DISCUSSION
Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a major public health problem all over the world. The present study was undertaken with the objective to assess the prevalence and knowledge, attitude and practices of HIV/AIDS in high risk groups viz. Truck drivers, CSWs, Jail-inmates, Police and P.A.C. personnel of Bundelkhand region, in Uttar Pradesh and low risk groups viz. students, teachers and paramedical staff of Bundelkhand region in Uttar Pradesh. The required data were collected on a pre-designed questionnaire by direct personal interview method. This type of study have some inherent limitations Firstly, the respondents have to choose only from the answers given with each question. Secondly, face to face interviewing can give wrong answer. Some people could respond with correct answers rather than what they actually felt.

[A] 5 HIGH RISK GROUPS

[A] 5.1 SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AMONGST HIGH RISK GROUPS

Regarding sources of knowledge on HIV/AIDS in our study, television (63.44%) formed the main source (table 6). Other sources were family members/ friends (15.46%), news papers (11.12%) and book / magazines (9.98%). Television was also found as main source of information for AIDS in the survey by Mehra et al (1995), Kunte et al (1999) and Lal et al (1999) and C.M. Singh (2002), whereas Shehgal (1992), Lal et al (1994) and Thergaonkar et al, (1991) showed newspaper as the chief source of information. This may be due to, at that time televisions were not so easily available, and awareness programmes about AIDS were also very less in number.
In the present study, a good proportion of respondents (68.24%) knew correctly that AIDS occur in India. Awareness was higher amongst P.A.C. (90.36%) and Police (88.61%) personnel as compared to other groups (Table 7). This difference was perhaps, due to higher educational level of police & P.A.C. personnel. In the study by Chuttani et al (1990), half of men and 12% of women were aware of AIDS, Bhasin et al (1999) found that a large majority of boys (97.27%) and all girls were aware that AIDS occur in India. C.M. Singh (2002) found that awareness was higher amongst P.A.C. (90%) and police (89%).

Regarding preventability, (52.09%) respondents of the present study marked that AIDS is a preventable disease. Percentage of respondents who correctly answered was higher among police (87.31%) and P.A.C. personnel (75.90%), and lower among truck drivers (46.00%), CSWs (33.61%) followed by jail inmates (34.63%), it was due to higher literacy status of police & P.A.C. personnel (Table 3). Seventy seven percent naval personnel of the Thergaonkar et al (1991), 52% students of Chandra et al (1993) and 16% to 20% adolescents of Bhende (1994), new that AIDS is preventable. C.M. Singh (2002) in his study amongst high risk groups, found that awareness about preventability of AIDS was higher amongst police (86%) and P.A.C. personnel (75%) 

Nearly half (43.95%) respondents in this study stated correctly that condom can be used for prevention of AIDS. Percentage of respondents in favour of this was highest among police (76.89%) and lowest in CSWs (27.31%). This difference seems again due to differences in literacy status. Whereas, respondents who favoured condom usage were 60% in a study by

[A] 5.3 KNOWLEDGE ON MODES OF TRANSMISSION AMONGST HIGH RISK GROUPS

Sexual route of AIDS spread was known to 73.27% participants of our study, 50.19% and 48.21% participants reported sources of AIDS spread as infected needles and blood transfusion respectively. Vertical route was known to only 32.21% of respondents. Misconceptions were higher in CSWs, truck drivers, and in jail-inmates than police and P.A.C. personnel. Knowledge on sexual route as source of infection was low in CSWs 63.86% followed closely by jail inmates 64.39 (Table 8). In studies of Agarwal et al (1996), Chandra et al (1993) and Bhasin et al (1999), 50%, 85% and 97.61% respondents reported sexual route as a mode of transmission for AIDS respectively. Fifty one percent students were aware of vertical transmission of HIV (Velhal et al, 1994). Chandra et al (1993), in their study found that 71% respondents were aware of vertical route of transmission. Fifty percent and 51% respondents said that it can be transmitted by blood and through infected needles and syringes respectively (Velhal et al 1994). Jana et al (1991) in his study reported that only 69.11% sex workers were aware of its sexual transmission. C.M. Singh (2002) in his study reported that 76.09% high risk group respondents were aware of its sexual transmission and 50.19%, 48.21%, 32.21% were aware of its transmission via infected needle, blood transfusion and from mother to child respectively.

