



ABSTRACT

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are life threatening conditions that affected approximately 38 million people across the globe in 2019 according to UNAID.org and African Americans are infected disproportionately compared to other races with 42% of new cases being African Americans. Thus, the aim of this project was to educate and spread awareness to college students who attend a historically black college/ university in the Nashville, TN area, with special concentration on Fisk University and American Baptist College as this age demographic is infected at the high rates. The expected outcome of this study was that participants would have an increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS facts, debunk myths, and understand the differences between PrEP and PeP.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The intention behind this research was to provide education and promote awareness to African American undergraduate college students attending a Nashville, TN area private historically black institution including 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. 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 Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). HIV/AIDS is frightening as there is currently no cure (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 sexual intercourse or through injection drug use. First identified in 1981, HIV is the cause of one of humanity's deadliest and most persistent epidemics. AIDS is the late stage of HIV infection that occurs when the body's immune system is badly damaged because of the virus. African Americans are at a higher risk of living with HIV and make up 42% of new cases according to the CDC.

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Participants were recruited through the school messaging app GroupMe. At the virtual educational event, participants were asked to complete a short survey/pre-test upon arrival to ascertain a baseline measure of his/her HIV/AIDS knowledge via link placed into the "chat box" The Student Health Ambassador served as moderator for the event. Next, Tomekicia Wren, HIV Health Educator shared information regarding PrEP, PeP, and HIV/AIDS awareness. She also provided updated information and debunked several common myths. What is more, she discussed the importance of HIV/AIDS testing and the timetables involved. At the end of the event, attendees were asked to complete a post-test/survey the same way they completed the pre-test/survey. This was used to measure the knowledge participants gained from the intervention. In addition, all who completed the pre-test and post-test were eligible to participate in a monetary gift card drawing. The surveys were administered via Google Forms. Finally, to ensure that the pre and post surveys were properly matched, but, refrained from collecting identifying information, individuals were asked to type their initials (first, middle, and last) and the numeric portion of their street address on both surveys.

OUTCOME

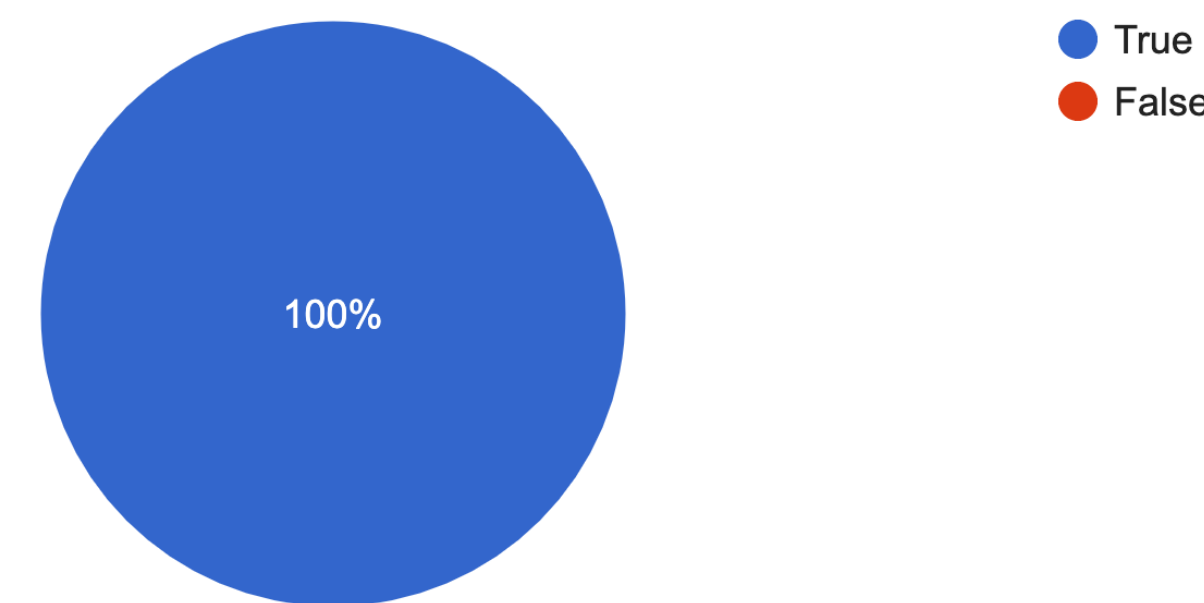
The outcomes of this educational event were an increase in knowledge according to the pre and post-test. Additionally, myths and rumors concerning HIV/AIDS were dispelled. Moreover, attendees were provided with information on where they could get tested locally. Conversely, there was a change after the presentation where knowledge appeared to decreased. As is shown in the graphs below, in the pretest participants selected "True" for question 8 : "Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) is when people at risk for HIV take daily medicine to prevent HIV." However, in the posttest some participants were not as confident in their answers and 80% chose "True" while the other 20% chose "False".

