order to put more knowledge on the nursing students toward HIV/AIDS counseling and testing.

### Introduction

HIV/AIDS has been identified as a major health concern all over the world [1]. Nigeria has the second largest number of new cases reported each year and about 3.7% of its population is living with HIV/AIDS according to Nigeria Country Progress Report (2012).

According to Dugdale *et al.* (2012) [2] HIV infection is a condition caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The condition gradually destroys the immune system, which makes it difficult for the body to fight infection.

The human immunodeficiency virus attacks the immune system and weakens once ability to fight infections and disease. AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection, when the body can no longer fight life-threatening infections. There is no cure for HIV but there are treatments to enable most people with the virus to live a long and healthy life [3].

According to Normal Foundation (2013) [4], the Human Immunodeficiency Virus is a retrovirus that invades cells in the human immune system, making it highly susceptible to infectious diseases. The World

Health Organization estimated over 500,000. Americans to have died from HIV/AIDS and over one million U.S. citizens are living with the disease.

Statistics from the Health Protection Agency, 95% of those diagnosed with HIV in the U.K. in 2010 acquired as a result of sexual contact. Furthermore, NHS (2012) [3] added that HIV is disproportionately common among men who have sex with men. The stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS is high among health workers as well as the general population. Knowledge and specific information has important role in HIV/AIDS prevention and the health workers have a central responsibility in prevention care and treatment.

GHS (2013) stated that no cure has been found yet. However, provision of antiretroviral drugs and preventive strategies that assist in prolonging the life of those who have been infected are available, knowledge of one's HIV status is a first step to facilitate assessing care and preventing further infection and thereby controlling the HIV epidemic. These further went on to say that one of the strategies of ascertaining one's HIV status is counseling and testing. Counseling and testing. Centers are places where people get to know more about HIV and AIDS or to check their semi-status so as to make informed decisions about their health and behavior.

Inclusion, counseling and testing is necessary to direct HIV infected people to antiretroviral therapy which is becoming increasing available.

Therefore, it is important to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing among Department of Nursing Science student in Imo State University, Owerri Orlu Campus.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the knowledge, attitude and practice of HIV counseling and testing among nursing science students in Imo State University, Owerri Orlu Campus.

## **Objectives of Study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the knowledge of university student on HIV counseling and testing services.
- To determine their attitudes towards HIV counseling and testing.
- Ascertaining the practices of counseling and testing.
- To identify challenges associated with counseling and testing uptake.

## **Research Design**

The study designed by the researcher is the descriptive survey and it is aimed at determining the knowledge, attitude and practice of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing among nursing science student in Imo State University, Owerri, Orlu Campus.

### **Setting/Area of Study**

The setting of this study is Department of Nursing Science Imo State University, Owerri, Orlu Campus Imo State, Nigeria. The department is located within the Imo State University Teaching Hospital.

### **Target Population**

The target population of the study is restricted to nursing students in 400 level in the Department of Nursing Science, Faculty of Health Sciences, Imo State University, OwerriOrlu Campus. The total population of nursing science students in 400 level is one hundred and fifty seven which comprised of both male and female.

### **Sample/Sampling Technique**

In order to have a concise study the researcher used the random sampling method where 50% of the total population of 157 of student nurses in 400 level. In nursing science department Imo State University, Owerri, Orlu Campus were used for the study, 50% of the total of 157 is 79. Therefore, a total of 79 paper with "Yes and No" was put in a basket. All the 400 level nursing students present in class were asked to pick from the basket and the questionnaire was administered only to those that picked "Yes". After sampling a total of 79 students sampled out for the study.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

A semi-structured questionnaire which consisted of both open and closed ended was designed to capture the objectives of the study. It covered demographic details of respondents, their knowledge, attitude and practices of counseling and testing for HTV. Multiple choice responses were provided from which the respondents were allowed to choose the ones applicable to the questions as the case may be. The responses provided were exhaustive of all the possible responses and at the same time mutually exclusive.

The questions were formulated based on research questions to be answered at the end of the study. However, an introductory letter was obtained from the head of department of nursing science and presented or attached to the questionnaire to facilitate the administration and collection of the questionnaire for the conduct of the study. On each questionnaire, the interaction on how to fill the questionnaire was given.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

To ascertain the content appropriateness of the survey instrument (that is making sure it is adequate enough (valid) to achieve the result it is meant for, it will be overseen and confirmed by the research or project supervisor. By this therefore, the survey instrument will be subjected to face validity. For this study, content and face validity of the instrument done by a supervisor reading through the questionnaire and making corrections deemed necessary and the same were affected before the final copy was produced.