[A] 5.4 OPINION REGARDING AIDS AMONGST HIGH RISK GROUP

In the present study, 49.58% respondents knew diseases correctly that AIDS
is major public health problem. C.M. Singh (2002) reported 59.92% respondents knew correctly that AIDS is a major public health problem. In comparison to police (86.68%) and P.A.C. personnel (83.13%) only 30.73% jail-inmates 31.93% CSWs patients and 39.65% truck drivers knew the correct fact (Table-9). This could be explained on account of more accessibility of sources of knowledge on HIV/AIDS in police and P.A.C. personnel.

In this study, 54.91% respondents said that investigation of HIV/AIDS should be necessary before marriage. About 82.18% police and 95.18% P.A.C. personnel responded in favour of such testing, but in comparison to other groups, the percentage was quite high in these groups. It seems to be due to better knowledge of police and P.A.C. personnel regarding mode of transmission of HIV (Table 10). C.M. Singh (2002) in his study found 59.90% of respondents in favour of investigation of HIV/AIDS before marriage.

Out of total, 50.96% respondents accepted the idea of testing to all admitted patients in hospital, while 15.38% rejected it. Relatively more police (80.20%) and P.A.C. personnel (83.73%) accepted such testing. About 34% respondents were undecided on this account (Table 11). C.M. Singh (2002) in his study found 55.79% respondents in favour of the idea of testing all admitted patients in hospital for HIV/AIDS.

In this study, 53.40% respondents opined that every foreign tourist should be investigated for HIV. Percentage of respondents in favour of such testing was higher among police (93.07%) and P.A.C. personnel (93.37%) and was lowest among jail-inmates (18.72%). Nearly similar results were observed in a study by Shehgal (1992) in different high and low risk groups and C.M.
Singh (2002) in different high-risk groups. About one-third (33.82%) respondents were undecided on this matter. As Ebrahim et al (1986, 1996) reported that out of total identified HIV cases in Bahrain, 51% were foreign nationals. Hence it was necessary to acquire knowledge about the opinions regarding the above statement.

About fifty percent respondents in the present study, favoured addition of information on sex, in the teaching curriculum of school, while 27.72% were against this and 22.70% were undecided. Positive response in this study on this issue was lower than other studies like, Mukkepadhyay et al (1996) in their study observed that 94.4% were in favour of it and 3.6% respondents were against it and C.M. Singh (2002) in his study observed that 55% were in favour of it. This could be explained by lesser degree of knowledge on preventive aspects among those truck drivers, S.T.D. patients and jail-inmates who participated in this study (Table 13).

Nearly half (46.4%) of the respondents of our study were against the separation of AIDS patient from the family, while 36.71% were in favour of such separation (Table 14). Shegal (1992) in his study in different high risk and low risk groups and C.M. Singh (2002) in his study in different HRGs, also observed similar results.

Percentage of respondents (33.82%) who were in favour of touch and care of AIDS patients was nearly equal (48.51%) to the respondents who were against it (table 15) same results were reported by C.M. Singh (2002) in his study. Benjamin et al (1997) found that 90% doctors, 71% Lab technicians, 81% paramedical staff were ready to shake hand with AIDS patient. Gugnani et al (1991) reported that 98% and 97% (medicos and non medicos respectively) were aware of the carrier state of the disease. This

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may be due to lower knowledge of high risk groups regarding right mode of transmission. These observations are also indicative of inconsistent social attitude among high risk groups for AIDS patients, which may be due to wide range of prevalent myths and apprehensions about this malady (Table 8).

In the present study, 56.66% respondents were in favour of avoiding sex with stranger whereas, 10.97% were ready to take risk and 32.37% respondents were undecided on this matter. In comparison to others, more CSWs (15.13%) and more jail-inmates (15.61%) were ready to have sex with attractive stranger. Sehgal (1992) reported nearly similar results in his study. He observed that 57% respondents expressed that one should not have sex with stranger. Francis et al (1994), in their study found that 14% respondents had agreed to take risk of AIDS rather than miss the chance of having sex with an attractive stranger C.M. Singh (2002) found 56.66% respondents in favour of avoiding sex with stranger, where as 15.13% STD patients and 15.61% jail inmates were ready to take risk.

In this study, 64.58% respondents answered correctly that their should not be any restriction for AIDS patient to work in factory / office, while only 19.04% were against this idea. Forty five percent students in Lal et al (1994a) and 33.5% respondents in the study of sehgal (1992) opined that HIV infected AIDS cases should be totally isolated from society otherwise they will spread infection. In the same way Gugnani et al (1991) reported that almost all medicos and non medicos felt that there should be strict isolation of HIV positive individual along with a ban on prostitution on and homosexuality. This difference on the opinion in our study could be due to the ground of more awareness regarding different aspects of AIDS in present time. While C.M. Singh (2002) in his study reported that 63.39%

(237)
respondents felt that there should not be any restriction for AIDS patients to work in factory/office.