Pretest Results:

Post Test Results:

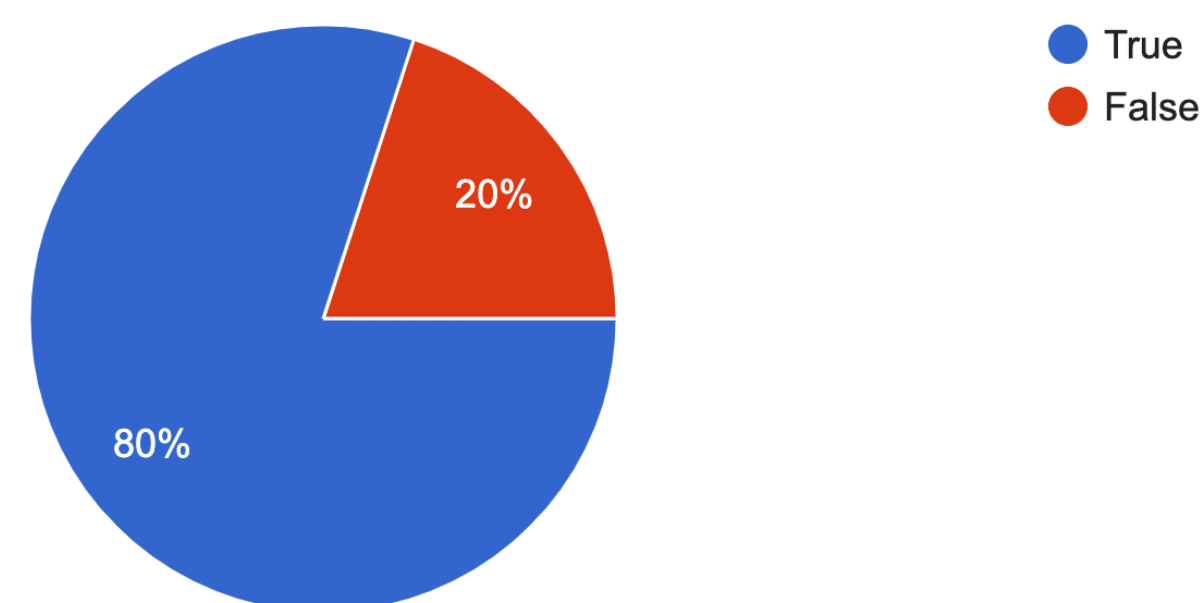
8. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) is when people at risk for HIV take daily medicine to prevent HIV.

5 responses



8. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) is when people at risk for HIV take daily medicine to prevent HIV

5 responses



DISCUSSION

Attending this HIV/AIDS educational intervention will hopefully prove to be substantial as this event will help increase knowledge and understanding concerning HIV/AIDS. Thus, attendees will hopefully become more aware of the risks that accompany unprotected sex in relation to HIV/AIDS. 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 decent knowledge beforehand about HIV/AIDS but, there were some stigmas and misconceptions that were corrected from the presentation based off lack of knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS. Moreover, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the study had to be conducted virtually which made it difficult for the researcher to truly gauge an accurate assessment of how well the participants retained and understood the information shared by the presenter.

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC health disparities and inequalities report—
 "What to Know About HIV and COVID-19." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 28 July 2020, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/hiv.html.
 Epidemic." ABC News, ABC News Network, 27 Nov. 2019, abcnews.go.com/US/cities-learn-york-city-tackling-hiv-epidemic/story?id=67335363.
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). HIV Among African Americans.
 "PrEP The Basics ." PrEP, prepfacts.org/prep/the-basics/.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fisk University
 Meharry Medical College
 TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project
 Meharry Medical College Preventative Residency Program
 Tomekicia Wren