## Method of Data Collection

The data collection took place on October 2014. The researcher administered a total of 79 questionnaires to the selected nursing students in 400 level. In the nursing department Imo State University, Owerri-Orlu Campus. Prior to administering the questionnaire, the purpose of the study was explained to them. Participants were informed on how to fill the questionnaire. 79 participants made up of both male and female responded to the questionnaire giving 100% return rate.

## Ethical Consideration

In the course of this study, the researcher took into consideration all the ethics of research. The following are the ethical consideration taken care of by the researcher.

- The anonymity of the student was ensured and none of their names was ever mentioned during the course of this work.
- An informed consent was obtained from the students before the questionnaires were given to them to fill.
- The researcher addressed and explained reasons for the conduct of the study and assured them of animosity and confidentiality of their responses.
- The researcher ensured that only relevant questions were asked and the confidentiality of responses ensured.

Before the researcher administered the questionnaire to the 400 level nursing students permission letter from the department of nursing science was attached to each questionnaire for approval.

## Result

**Table 1:** Showing the age brackets of nursing science students in Imo State University, Owerri, Orlu Campus

Variables	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age:</b>		
15 - 20years	0	0
15 - 20years	10	12.7
21 - 25years	39	49.4
26 - 30 years	24	30.4
Over 30 years	6	7.6
<b>Sex:</b>		
Male	9	11.4
Female	70	88.0
<b>Marital Status:</b>		
Married	21	73.4
Single	58	26.6

Divorced	0	0
Widowed	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

## Results

From table show that 0(0%) respondents are under 15years, 10(12.7%) respondents are between 15-20years, 39(49.4%) respondents are between 21-25 years, 24(30.4%) respondents are 26-30years and 6(7.6%) respondents are over 30years. 9(11.4%) respondents are make nursing students in 400 level and 70(88.6%) respondents are female nursing students in 400 level. 21(73.4%) respondents are married, 58(26.6%) are single and non for divorced and widened in nursing department during the study.

**Table 2:** Respondents that have heard of HIV/AIDS

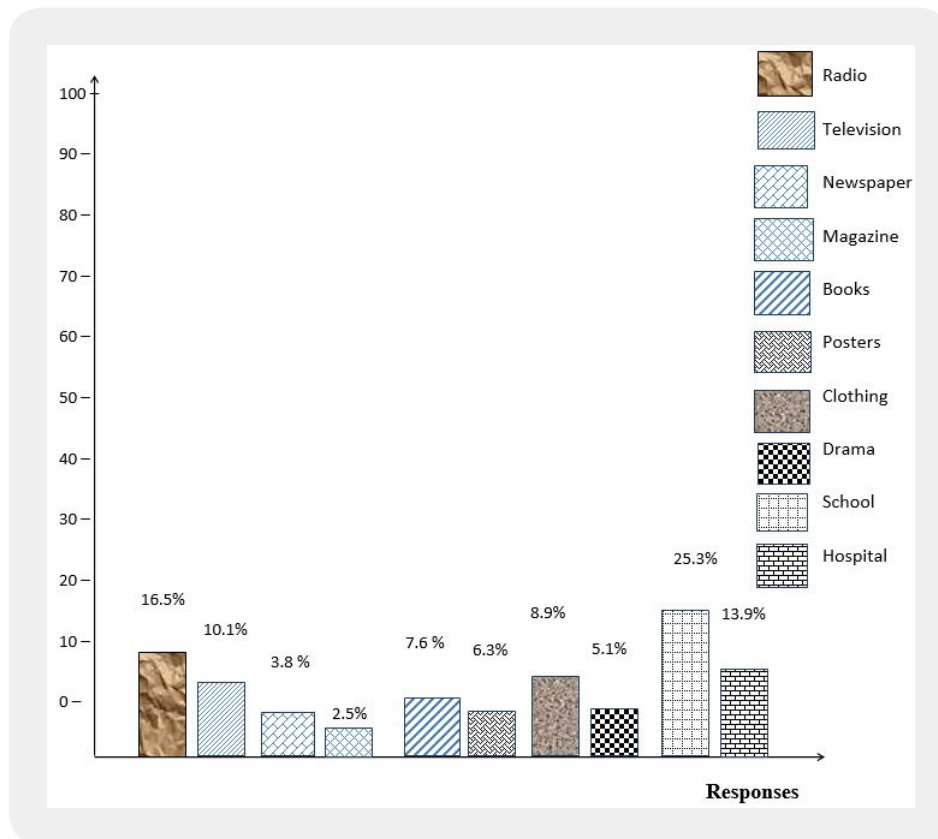
	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		79	100
No		0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Result show that 79(100%) of the respondents have heard of HIV/AIDS.