In total 37.24% study subjects in our study were in favour of divorce of spouse who had AIDS (table 18). Similar results were found by Sehgal (1992) and C.M. Singh (2002) in their study. Percentage of respondents who were against divorce was higher among police (60.40%) and P.A.C. personnel (65.66%) in comparison to truck drivers (28.88%), CSWs (26.05%) and jail-inmates (45.85%).

About fifty eight respondents in this study stated that they would feel ashamed if they had AIDS, while one third respondents were against this statement. Similar results were obtained by Sehgal et al (1993) and C.M. Singh (2002) in their study. Maximum respondents in favour of this statement were in truck drivers (79.08%) and CSWs (60.92%). Lower percentage was observed among (31.18%) in police personnel and PAC (13.61%) personnel.

Only half (43.72%) of respondents in this study stated that they will not suggest a women with AIDS for marriage and child birth, while 26.88% were in favour of marriage and child birth. These findings also suggest about low level of awareness on AIDS. Most of the P.A.C. personnel (86.75) were against such idea, while only 16.14% truckers were against this idea. This difference also seems to be due to lower educational level and lower level of awareness among truck drivers in comparison to P.A.C. personnel. Same result were obtained by C.M. Singh (2002) in his study on high risk groups.

About 9% respondents stated that they practice oral sex while 90.56% refused to indulge such practice. Most of the police personnel (95.54%) and
PAC personnel (94.58%) refused to practice oral sex, only (30.87%) CSWs and truck drivers (11.55%) reported in favour of question. Similar result were obtained by C.M. Singh (2002) in his study of high risk groups. While Jana et al (1994) reported in his study on CSWs in Calcutta that 94.44% sex workers practiced oral sex. Such difference seems to be due to unwillingness of respondents to answer this questions.

[A] 5.5 PREVALENCE RATE OF HIV AMONGST HIGH RISK GROUPS

The present study revealed an overall prevalence rate of HIV amongst high risk groups to be 2.51%. Results of different high risk groups are discussed in detail as under –

[A] 5.5.1 Seroprevalence of HIV in commercial sex workers: Prevalence rate of HIV in female CSWs in this study was 4.20%. Only 238 CSWs could be studied due to no defined area (or red light area) of CSWs in Bundelkhand region. Total 10 respondents were found seropositive for HIV. Agarwal et al (1999) in their study found 12% HIV seropositivity amongst female sex workers in Manipur. Gulati et al (1999) in their study found 6.8% seropositivity amongst high risk group in Varanasi.

[A] 5.5.2 Seroprevalence of HIV in truck drivers: Out of 502 truck drivers tested for HIV in this study, 21 (4.18%) were detected positive. The prevalence rate among truckers in this study is almost nearer to other studies on truckers. Joshi & Prasad (1999) observed a rate of 6.2%, Singh et al (1999) observed a prevalence rate of 4.3% and Meda et al (1998) observed a prevalence rate of 18.6% in truckers of Burkina Faso. Prevalence rate among truck drivers was lower (2.13%) in the studies by C.M. Singh (2002).
Seroprevalence of HIV among police & P.A.C. personnel: Out of 202 police and 166 P.A.C. personnel who were subjected to ELISA test, no one turned up positive for HIV (Table 34). With our best efforts, we were unable to find any other such kind of study which can reveal seroprevalence of HIV among police and P.A.C. personnel, except one study by C.M. Singh (2002) which also revealed zero prevalence rate among P.A.C. and police personnel. This zero prevalence rate may be due to many reasons. It may be due to low sample size, unwillingness of respondents who were engaged in risky sexual practices to participate in this study, and a good level of awareness about different methods of prevention and transmission of HIV infection, as observed in this study.

5.5.4 Seroprevalence of HIV among jail-inmates:
Prevalence rate among jail-inmates in this study was 0.98%. Out of 205 prisoner only two were found positive for HIV (Table 34). Higher prevalence rate had been reported by some authors in their studies, while there are ample of evidences in favour of low prevalence rates among Indian prisoners. Lal et al (1999) in their study in Orissa jail observed that out of 300 prisoners of Indian origin, no one was positive for HIV. Similarly Arora et al (2000) also observed a very low level of positivity (0.08%) among prisoner of Haryana state, Sunder et al (1995) observed slightly higher positivity rates (1.98%) and C.M. Singh (2002) in his study found only 0.49% prevalence rate among jail inmates in Jhansi.

