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The Relationship of Knowledge and Attitude of Youth on HIV/AIDS Prevention in Suco Lactós, Administrative Post Fohorem, Municipality of Covalima, Year 2025

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Abstract:

- ***Introduction:***

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a critical public health threat that compromises the immune system, leading to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). Young people are particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS due to various social, cultural, and behavioral factors. Increasing knowledge and fostering positive attitudes towards HIV prevention are essential in reducing infection rates among this demographic.

- ***Objective:***

This study aims to explore the relationship between youth knowledge and attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, in 2025. Specific goals include assessing the levels of knowledge and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention and describing their correlation.

- ***Method:***

A cross-sectional quantitative approach was employed, with a sample of 75 young individuals aged 16-25 years gathered from four villages in Lactós Suco. Data collection involved structured questionnaires assessing knowledge and attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. Statistical analyses, including univariate and bivariate methods with chi-square tests, were conducted to evaluate relationships between variables.

- ***Results & Discussion:***

The findings revealed that 78.7% of respondents know about HIV/AIDS prevention, while 21.3% lack adequate understanding. Attitudes towards prevention were also generally positive, with 65.3% exhibiting favorable perceptions. However, a notable minority (34.7%) demonstrated unfavorable attitudes, potentially influenced by social stigma and misinformation. Statistical analysis indicated a significant relationship between knowledge and preventive behaviors (p-value = 0.02), but not between attitudes and behavioral outcomes (p-value = 0.25). This discrepancy highlights the complexity of behavior change, in which knowledge does not always translate into proactive prevention efforts.

- ***Conclusion:***

While youth in Covalima exhibit considerable knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, addressing negative attitudes and stigma is crucial for effective intervention. Comprehensive educational strategies should empower youth to adopt healthier behaviors. Future initiatives must focus on creating supportive environments that foster open dialogue about sexual health, ultimately improving prevention efforts against HIV/AIDS.

Keywords: *HIV/AIDS, Youth, Knowledge, Attitudes, Prevention, Covalima, Public Health, Educational Strategies.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

HIV, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is a formidable virus that progressively undermines the human immune system, which is essential for defending the body against infections and diseases (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 2021). When left untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS, or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. AIDS is not a single disease but rather a complex of symptoms and infections that arise as the immune system becomes severely compromised due to the relentless attack of the virus (World Health Organization, 2022). This condition marks the final stage of HIV infection, characterized by the body's inability to fend off even the most minor illnesses, highlighting the urgent need for early diagnosis and intervention (Ariyanti, 2020).

Young individuals represent a demographic that is particularly vulnerable to the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Substantial social transitions mark this critical phase of life, often introducing them to a variety of new social, cultural, physical, and psychological experiences (Zha et al., 2021). These changes can leave them more exposed to numerous health risks, including HIV/AIDS (Kahn et al., 2020). A significant factor contributing to their heightened susceptibility is a pervasive lack of comprehensive understanding surrounding the complexities of HIV/AIDS, which can lead to uninformed decisions and behaviors (Ariyanti, 2020).

According to the World Health Organization (2023), around the globe, a staggering 39.9 million individuals are living with HIV/AIDS, a challenging condition that tragically claims approximately 630,000 lives each year. Among this population, roughly 20.5 million women aged 15 and older are affected by HIV, with 240,000 of them succumbing to the disease. In parallel, about 18.1 million men are also living with HIV, and the impact on the youngest members of society is profound, as 30,000 children under the age of 1 are lost each year. Overall, the epidemic results in a heartbreaking total of 1.4 million lives lost, with 76,000 deaths attributed explicitly to HIV-related complications. The statistics serve as a sobering reminder of the ongoing global health crisis and the urgent need for continued awareness, education, and support in the fight against HIV/AIDS (WHO, 2023).

As per Nuramalia (2022), approximately 360,000 youths between the ages of 15 and 24 are diagnosed with HIV, a staggering figure that includes nearly 140,000 adolescents aged 15 to 19. Despite the continuous efforts of global initiatives targeting the fight against HIV/AIDS, it is evident that adolescents and young individuals still require heightened attention and resources. While significant progress has been achieved in various areas, this vulnerable demographic now represents a concerning percentage of the global population living with HIV. The urgency of addressing their unique needs and challenges has never been greater.

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is primarily transmitted through unprotected sexual activity, which includes intimate intercourse with individuals who are infected with HIV/AIDS, such as partners who may have the virus, sex workers, or members of the same sex (Rohmatulailah & Fikriyah, 2021). HIV primarily spreads through direct contact with mucous membranes or blood, which occurs when an individual comes into contact with bodily fluids that contain the virus. These fluids include blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk, all of which can harbor significant concentrations of HIV. The transmission can occur through various means, such as unprotected sexual intercourse, sharing needles or syringes, and from mother to child during perinatal processes, including pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding (WHO, 2023). It is noteworthy that HIV is not transmitted through casual contact or through activities such as hugging or sharing utensils (Rohmatulailah & Fikriyah, 2021). Rohmatulailah & Fikriyah (2021) state that understanding these modes of transmission is crucial in preventing the spread of the virus and protecting vulnerable populations. These routes highlight the critical importance of safe practices in reducing infection risk.

Adolescence is a pivotal phase in human development, marking the transformative journey from the innocence of childhood to the complexities of adulthood. Profound changes across various dimensions, including physical growth, behavioral evolution, biological maturation, and emotional reconfiguration, characterize this significant period (Steinberg, 2014). Behavior, in this context, encompasses the myriad ways individuals respond to their surroundings, shaped by both internal and external stimuli (Berk, 2018). However, unhealthy shifts in behavior during this critical time can result in heightened vulnerability to serious health issues, such as increased rates of HIV/AIDS among young people (UNAIDS, 2020).

The emergence of HIV/AIDS has significantly heightened awareness among young people, particularly those who engage in drug use, regarding critical issues such as reproductive health, casual sexual relationships, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections (WHO, 2023). However, the persistent absence of comprehensive and accessible reproductive health information for youth severely hampers their ability to grasp these vital topics. This knowledge gap poses serious challenges, leaving many inadequately equipped to make informed decisions about their sexual health and well-being (Ismail et al., 2022).

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The Department of the Infectious Disease Control Program at the Ministry of Health, Timor-Leste, reported that there are currently 277 individuals living with HIV/AIDS, according to data covering the period from January 2024 to 2025, which totals 2,256 cases (Ministry of Health, 2025). The National Institute for Combating HIV/AIDS (INCSIDA) indicated that 19 new cases were registered on October 2, 2024. Since 2003, there have been 2,042 recorded cases, with 1,118 individuals receiving intensive treatment in 13 municipalities (Tatoli, 2024). Additionally, 341 patients and their contacts have been lost to follow-up. The annual increase in HIV/AIDS cases continues as young people engage in unprotected sex and lack awareness about the disease.

Table 1 Reports the Number of HIV/AIDS Cases from 13 Municipalities, Timor-Leste, 2024

Municipal	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Aileu	16	0.78
Ainaro	32	1.57
Baucau	53	2.60
Bobonaro	117	5.73
Covalima	83	4.06
Dili	1545	75.66
Ermera	35	1.71
Liquiça	24	1.18
Lautem	17	0.83
Manatuto	20	0.98
Manufahi	22	1.08
Oe-cusse	63	3.09
Viqueque	15	0.73
Total	2042	100.00

Source: Tatoli (2024)

According to the National Institute for Combating HIV/AIDS (INCSIDA), the age group most affected by HIV is 25 to 44 years, with 1,170 individuals diagnosed. This is followed by the 15-24 age group, which has 566 affected individuals. INCSIDA also reports that nearly 500 young people aged 15 to 24 are living with HIV, while approximately 1,100 individuals in the 25 to 44 age range are infected (INCSIDA, 2024).

Knowledge and attitudes are essential components in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. A solid understanding of how HIV is transmitted and prevented encourages positive behaviors, such as using condoms, getting tested for HIV, and avoiding risky activities. Young people who possess adequate knowledge and have positive attitudes are generally better equipped to protect themselves from HIV infection. Since adolescence is a particularly vulnerable stage, education plays a crucial role in promoting effective preventive measures (Ismail et al., 2022). Various factors influence the prevention of HIV/AIDS, including awareness of prevention methods, attitudes toward risk, and limited access to information. These issues can contribute to the ongoing rise in HIV/AIDS cases each year.

It is crucial to understand how young people's knowledge and attitudes impact efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS.

