Impacts of antiretroviral therapy and food supplements on life outcomes of adults living with HIV & AIDS in Delta State, Nigeria

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Background:

The first case of HIV and AIDS in Nigeria was reported in 1986. Since then the number of people living with HIV (PLWHA) has been on the rise. From an initial 25 antiretroviral therapy (ART) centres in 2002 to 41 centres in 2006, the Nigerian government has made deliberate efforts to provide free treatment for PLWHA. However, no published results exist on the success or otherwise of this programme in Nigeria’s Delta region.

This study will investigate the roles of ART and food supplements in improving the lives of PLWHA in Delta State, Nigeria.

Materials and methods:

A descriptive cross-sectional study was completed using a purposive sampling method on 510 adults. Information on HIV and AIDS were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to test the hypothesis that the use of antiretroviral drugs and/or food supplements directly affects the quality of life of PLWHA. The impacts of ART and food supplements on five domains of wellbeing were investigated: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, environment, and overall wellbeing.

Results:

80% (408) of respondents were on antiretroviral therapy, while 14% (72) were not. 76% (388) of participants had been on treatment for over one year. 8% (41) of respondents were on food supplements. Of the five domains of wellbeing investigated, antiretroviral therapy was found to make a highly significant difference (P < 0.001) on physical health, psychological health and overall wellbeing. ART was found to make a significant difference (P< 0.05) on social relationships versus those who were not on ART. No significant difference (P>0.05) was attributable to the environment.

Conclusions:

This study revealed that ART contributes significantly to improved quality of life for PLWHA, with statistically significant differences in four of the five domains examined. It is anticipated that the knowledge gained from this research will inform HIV treatment programme developments and improve nursing care for PLWHA in Delta State.

References:
