

**ABSTRACT**

The intention behind this research was to provide education and promote awareness to African American undergraduate students attending Nashville, TN private historically black institutions Fisk University & American Baptist College.

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The intention of this research was to provide education and promote awareness to African American undergraduate college students attending Nashville, TN private historically black institutions Fisk University & American Baptist College. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks cells that help the body fight infection, making a person more vulnerable to other infections and diseases. In fact, it is spread by contact with certain bodily fluids of a person with HIV, most commonly during unprotected sex, or through sharing injection drug equipment. If left untreated, HIV can lead to the disease AIDS or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. Currently, there is no cure for HIV/AIDS (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). By taking HIV medicine (called antiretroviral therapy or ART), people with HIV can live long and healthy lives and prevent transmitting HIV to their sexual partners. In addition, there is pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is only for people who are at risk of getting HIV. But PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) is an option for someone who thinks they've recently been exposed to HIV during sex or through injection drug use. African Americans are at a higher risk of living with HIV. In fact, the CDC found Black/African American gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men are more affected by HIV than any other group in the United States.

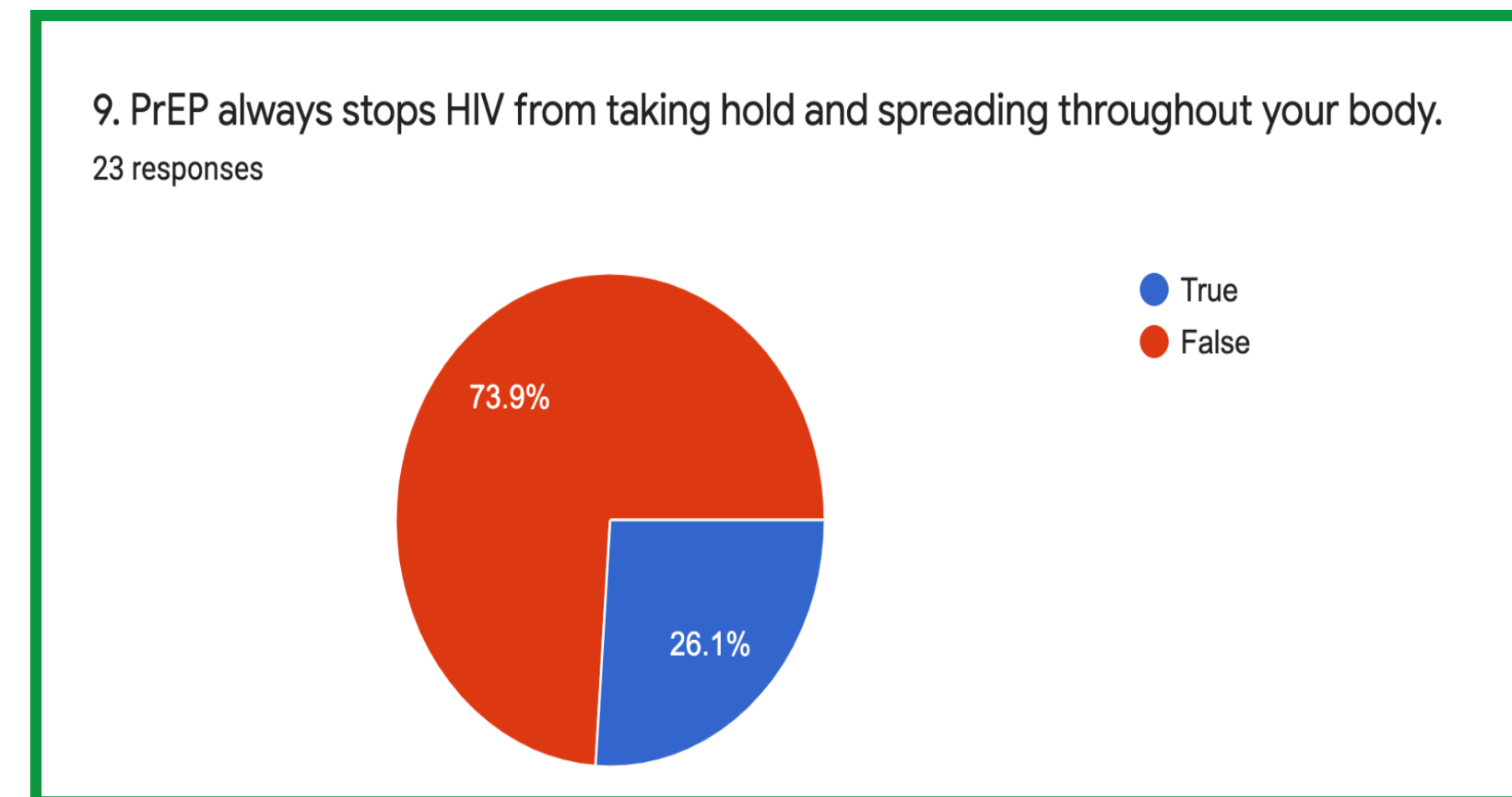
**METHODS AND PROCEDURE**

Participants were recruited in various ways; including electronic flyers and social media. Subsequently, at the educational event, participants completed a short pre-test upon arrival to ascertain a baseline measure of his/her HIV/AIDS knowledge. Moreover, the event utilized the Meharry Medical College Preventative Medicine Residency Program as a community partner. What is more, participants were provided with information on where to get HIV testing locally and receive their results privately. Also, the presentation provided health education and prevention awareness regarding HIV/AIDS as well as information on PEP and PrEP. At the end of the event, the attendees were asked to complete a post-test/survey. This was used to measure the knowledge participants gained from the intervention. Finally, Hope House Memphis offered mail-in HIV tests to all participants.