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the connection between young individuals' understanding and their perspectives on preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025.

A. Specific Objectives

- To examine the correlation between youth knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025.
- To assess the attitudes of young people toward HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025.
- To define the relationship between young people's knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025.

B. Research methods

➢ *Research Design*

The researcher employed a quantitative approach, conducting a cross-sectional study to investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In this study, the cross-sectional method involved observing

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each participant at a single point in time and collecting measurements simultaneously, which reflected the subjects' characteristics or variables at that moment. This research was conducted in Lactós Suco, located within the Fohorem Administrative Post of Covalima Municipality, in 2025.

C. Population and Sample

➢ *Population*

The term "population" refers to the entire collection of individuals or items that share specific traits and characteristics, which researchers use for analysis and to conclude (Sujarweni, 2015). The study comprised 303 young individuals aged 16 to 25, selected from four villages: Calobor, Cacaut, Fatuc-laran, and Aululik, located in the Lactós Suco area within the Fohorem Administrative Post of the Covalima Municipality. This age group was selected because young people are seen as a vulnerable demographic in relation to HIV/AIDS-related risky behaviors and are also a primary target for prevention efforts.

➢ *Sample*

As noted by the scholar Sugiyono (2014), the sample accurately represents the population in terms of size and survey characteristics. According to Arikunto (2013), when the population exceeds 100 individuals, a sample size of 15-25% is considered appropriate for this research.

➢ *Technique Defining Sample*

The study determined its sample size using the Slovin formula, as the population size is known. This formula helps establish the sample size based on the desired margin of error. It can be expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N.e^2}$$

Description:

n = Total sample
N = Total population
e = Level of precision or margin of error

The total population in this study is 303 people, with a precision level of 10% (e=0.1). After calculating the sample size, it is:

$$n = \frac{303}{1+303.(0,1)^2} = \frac{303}{1+3,03} = \frac{303}{4,03} = 75$$

Based on the above results, the total sample size for the researcher's study is 75 people.

➢ *Sampling Technique*

In this research, the investigator uses accidental sampling, a type of non-probability sampling. This method involves selecting participants—specifically young people—based on those the researcher encounters during data collection in various locations, such as schools, marketplaces, streets, or other public areas. This approach was chosen due to time, resource, and accessibility constraints for the intended participants. The researcher will identify young individuals in the study area who are available and willing to participate at that moment. Although this technique does not involve formal randomization or stratification and may not fully represent the youth demographic, it is effective for obtaining preliminary data relevant to the research.

D. Data Collection Techniques

➢ *Data Collection Techniques and Tools*

According to Sugiyono (2020) and Nurasiah (2020), there are generally four types of data collection techniques that fall into specific categories:

Questionnaire: A questionnaire is a tool for collecting data, comprising a sequence of questions organized to gather information from participants. Typically, questionnaires include open-ended, closed-ended, and Likert-scale questions that respondents are required to answer in writing.

Interview: An interview is a discussion between two individuals to share information and ideas through a series of questions and answers. This process helps to provide insights into a specific subject, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of young people's knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS from young respondents.

Observation: An observation is a technique in which researchers directly examine data to gain a deeper understanding of the context within the broader social environment, thereby allowing for a comprehensive perspective. This method of data collection is used to depict circumstances at the grassroots level through observations conducted by the author at the research site

Documentation: This technique is used to collect secondary data from documents such as reports, archives, and statistical data on HIV/AIDS prevention. The objective is to support and complement primary data obtained through questionnaires.

E. Data Source

➢ *The data sources necessary for the research are categorized into two types:*

Primary Data: Primary data is collected directly from relevant sources by the researcher, without the involvement of intermediaries. This data is typically gathered from respondents who complete questionnaires.

➢ *Secondary Data*

Secondary data complements primary data. It is obtained indirectly, often from a third party that has processed the data for various purposes. Sources of secondary data can include media publications, institutions, books, and other archival documents.

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F. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis techniques used in this research are univariate and bivariate.

➢ *Univariate Analysis:*

Univariate analysis was conducted to describe and explain the characteristics of each research variable. The data were presented as frequency distributions and percentages. In this study, univariate analysis focused on the following variables: respondent characteristics (age, gender, education), level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention, and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention. The results of the univariate analysis will indicate the percentage of respondents who have good or poor knowledge, as well as those who hold positive or negative attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention.

➢ *Bivariate Analysis*

Bivariate analysis was utilized to examine the relationship between two variables: knowledge and attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS prevention efforts targeted at young people. The Chi-Square (χ^2) test was selected for this analysis since the data are categorical, such as "good" versus "poor" or "positive" versus "negative." The results of this test will indicate whether there is a significant relationship between the level of knowledge and the attitudes of young people towards HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. A significance level of 0.05 (5%) was established for this study. If the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates a significant relationship between the variables being tested.

II. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

➢ *Demographic Data*

The study lasted two months and took place at Suco Lactós, Administrative Post Fohorem, Covalima Municipality, 2025.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of Youth in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025.

No.	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	128	42.2
2.	Female	175	57.8
Total		303	100.0

Sources: Secondary data, 2025

The table presents data on the total youth population in Lactós Suco, located in the Fohorem Administrative Post of Covalima Municipality, for the year 2025. In this demographic breakdown, the youth population is divided into two distinct gender categories: males and females.

The data reveal that of the total youth population, 128 are male, accounting for 42.2% of the population. In contrast, females comprise a larger proportion of the youth demographic, with 175 individuals, representing 57.8% of the total. This indicates a gender distribution that leans toward more females than males in this community.

Overall, the analysis suggests a significant gender disparity, with females outnumbering males. This trend may reflect broader social, cultural, or demographic patterns within the community. It could have implications for planning community services, educational programs, and resources tailored to the youth in Lactós Suco.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Youth Data Organized by Hamlets for Lactós Suco in the Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025.

No.	Hamlets	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Aululic	66	21.8
2.	Cacaut	92	30.4
3.	Calobor	60	19.8
4.	Fatuc-Laran	85	28.1
Total		303	100.0

Sources: Secondary data, 2025

The table presents youth data from Lactós Suco in Covalima Municipality for 2025, categorized by village. Cacaut has the highest youth representation with 92 individuals (30.4% of total), suggesting favorable factors for youth. Aululic has 66 youth (21.8%), indicating a healthy presence, while Calobor has 60 youth (19.8%), suggesting some challenges. Fatuc-Laran has 85 youth, with its percentage not calculated. Overall, the data shows a diverse youth distribution, highlighting the need for tailored programs for development and engagement.

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Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Youth Data According to Age from Four Villages (4), in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025

No.	Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	16-20	128	42.3
2.	21-25	175	57.7
Total		303	100.0

Sources: Secondary data, 2025

The data presented in Table 3 provides a detailed look at the youth population in Lactós Suco, located in the Fohorem Administrative Post of Covalima Municipality for the year 2025. The table is segmented into two age groups: 16-20 years and 21-25 years, offering insights into the demographic distribution within these brackets.

In the 16-20 age group, there are 128 individuals, accounting for approximately 42.28% of the youth population surveyed. This indicates that a significant portion of the youth in this area falls within this younger age bracket.

Conversely, the 21-25 age group comprises 175 individuals, representing 57.72% of the youth demographic. This suggests a higher concentration of older youth in the Fohorem Administrative Post, which may reflect factors such as educational transitions, workforce participation, or other social dynamics prevalent in the area.

The analysis reveals that the majority of the youth population (over half) falls into the 21-25 age category, suggesting a potential focus for programs and initiatives targeting this demographic. Understanding the composition of the youth population can help local authorities and organizations tailor their efforts to address the specific needs and challenges of these age groups, thereby promoting better socioeconomic outcomes in the community.

- *Characteristics of Respondents*

In this section, the researcher justifies the respondents' identities collected at the research site, specifically regarding their sex, age, and level of education, using the following tables.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Sex in Suco Lactós, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, Year 2025.

No.	Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	28	37.3
2.	Female	47	62.7
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The data presented in Table 4 highlight the distribution of respondents by sex in the Suco Lactós area of the Fohorem Administrative Post within the Covalima Municipality for the year 2025.

In total, 75 respondents participated, with a notable majority being female. Of the total, 47 respondents identified as female, representing 62.67% of the sample population. In comparison, 28 male respondents accounted for 37.33% of the total.

This significant difference in the distribution suggests a higher female representation in Suco Lactós. The predominance of females could reflect various social, demographic, or cultural factors in the area, such as gender roles or population trends, that might influence who is more likely to participate in surveys or studies.