**Table 3:** Showing were they heard of HIV testing information

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
a.	Radio	13	16.5
b.	Television	8	10.1
c.	Newspaper	3	3.8
d.	Magazine	2	2.5
e.	Books	6	7.6
f.	Poster	5	6.3
g.	Clothing	7	8.9
h.	Drama	4	5.1
i.	School	20	25.3
j.	Hospital	11	13.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 show how the respondents heard about HIV/AIDS counseling and testing 13(16.5%) from the radio, 8(10.1%) from television, 3(3.8%) from newspaper, 2(2.5%) from magazine, 6(7.6%) from books, 5(6.3%) from posters, 7(8.9%) from clothing, 4(5.1%) from drama, 20(25.3%) from school and 11(13.9%) from hospital.

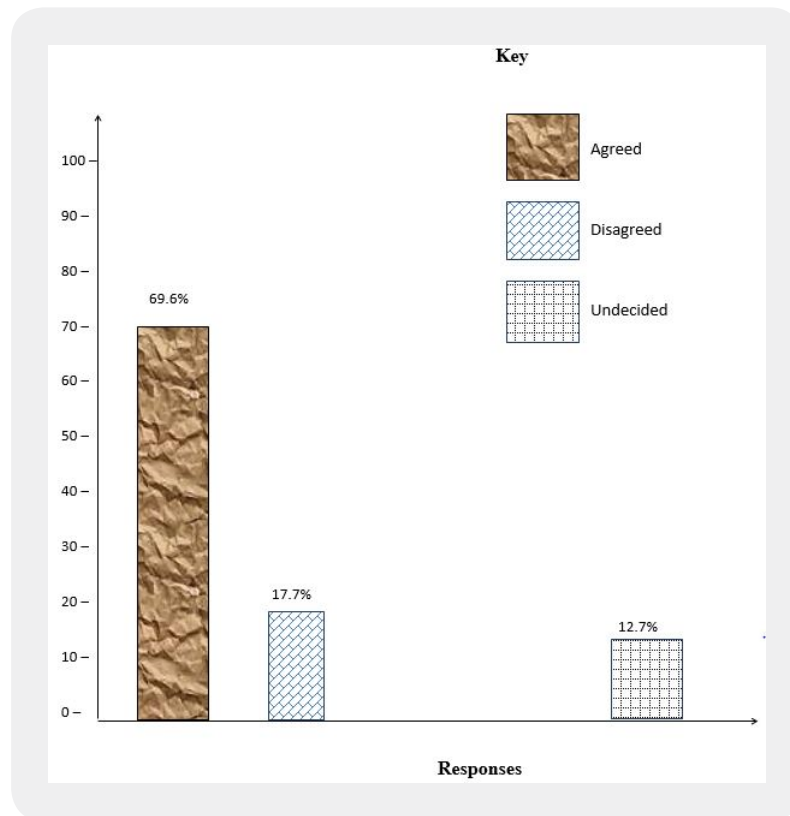


**Figure 1:** Bar Chart showing respondents that have heard HIV/AIDS counseling and testing

**Table 4:** Respondents' attitude towards knowing one's HIV status

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Agreed	55	69.6
Disagreed	14	17.7
Undecided	10	12.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Result from table show that 55(69.6%) respondents agree on people knowing their HIV status, 14(17.7%) disagreed and 10(12.7%) are undecided about it.



**Figure 2:** Bar Chart showing students attitude towards knowing one's HIV/AIDS Status

**Table 5:** Respondents attitude towards HIV counseling and testing if it reduces risk of contacting infection

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Agreed	30	38.0
Disagreed	27	34.2
Undecided	22	27.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6:** Respondents think that they are at risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS infection in their career

	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		47	59.5
No		32	40.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table 47(59.5%) respondents show that they are at risk of acquiring HIV infection in their career while 32(40.5%) respondents said that they are not at risk.



**Table 7:** How worried the nursing students are towards contacting HIV/AIDS

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Worried	58	73.4
Not worried	21	26.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 7, 58(73.4) of the respondents are worried about HIV/AIDS infection while 21(26.6%) are not worried about it.

**Table 8:** Show their responses towards nursing students going for HIV/AIDS testing

	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		51	64.6
No		11	13.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 8 above shows that 51(64.6%) of the respondents said Yes that it is good for nursing students to go for HIV/AIDS testing while 11(13.9%) said No.

**Table 9:** Showing how many nursing science students in 400 level that have gone for HIV testing to know their status

	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		47	59.5
No		32	40.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 revealed that 47(59.5%) respondents have gone for HIV/AIDS testing while 32(40.5%) have not yet.

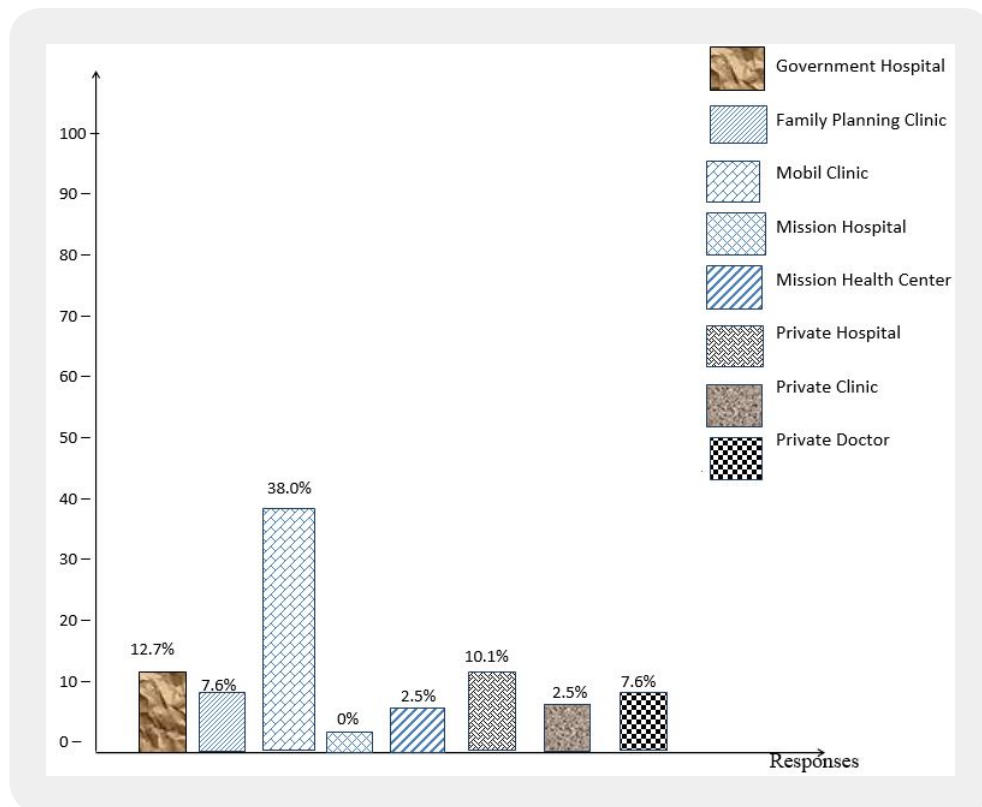
**Table 10:** Showing the responses of the responses of the respondents that said no to the above questions with their reasons

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Do not want to know my HIV status	11	34.4
I am afraid of the result	12	37.5
It is not necessary	3	9.4
Am afraid of the stigma	6	18.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 10 indicated that 11(34.4%) of the response do not want to know their HIV status, 12(37.5%) of the respondents are afraid of the result, 3(9.4%) think is not necessarily to know one’s HIV status, 6(18.75%) are afraid of the stigma making them, 32 said no.

**Table 11:** Show where the student nurses went for their HIV/AIDS testing

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Government hospital	10	12.7
Family planning clinic	6	7.6
Mobile clinic	30	38.0
Mission hospital	0	0
Mission health	2	2.5
Private hospital	8	10.1
Private clinic	17	2.5
Private doctor	6	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>



**Figure 3:** Bar chart showing where the respondents went for their HIV/AIDS testing

Table 11 revealed that 10(12.7%) went to government hospital for the HIV testing, 6(7.6%) went to family planning clinic, 30(38.0%) go to mobile clinics, 0(0%) for mission hospital, 2(2.5%) for mission health centre, 8(10.1%) go to private hospital, 17(2.5%) go to private clinic and 6(7.6%) do got to private doctors for HIV/AIDS testing.