5.5.5 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV in relation to various socio-demographic variables:

5.5.5.1 Age specific prevalence rate:
The present study found that all the positive study subjects were between 18-25 yrs. (2.91%) and 26-54 years (2.46%). But the results were statistically
insignificant. Similar results were reported by Singh et al (1999). Out of 378 participants below 26 years age, only 11 were found positive, while there were 22 positive cases, aged between 26-54 years. This study thus, shows that majority of respondents who detected positive for HIV were sexually active and of economically productive age group. Similar results were reported by NACO (2005) that 89% of reported cases are from sexually active and economically productive age group (18-40 years), and C.M. Singh (2002).

5.5.5.2 Marital status specific prevalence rates:
The present study revealed a much higher prevalence of HIV among unmarried participants (3.46%) in comparison to the married (2.16%) and results were statistically in significant, same results were revealed by C.M. Singh (2002) in his study on HRGs. As against this, Rathore (1997), Singh et al (1999) and Sunder et al (1995) found that majority of HIV sufferers were married. However, no association of HIV/AIDS with marital status was found by Mathai et al (1990) and Mahendale et al (1996). In this study, positivity was higher in unmarried respondents. This may be due to smaller size of studied sample of unmarried participants and decrease in age of first sexual contact as shown in table 23. Our results showed that 88.65% of CSWs, 58.04% of jail-inmates, 44.43% truckers had experienced first sexual contact before or up to 19 years of age.

5.5.5.3 Literacy Status specific prevalence rates:
In the present study, out of 137 illiterate participants only one (.41%) was positive for HIV, twelve (5.41%) out of 222, were positive among just literate respondents and twenty (3.08%) out of 649 were positive among moderately literate respondents, while no one was detected positive among well literate group. It was also seen that the HIV seropositivity decreased as
the educational status increased (Table 37). Similar results were reported by Singh et al (1999), Sunder et al (1995) and Mahendale et al (1996) and C.M. Singh (2002). Such result was statistically highly significant.

5.5.5.4 Religion And caste specific prevalence rates:
In this study, positivity was slightly higher in Hindus (2.65%) in comparison to Muslims (1.94%) but results were not statistically significant (t (calculated) = .595; t< t_{0.10, \alpha}=1.282), thereby indicating that Hindus and Muslims were equally susceptible to HIV infection. C.M. Singh (2002) reported positivity slightly higher in muslims in comparison to Hindus. Positivity was higher in SC/ST groups (4.46%) and lower in General (1.57%) and Backwards classes (2.11%). This is understandable since in India, caste is strong social and economic factor. Literacy status is also very low in these groups. Same is the case about awareness of health. On analysis, we found that results in the other two groups General and others, were not different significantly. Results were not statistically significant (t (calculated) =.607; t< t_{0.10, \alpha} = 1.282).

5.5.5.5 Socio economic status specific prevalence rates: In this study, all participants were either from middle or lower classes and, there was no any participant from upper class (Table 40). This was due to their nature of job and low income. It was observed that all the positive participants were from lower class. As we understood, social and economic situation that create vulnerability to HIV infection has not been adequately studied or explained. There is little information available about different socio-economic groups in India in terms of their basic sexual and drug-taking behaviours. Mathai et al (1990) in their study observed that most of HIV infected patients (57%), belonged poor socio-economic background. Through such result was statistically highly in significant. (t (Calculated) =.048; t< t_{0.10, \alpha}=1.282). C.M. Singh (2002) also reported the same results.
5.5.5.6 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups by use of condom:
In present study, it was observed that prevalence of HIV was higher (3.63%) in respondents who never used condom in comparison to those who used it for some times (1.27%), while it was zero among those who used it always. These results were significantly different. Out of total positive respondents, 78.79% stated that they never used condom while 21.21% used it some times. These finding shows that there is definite role of condom in prevention of HIV transmission. This could also be explained as maximum percentage of respondents who stated that they never used condom was in CSWs (68.91%), truck drivers (65.87%) and jail-inmates (65.71%). Results were statistically highly significant. Same results were reported by C.M. Singh (2002) and Jana et al (1994).