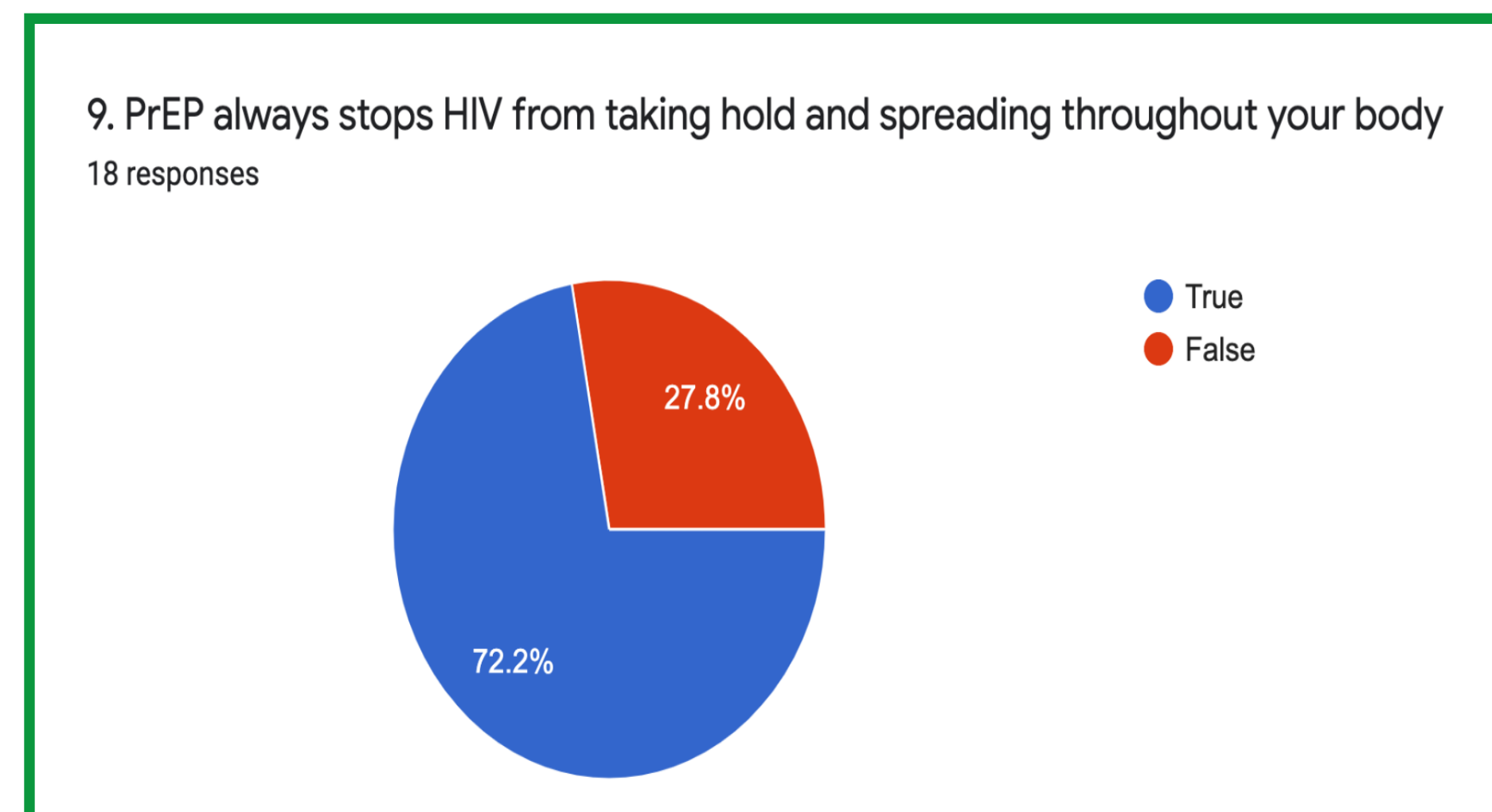
**OUTCOME**

This study found that there was a 100% increase in knowledge and awareness surrounding HIV/AIDS in college students. Based on the results from the pre-test and post-test there were more correct answers in the post test compared to the results from the pre-test. So, this shows that participants gained a better understanding of the symptoms and signs of HIV/AIDS and how to protect against transmission. Moreover, in the graphs shown, based on the results from the pre-test and post-test, again, there were more correct answers in the post test compared to the results from the pre-test. Consequently, this shows that participants gained a better understanding of the symptoms and signs of HIV/AIDS and how to protect against transmission.

**Pretest Results:**



**Post Test Results:**



**DISCUSSION**

Attending this HIV/AIDS educational intervention has proven to be substantial for its participants as from the results there was an increase in knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS. Thus, attendees became more aware of the risks that accompany unprotected sex in relation to HIV/AIDS. As such, this is especially significant for African Americans as they are the most disproportionately affected racial group as it relates to HIV/AIDS. Through this study, it was found that the people who attended had moderate knowledge beforehand about HIV/AIDS but, there were some stigmas and misconceptions that were corrected from the presentation regarding HIV/AIDS stigmas. In comparison to last year's similar event, there was a significant increase in attendees. After doing this project for the second time, I felt more confident going into this event, as I learned ways to better engaged participants. Also, I was pleased that I had a 50% increase in participants this year from previous year. Additionally, this year's study had more attendee engagement during the discussion. Finally, I was pleased that participants had a greater increase in knowledge versus last year.

**REFERENCES**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC health disparities and inequalities report— United States, 2011. MMWR 60(Suppl):1–116. Infant Mortality, Low Birth weight and Racial Disparity. <http://www.nationalhealthystart.org/site/assets/docs/InfantMortalityLowBirthweight.pdf>

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