

Attitudes of university students towards HIV/AIDS voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) services: a case study from the University of Dar es Salaam

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The research seeks to unravel attitudes of University of Dar es Salaam students towards HIV/AIDS Voluntary Counseling and Testing. It comprehensively looks at the historical background of the epidemic from a global perspective and then narrows its focus to the pandemic in Tanzania. People are shunning VCT services in spite of the fact that they are the principal strategy of alleviating HIV/AIDS. The purpose of the study was to examine students' attitudes towards VCT of HIV/AIDS. Voluntary Counseling and Testing Services, 2. Determine the level of use of the HIV/AIDS VCT at the University of Dar es Salaam, 3. Examine factors influencing University students to obtain VCT services and 4. Find out the degree to which University students understand the essence of VCT. The study is a case study that employed both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. 305 respondents were sampled by using quota sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling. Primary data was obtained from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and closed-ended questionnaires (Likert scale). Secondary data was obtained from documentary reviews (surveillance reports and UDSM VCT overview reports). It was found that UDSM students have a negative attitude towards VCT. They recommend the services to other people but cannot go themselves because of fear of the consequences of HIV positive results (stigmatization, isolation and stress). In conclusion, the study singles out VCT as the fundamental strategy that should be used to mitigate the rampant effects of HIV/AIDS. The study recommended that HIV/AIDS courses be introduced in educational curricula so that VCT can be promulgated at large.