Understanding the sex distribution is crucial for planning community programs or interventions, as it highlights the need for policies and services to cater to the majority population effectively. Overall, this data suggests that initiatives in Suco Lactós may need to consider the unique perspectives and needs of the predominantly female respondents.

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Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Level of Education in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025.

No.	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Tertiary	10	13.3
2	Secondary	38	50.7
3	Pre-Secondary	17	22.7
4	Primary	10	13.3
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The frequency distribution of respondents by level of education in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, for the year 2025 provides valuable insights into the population's educational background.

According to the data, the largest group, 50.7%, completed secondary education. This indicates that a significant portion of the community has attained a high level of education, which may influence their employment opportunities and their ability to assume more complex societal roles.

Following secondary education, 22.7% of respondents achieved pre-secondary education, suggesting that a sizeable group has received some foundational education but has not advanced to secondary levels. This could indicate gaps in educational continuity or accessibility in the area.

Tertiary education was reported by 13.3% of respondents, indicating that a smaller yet important segment of the population has pursued higher education. This level of education can be critical for developing specialized skills and knowledge that contribute to community development and economic growth.

Lastly, primary education was reported by 10 respondents. This represents a smaller fraction of the population, suggesting that although basic education is available, some individuals in the community may still have not completed primary education or be illiterate.

Overall, the distribution highlights a community with a relatively diverse educational background, a strong base in secondary education, and areas for improvement in increasing higher education attainment and ensuring that foundational educational levels are met across the population.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Age Group for Young People in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025.

No.	Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	16-20	33	44.0
2.	21-25	42	56.0
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The data presented in Table 6 reflect the distribution of young people in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, by age group for the year 2025.

In total, 75 respondents are categorized into two distinct age groups: 16-20 years and 21-25 years. The 21-25 age group has the highest frequency, comprising 42 respondents, or 56% of the total sample. Conversely, the 16-20 age group includes 33 respondents, representing 44% of those surveyed.

This distribution indicates that young people aged 21-25 are more prevalent in this community than those aged 16-20. Such demographics may suggest a trend towards greater youth engagement or higher retention rates in this age bracket within the area. The relatively balanced proportions, however, indicate that both age groups are significant in number, highlighting the importance of addressing the needs and interests of both segments within community initiatives and programs.

Overall, this analysis underscores the presence of a youthful demographic in the region, which could inform local policymaking, youth programs, and resource allocation to better support this population.

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➢ *Univariate Analysis*

Univariate analysis is employed to describe the distribution of values for individual variables. This analysis will examine the relationship between young people's knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, in 2025.

Table 7: Frequency Distribution of the Relationship Between Increase in HIV/AIDS Prevention in Suco Lactos, Post Administrativo Fohorem, Covalima Municipality, Year 2025

No.	Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Know	59	78.7
2.	Do not know	16	21.3
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The frequency distribution table presents data on youth knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention in Suco Lactos, located in the Post Administrativo Fohorem of the Covalima Municipality, for the year 2025.

Out of the total responses collected, a significant majority of the youth, 59 individuals, indicated that they possess knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention. This represents approximately 78.7% of the surveyed population. Conversely, a smaller group of 16 individuals, making up 21.3%, reported that they do not have knowledge on this critical health issue.

The results suggest that there is a substantial awareness among the youth in this region about HIV/AIDS prevention strategies. The high percentage of knowledgeable individuals may reflect the effectiveness of local health education initiatives or community outreach programs that raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. However, the presence of 21.3% of youth lacking knowledge indicates a notable gap that persists, underscoring the need for ongoing education and outreach to ensure that all individuals are informed about prevention methods.

Overall, while the data shows a positive trend towards awareness in the community, it also underscores the importance of addressing the knowledge gap among the minority who are still uninformed, as empowering all youth with proper knowledge is vital for effective prevention of HIV/AIDS in the region.

Table 8: Frequency Distribution of Youth Attitude towards HIV/AIDS Prevention in Lactos Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025

No.	Attitude	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Positive	49	65.3
2.	Negative	26	34.7
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The table presents a frequency distribution of youth attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactos Suco, located in the Fohorem Administrative Post of Covalima Municipality, for the year 2025.

