

PhD

FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE  
AND BEHAVIOR TOWARDS HIV/AIDS IN NEPAL

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**FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S KNOWLEDGE,  
ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR TOWARDS HIV/AIDS IN  
NEPAL**

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**Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of  
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**By**

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## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

We certify that this dissertation entitled “Factors Affecting Women’s Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior Towards HIV/AIDS in Nepal” was prepared by Uddhav Sigdel under our guidance. We hereby recommend this dissertation for the final examinations by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in POULATION STUDIES.

Dissertation Committee

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Date: December 2022

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this Dissertation entitled “Factors Affecting Women’s Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior Towards HIV/AIDS in Nepal” is my own work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors’ sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

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**Uddhav Sigdel**  
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Date: January 2023

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## ABSTRACT

This research study entitled “Factors Affecting Women’s Knowledge, Attitude, and Behavior towards HIV/AIDS in Nepal” is an academic contribution to the body of knowledge on HIV/AIDS prevention. The aim of the study is to identify the individual and social factors that affect women’s knowledge, attitude, and behavior of HIV/AIDS and key issues of governmental responses to HIV/AIDS. Both quantitative and qualitative data are used, in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The Nepal Demographic and Health Surveys (NDHS, 2011 and NDHS, 2016) are used as secondary sources, whereas, qualitative primary data were collected from Ram Nagar VDC (currently Sunuwal Municipality) of west Nawalparasi district.

The bivariate analysis of the study has identified that the individual demographic (age, marital status, place of residence) and socio-economic (education, occupation and wealth index), geo-development (ecological zone, development region, and provincial level), cultural (religion, ethnicity, and native language) and media exposure (frequency of reading newspaper or magazine, listening radio and watching Television) are the factors affecting women’s knowledge, attitude and behavior of HIV/AIDS in Nepal. From the Statistical analysis, it is found out that among the individual factors, education[OR =8.00 (6.96-10.59)] in 2011 and [OR =7.82 (6.33-9.66)] in 2016, wealth index[OR =2.65 (2.01-3.50)] in 2011 and [OR =2.04 (1.60-2.60)] in 2016, provincial characteristics[OR = 1.81 (1.50-2.17)] in 2011 and [OR = 1.62 (1.31-2.00)] in 2016, ethnicity and native language[OR =3.34(2.21-5.05)] in 2011, whereas, [OR (B)=1.47(1.01-2.13)], and reading newspaper are consistent and the most influential factors to women’s knowledge, attitude, and behavior of HIV/AIDS. Besides these factors, social norms, values, social interaction about HIV/AIDS, perceived risk, belief with a sex partner, and position of women in society are the major social factors to understand KAB of HIV/AIDS among women. Women constructed the meaning of HIV/AIDS socially, via media, peers, friends/relatives, etc. The meaning of HIV/AIDS and their understanding are quite different than its bio-medical reality. The qualitative findings of the study identified that the understanding of HIV/AIDS emerging from the narrative analysis of women constructed HIV/AIDS as a fatal, infectious, communicable, sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Despite the progress in HIV/AIDS control, awareness building

among the general and high-risk populations is still questionable. The existing policies, strategic approaches, and programs are effective to reduce HIV infections, however, coverage of programs, geographical constraints, external financial support, programs implementation gaps at the different levels are major issues and restraints of the governmental responses to HIV/AIDS in Nepal.

Women's education, wealth index, provincial characteristics, ethnicity, language, and media exposure, should be addressed in governmental responses to prevent women from the risk of HIV/AIDS. It is evident that Nepal faces numerous challenges in effectively addressing and implementing HIV prevention, care, support, and treatment. Despite, numerous efforts by the Government of Nepal, HIV prevention and treatment services are not able to reach most at-risk populations in the remote areas of the country because of enough gaps between policy, program design and implementation. Thus, the policymakers seriously need planning to anticipate and translate the plan into action to prevent and treat the increasing numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS. This research suggests the need to shift HIV/AIDS prevention models from biomedical to cross-cultural models more closely situated in their socio-economic and cultural context.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Abstained from sex, between faithful partner and consistent condom use
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	Antenatal Care
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ARV	Antiretroviral (drugs)
Aus AID	Australian Agency for International Development
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BSS	Behavior Sentinel Surveillance
CABA	Children Affected by AIDS
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCC	Community Care Centre
CD4	Cluster of Differentiation 4
CHBC	Community and Home-Based Care
CMA	Critical Medical Anthropology
CTTC	Community Test and Treat Competence
CT	Chlamydia Trachomatis
DACC	District AIDS Coordination Committee
DBS	Dried Blood Spot
DDC	District Development Committee
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DIC	Drop in Center
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOTS	Directly Observed Treatment, Short-Course
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EDP	External Development Partner
EID	Early Infant Diagnosis
EQAS	External Quality Assurance
EWI	Early Warning Indicators
FHD	Family Health Division
FHI	Family Health International

FP	Family Planning
FSW	Female Sex Worker
GARP	Global AIDS Response Progress
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GFATM	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GIZ	Germany's Agency for International Development
GoN	Government of Nepal
GV	Gender Violence
HBM	Health Belief Model
HBV	Hepatitis B Virus
HCV	Hepatitis C Virus
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLM	United Nations High Level Meeting
HMIS	Health Management Information System
HSS	Health Systems Strengthening
HSS	HIV Sentinel Surveillance
HTC	HIV Testing and Counseling
IBBS	Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
IMPACT	Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care Project
KAB	Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior
KABP	Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior/Practices
KAP	Key Affected Population
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
MSW	Male Sex Workers
NASA	National AIDS Spending Assessment
NCASC	National Centre for AIDS and STD Control
NCPI	National Commitments and Policy Instrument
NDHS	Nepal Demographic Health and Survey

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NHIP	Nepal HIV Investment Plan 2014-2016
NHSP	Nepal Health Sector Program
NHSP-IP	Nepal Health Sector Program Implementation Plan
NPHL	National Public Health Laboratory
NSP	National HIV Strategy Plan
OEs	Outreach Educators
OI	Opportunistic Infection
OST	Opioid Substitution Therapy
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PE	Peer Educators
PEMA	Political Economy Medical Anthropology
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PWID	People who Inject Drugs
PWID-M	Males Who Inject Drugs
SAARC	South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSP	Saath-Saath Project
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
SW	Sex Worker
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TB	Tuberculosis
TG	Transgendered person/people
TGSW	Transgendered Sex Worker
TTR	Test, Treat and Retain
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Program on AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VCT	Voluntarily Counseling and Testing Center
WHO	World Health Organization