

AGYW Perspectives on PEP and PrEP

Online Platforms and Telemedicine Adoption in South Africa

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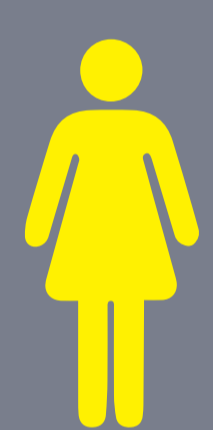


Background

The integration of technology in healthcare, particularly telemedicine and online platforms, is **transforming the delivery of health services**. This shift is crucial for Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW), given their unique healthcare needs, especially in sexual and reproductive health (SRH). The study focuses on **AGYW's perspectives on these technologies in the context of HIV/AIDS**, aiming to align healthcare solutions with their dynamic relationship with technology.



Methods



Demographic:
Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) aged 18 to 25.



Focus:
Willingness to adopt telemedicine and online platforms for HIV care.

Employing a quantitative research approach, the study conducted in 2023 investigated AGYW's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding HIV/AIDS, with a focus on their willingness to adopt telemedicine and online platforms. Using a 5-point Likert scale, electronic surveys were distributed to the entire AGYW population aged 18 to 25, ensuring a cross-sectional snapshot of prevalent factors. The total population sampling strategy reached 218,279 subscribers of a targeted online magazine, facilitating a diverse and representative sample. A validated structured questionnaire was used, ensuring ethical considerations like informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Quantitative data, collected through Likert scale responses, was analysed using PowerBI, employing descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.



Results



Findings:
93% know their HIV status.
67% aware of PrEP.
17% initiated PrEP.

Initial findings revealed that 93% of respondents are aware of their HIV status, with 1% reporting multiple sexual partners. Notably, 78% expressed interest in purchasing HIV self-test kits online, and 57% desired broader online health services. Regarding PrEP, 67% are aware, 17% have initiated PrEP, and 46% are open to online PrEP services. Financially, 60% were willing to spend up to ZAR500 (USD27) for online health services.



Conclusions



Summary:
High level of awareness and interest exists by AGYW towards digital adoption of HIV treatment and healthcare.

The study's findings demonstrate a high level of awareness and openness among AGYW toward incorporating online platforms into their healthcare routines. The interest in HIV self-test kits, PrEP, and broader online health services underscores the potential of digital platforms to address reproductive health needs effectively. The study contributes substantively to the discourse on digital health strategies, emphasizing the importance of aligning interventions with the preferences and priorities of AGYW in South Africa. Further analysis will refine these insights, guiding the development of targeted interventions in the dynamic landscape of reproductive healthcare.



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