An analysis of the data reveals a diverse range of perspectives among the youth in this area. The distribution showcases varying levels of awareness, knowledge, and willingness to engage in prevention strategies related to HIV/AIDS.

Key observations indicate that a significant portion of the youth may exhibit positive attitudes, demonstrating an understanding of the importance of education and preventive measures. This positive outlook could be linked to community awareness campaigns or educational initiatives, highlighting the role of targeted outreach in shaping perceptions.

Conversely, there may also be a notable percentage of youth with neutral or negative attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention. This aspect signals a potential knowledge gap or stigma surrounding the disease, which could hinder their willingness to participate in prevention efforts. It emphasizes the need for continued education and dialogue to combat misconceptions and foster a more supportive environment for discussing sexual health and responsibility.

Overall, the frequency distribution reflects not only the current landscape of youth attitudes in Lactos Suco but also underscores the importance of ongoing efforts in public health education and community engagement to ensure that all young individuals are

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informed and active participants in HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives. By addressing the varying attitudes and understanding the underlying factors, stakeholders can better tailor their strategies and resources to promote a healthier future for the youth in the Covalima Municipality.

Table 9: Frequency Distribution of HIV/AIDS Prevention Among Youth in Suco Lactos, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality in 2025

No.	HIV/AIDS prevention	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	66	88.0
2.	No	9	12.0
Total		75	100.0

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The data presented in Table 9 highlight the distribution of responses regarding HIV/AIDS prevention among youth in Suco Lactos, located within the Fohorem Administrative Post of Covalima Municipality, in 2025.

A total of 75 respondents participated in the survey, and the findings reveal a significant awareness and acceptance of HIV/AIDS prevention measures among the youth in this area. Specifically, 66 individuals, which represents 88.0% of the respondents, indicated that they are engaged in preventive practices against HIV/AIDS. This high percentage suggests that a substantial majority of youth are aware of the importance of prevention and are likely taking steps to protect themselves and others from the virus.

Conversely, only nine respondents, accounting for 12.0%, reported that they do not engage in HIV/AIDS preventive measures. This smaller proportion indicates that a minority of youth may lack awareness, access, or the means to implement preventive practices.

Overall, the findings suggest a generally positive trend in HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention among the youth in this region, with a clear majority adopting a preventive strategy. However, the existence of a smaller group that is not participating in such measure's points to the need for continued education and outreach efforts to ensure that all youth have the knowledge and resources necessary to prevent HIV/AIDS.

- *Bivariate Analysis*

This bivariate analysis examines the relationships between young people's knowledge and attitudes regarding HIV prevention in Suco Lactós, located in the Administrative Post of the Fohorem Municipality, Covalima, in 2025. The statistical method employed for this analysis is the Chi-square test.

The confidence level is set at 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$). A P-value less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) indicates that there is a significant association between the two variables being investigated by the researcher.

Table 10. The Relationship Between Youth Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Suco Lactos, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, in 2025.

No.	Knowledge	HIV/AIDS Prevention						P-Value
		Yes		No		Total		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	Know	65	98	1	2	66	100	0.02 <0.05
2.	Do not know	9	100	0	0	9	100	
Total		74		1		75		

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The data presented in Table 10 illustrate the relationship between youth knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention in Suco Lactos, located in the Fohorem Administrative Post of the Covalima Municipality, as of 2025. The table highlights two distinct groups based on their awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention methods, categorized as those who know and those who do not know.

In the first category, labeled "Know," a substantial majority of youth, represented by 65 individuals (98%), reported being knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS prevention strategies, with only one individual (2%) indicating a lack of knowledge. This suggests a high level of awareness among the youth regarding HIV/AIDS prevention in this area, with a total of 66 participants included in this group. The statistical analysis reveals a p-value of 0.02, indicating that the relationship between knowledge and HIV/AIDS prevention is statistically significant.

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Conversely, the second category, "Do not know," is comprised of 9 individuals who lack knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. This stark contrast with the first group reinforces the notion that the majority of youth possess critical knowledge about how to prevent the disease.

Overall, the findings suggest a positive trend in the awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention among the youth in Suco Lactos, with a significant number demonstrating knowledge about preventive measures. However, the presence of a small group lacking this knowledge highlights the need for continued education and outreach efforts in the community to ensure that all youth are informed and equipped to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS.

From the statistical test (chi-square) showed that there is a significant relationship between young people's knowledge about HIV / AIDS Prevention with P-Value = 0.02 (α<P = 0.02<0.05)

Table 11. The Relationship between Youth Attitudes and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Suco Lactos, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, 2025

No.	Attitude	HIV/AIDS Prevention						P-Value
		Yes		No		Total		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	Positive	47	71	19	29	66	100	0.25 >0.05
2.	Negative	2	22	7	78	9	100	
Total		49		26		75		

Sources: Primary data, 2025

The table presents an analysis of youth attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention in Suco Lactos, part of the Fohorem Administrative Post in Covalima Municipality, as observed in 2025.

In this data set, a total of 66 youths were surveyed, categorized by their attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention as either positive or negative. The results indicate that a significant majority, 47 youths (71%), exhibited a positive or "good" attitude towards HIV/AIDS prevention. Conversely, 19 youths (29%) demonstrated a "bad" or negative attitude.

For those with a good attitude, the HIV/AIDS prevention awareness is significantly high, reflecting a favorable perception that likely contributes to more proactive engagement in preventive measures. The p-value for this finding is 0.25, which exceeds the threshold of 0.05, suggesting that there is no statistically significant relationship between a good attitude and prevention outcomes in this survey.

On the other hand, the small number of youths categorized with a bad attitude, showing only two individuals, implies that negative perceptions about HIV/AIDS prevention are relatively rare in this demographic. However, the limited data on this group make it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the implications of negative attitudes.

Overall, the survey suggests that the youth in Suco Lactos generally hold positive attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention, which is encouraging for public health initiatives in the region. Nevertheless, the statistical analysis indicates that these attitudes do not have a significant impact on behavioral outcomes related to HIV/AIDS prevention in the studied population. Further research could help better understand the factors influencing these attitudes and their potential correlation with prevention practices.

The statistical test (chi-square) showed that there is no relationship between the attitude about HIV / AIDS Prevention with P-Value = 0.25 (α> P = 0.25> 0.05).

B. Discussion

The study explores the relationship between youth knowledge and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Fohorem Administrative Post, Covalima Municipality, in 2025. The findings indicate that while a large majority (78.7%) of respondents claim to know about HIV/AIDS prevention, there remains a gap among about 21.3% who do not possess an adequate understanding. Furthermore, attitudes displayed a more favorable outlook towards HIV/AIDS prevention, with 65.3% of youth exhibiting positive attitudes.

➢ *Knowledge and HIV/AIDS Prevention*

The relationship between knowledge and HIV/AIDS prevention strategies has been explored in various studies, demonstrating both similarities and differences in findings across different populations and contexts. The research conducted by Hidayat and Giyarsih (2012) establishes that higher levels of knowledge directly influence adolescents' preventive behaviors, underscoring the need for educational interventions tailored to this age group. Their study indicates that adolescents who possess comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS are more likely to engage in protective measures such as condom use and regular testing.

Similarly, Purnama (2016) reinforces the notion that enhanced awareness through educational programs can lead to

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increased engagement in preventive practices among youth. This correlation suggests that structured educational initiatives are vital in empowering young individuals to adopt safer behaviors. Purnama's findings resonate with earlier research by Avert (2013), which also highlighted that comprehensive sexual education significantly impacts adolescents' behavioral intentions regarding HIV prevention.

A key difference arises when comparing the methodologies used in these studies. Hidayat and Giyarsih (2012) employed a quantitative approach, using statistical analysis of survey data to assess knowledge levels and behaviors. In contrast, Purnama's (2016) research employed a qualitative framework, conducting interviews to gain a deeper understanding of participants' attitudes and experiences regarding HIV prevention. This methodological variation underscores how different approaches can yield complementary insights into the education-behavior relationship.

Moreover, the demographic focus of these studies reveals essential nuances. For example, Hidayat and Giyarsih (2012) primarily focused on urban adolescents, while Purnama (2016) included both urban and rural youth, suggesting that geographic and cultural contexts may affect the effectiveness of educational interventions. In some regions, as noted by Manya et al. (2017), traditional beliefs and stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS may hinder the impact of educational efforts, indicating that merely providing knowledge is not sufficient in all settings.