**Table 12:** Showing what nurses think are the risks of knowing one’s HIV status

Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Fear of testing positive	27	34.2
Stigma	16	20.3
Discrimination	8	10.1
Fear of chronic illness	5	6.3
Fear of death	19	24.1
Lack of perceive benefit	3	3.8
Don’t know	1	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure Bar Chart Showing What the Respondents Think as the Risk of Knowing Once Hiv/Aids Status**

Table 13, indicates that 27(34.2%) of respondents have fear of testing positive, 16(20.3%) think of the stigma, 8(10.1%) are afraid of discrimination, 5(6.3%) fear for the chronic illness, 19(24.1%) are afraid of death, 3(3.8%) lack perceive benefit and 1(1.3%) don’t know the risk of knowing one’s HIV status.

**Table 13:** Shows how many students nurses of 400 level that have received HIV/AIDS counseling

	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		62	78.5
No		17	21.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 13 shows that 62(78.5%) of the respondents have received HIV/AIDS counseling and 17(21.5%) have not received HIV/AIDS counseling before.

**Table 14:** Shows nursing student’s comment on if HIV infected nurses should not continue with their career

	Item	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Yes		70	88.6
No		9	11.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 14, it shows that 70(88.6%) of the respondents think that HIV infected nurses should not continue with their career while 9(11.4%) says that they should continue with their career.

## Discussion

Findings from table 4 showed that all the students in 400 level (100%), 79 of the respondents have heard of HIV/AIDS. Further studies in table 5 showed that of the 79(100%) who know about HIV/AIDS counseling and testing most 13(16.5%) of them had information through radio, 8(10.1%) through television, 3(3.8%) through newspaper, 2(2.5%) through magazine, 6(7.6%) through books, 5(6.3%) through posters, 7(8.9%) through clothing, 4(5.1%) through drama, 20(25.3%) through school and 11(13.9%) through the hospital.

The above findings support Baggale *et al.* (2011) [5], which found that Lusaka, Zambian and London nursing students have had knowledge about HIV transmission.

Also, 30(38.0%) of the student agreed that HIV/AIDS counseling and testing reduces the risk of contacting the infection, 27(34.2%) disagreed and 22(27.9%) were undecided.

It was revealed that people would have both negative and positive attitudes towards such as individual (88%). About 65% of respondents felt people would regard those who went for counseling and testing as promiscuous 49%. Ayopo (2010) [6], indicated that Nigerian adolescent student have positive perception regarding HIV/AIDS, as well as positive attitudes to prevention methods.

Results from table 8 showed that 47(59.55) of the respondents think that nursing students are at risk of acquiring HIV and AIDS and 32(40.5%) said they are not at risk. Also, from table 7 it shows that 58(73.4%) of nursing science students are worried about contacting HIV and AIDS infection while 21(26.6%) said they are not worried.

Table 8 shows also that 51(64.6%) of the student believe that nursing students should go for HIV/AIDS testing while 11(13.9%) said no that they should not and 17(21%) said they don't know.

Table 9 shows that 47(59.55) of the 400 level nursing students have gone for their HIV/AIDS testing while 32(40.5%) the 400 level students have not done that. From the students that said no to the answer gave their reasons 11(34.4%) said that they do not want to know their HIV status, 12(37.7%) said they are afraid of the stigma.

Table 11 showed where the nursing students go for their HIV/AIDS testing. 10(12.7%) government hospital, 6(7.6%) family planning clinic, 30(38.0%) mobile clinic, 2(2.5%) mission health center, 8(10.1%) private hospital, 17(7.5%) private clinic, 6(7.6%) private doctor.

Table 12 shows those mat feel about knowing their HIV status. The results shows that 27(34.2%) have fear of testing positive, 16(20.3%) think about the stigma, 8(10.1%) think about discrimination in it, 5(6.3%) have fear for chronic illness, 19(24.1%) are afraid of death, 3(3.8%) lack for perceive benefit while 1(1.3%) don't know.

Furthermore, table 13 shows 62(78.5%) of the nursing student of 400 level have received HIV/AIDS counseling. While 17(21.5%) have not received HIV/AIDS counseling.

Also table 14 showed that 70(88.6%) nursing student are not to continue with their career if they are infected while 9(11.4%) said they should continue with their career.

This is problematic because of health care workers do not know their HIV status, they can put themselves and others in health care setting at risk [8]. This scenario could be equally true with the student nurses who are being socialized into the nursing caring profession [7,8].

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that nursing students in Imo State University, Owerri, Orlu Campus have knowledge of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing, they have high attitude and their practice of HIV/AIDS counseling need to improve. Knowledge, attitude and practice of HIV/AIDS counseling and testing and prevention of immense benefit to nurses, other health workers, youths and the nation at large, so it should be encouraged and please get tested so as to know your HIV/AIDS status it is very important.

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