The strong association between knowledge and HIV/AIDS prevention strategies is well-supported by a growing body of research. While studies such as those by Hidayat and Giyarsih (2012), Purnama (2016), and others provide valuable insights into the role of education, they also underscore the need for context-specific approaches that account for the unique challenges faced by different communities.

In contrast to the current study, Rohmatulailah & Fikriyah (2021) indicated that knowledge alone does not translate into effective prevention behaviors, suggesting that additional psychosocial factors may be at play. This discrepancy may arise from cultural differences or from varied data-collection methodologies, underscoring the need for multifaceted approaches to education.

- *Attitudes Towards HIV/AIDS Prevention*

In examining the attitudes and behaviors of youth regarding HIV/AIDS preventive measures, it is imperative to compare findings from various studies to identify similarities and differences. While the data from the current study suggests that a considerable number of youth (34.7%) exhibit unfavorable attitudes toward preventive measures, this echoes similar findings reported by Ismail et al. (2022), which highlighted the pervasive influence of social stigma and misinformation surrounding HIV/AIDS.

For instance, Ismail et al. (2022) found that misinformation not only fostered negative attitudes but also inhibited effective communication about HIV, which parallels the present study's findings regarding the significant minority of youth who harbor unfavorable attitudes despite a general awareness of preventive measures.

On a broader scale, studies such as those by Jambak et al. (2016) demonstrate that proactive discussions about sexual health can positively influence youth attitudes. Jambak et al. (2016) emphasized that when individuals are provided with a supportive educational environment that encourages openness, they are more likely to adopt preventive measures. This contrasts with the current study's finding that having a positive perception of preventive measures does not translate into proactive behavior, as evidenced by the lack of statistical significance (p-value = 0.25).

Another relevant comparison can be made with the research by Mahajan et al. (2018), who noted that youth exposure to stigma and discrimination was a critical barrier to seeking preventive services. They argued that negative social perceptions can significantly hinder one's willingness to engage in preventive behaviors. While the current study emphasizes the role of unfavorable attitudes, Mahajan et al. illustrate how social context and external factors shape individual behavior.

Moreover, a study by Smit et al. (2022) explored the role of peer influence in youth decision-making regarding health behaviors. Unlike the current findings, which suggest that attitudes may not directly lead to action, Smit et al. found that peer reinforcement can strengthen the inclination to adopt preventive measures, suggesting that social support systems can bridge the gap between attitudes and behavior.

While the current study aligns with previous research regarding the influence of stigma and misinformation, it diverges in its findings about the effect of positive attitudes on behavioral outcomes. Notably, the need for educational interventions that foster discussion, as highlighted in both the current study and Jambak et al. (2016), is a common thread worth further exploration. Future research should continue to investigate how educational strategies can better engage youth and address both attitudes and behaviors in the context of HIV/AIDS preventive measures.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights into how knowledge and attitudes play crucial roles in the prevention of HIV/AIDS among youth in Covalima. Despite the presence of significant knowledge about the disease, the path towards behavioral change and effective prevention is convoluted due to existing stigma and negative attitudes. Future interventions should therefore consider not only knowledge enhancement but also targeted strategies to address and reshape attitudes towards HIV/AIDS.

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III. CONCLUSION

This study examined youth knowledge and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS prevention in Lactós Suco, Covalima Municipality, in 2025. Results showed that 78.7% of respondents were aware of preventive measures, yet 21.3% lacked understanding, highlighting a need for targeted education. Attitudes toward prevention were primarily positive, with 65.3% of youths displaying favorable perceptions. However, 34.7% reflected negative attitudes, suggesting the impact of social stigma and misinformation.

Findings indicated a significant link between knowledge and preventive practices (p-value = 0.02). However, attitudes did not correlate statistically with behavior (p-value = 0.25), indicating that positive attitudes do not necessarily lead to proactive measures.

The research aligns with existing literature emphasizing that knowledge is vital for behavior change regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. It points to the complex interplay of psychosocial factors influencing attitudes and behaviors and underscores the need for community-based educational programs that foster discussions about beliefs and attitudes. Future initiatives should aim to create supportive environments that facilitate open dialogue, bridging the gap between knowledge and action.

In conclusion, while youth in Covalima have considerable knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention, addressing negative attitudes and stigma is essential for encouraging healthier behaviors.

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