5.5.5.7 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups who had sex with partner other than their spouse:
In present study, it was observed that out of total positive cases, 82.35% reported that they had sex with partners other than their spouse and 17.65% were against of such sexual activity (Table 43). Such results were found to be statistically highly significant \( t_{(Calculated)} = 4.09; t_{.005} = 2.576 \). It was also observed that 73.33% of HIV positive cases had sex with more than one partner, other than their spouse and 26.67% reported it with one partner only. These findings reflect that with increase in number of sexual partners, HIV positivity is also likely increase. Similar results were reported by C.M. Singh (2002) in his study, that about 85.71% respondents reported that they had sex with partners other than their spouse.
5.5.5.8 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups by their numbers of sexual partners other than spouse:
In this study, it was observed that though HIV positivity was higher (5.80%), among those respondents who accepted that they had multiple sexual partners other than spouse in comparison to those who denied it (5.30%), but their was no statistical significance of the above table as \( t_{\text{calculated}} = .227; t < t_{0.10, \alpha} = 1.282 \) (table 44). Nearly 100% of CSWs, 28.38% of truck drivers and 19.48% of jail inmates (Table 22a) admitted having sex with partners other than spouse. HIV seropositivity was higher among truck drivers who admitted this fact. Similar results was observed by Singh et al (1999) in their study on truck drivers and C.M. Singh (2002) in his study on high risk groups. Out of total positive cases, 73.33% admitted having sex with multiple sexual partners and only 26.67% stated that they had sex with only one partner other than their spouse. Similar observation was made by Mahendale (1998) and C.M. Singh (2002).

5.5.5.9 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups by their type of sexual partners:
Prevalence of HIV among those 99 respondents who admitted having sex with commercial se workers was 33.33%. Even higher prevalence (39.39%) was noted among respondents who had sex with friends, this may be due to lower numbers of respondents who admitted sex with friends.

5.5.5.10 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups practising oral sex:
In this study majority of respondents (90.56%) denied oral sex (table 46). Prevalence rate was higher (3.23%) among those participants who admitted that they had oral sex in comparison to those who denied it 2.44%, but result was statistically not significant \( t_{\text{calculated}} = 4; t < t_{0.10, \alpha} = 1.282 \). So this study
shows that there was no increase risk of HIV infection among those who had experienced oral sex only, because most of HIV positive (87.88%) case were, who never experienced oral sex.

5.5.5.11 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups practising anal sex:
In this study percentage of respondents who admitted having anal sex was (16.05%) and percentage was higher among CSWs (29.83%), jail-inmates (20.49%) and truck drivers (14.54%). Prevalence of HIV was significantly ($t_{(calculated)} = 1.231; \; t \leq t_{0.10, \alpha} = 1.282$) higher among those study subjects who admitted having anal sex 4.25% in comparison to those who never experienced it (table 47). This shows that there is definite increase risk of HIV transmission by anal intercourse, similar result was observed by Mahendale et al (1996) and C.M. Singh (2002).

5.5.5.13 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups by donation of blood:
In present study it was observed that only 9.22% study subjects donated their blood (table 49). Prevalence rate of HIV was slightly higher among non blood donors (2.60%) in comparison to those who donated blood (1.65%), and result was insignificant statistically ($t_{(calculated)} = 0.63; \; t < t_{0.10, \alpha} = 1.282$). So by this study it can not be stated that whether there is increase risk of HIV infection among blood donors or not.

5.5.5.12 Prevalence rate (%) of HIV amongst high risk groups by transfusion of blood:
In present study it was observed that only 3.43% respondent had undergone blood transfusion (table 48). Prevalence rate of HIV was significantly higher among those who had undergone blood transfusion (6.67%) in comparison to
those who never undergone blood transfusion (2.37%). The result was statistically significant ($t_{\text{calculated}} = 1.816; t > t_{0.10, \alpha = 1.282}$). Nearly same result were reported by C.M. Singh (2002).

[A] 5.6. Status of immune system in HIV positive respondents:

In the present study total thirty three (high risk groups) cases were found to be HIV positive. The HIV infection, in these HIV positive respondents was up to the mark, according to the parameters given in WHO case definition for AIDS surveillance. Almost all the respondents except few reported about three major signs of HIV infection.

- weight loss $> 10\%$ of body weight
- Chronic diarrhoea for more than one month
- Prolonged fever for more than one month (intermittent or constant).

Some of the respondents also reported about persistent cough for more than one month and oropharyngeal candidiasis. It indicates most of the HIV positive respondents had passed the first stage of HIV infection and were in second or third stage of HIV infection with the $CD_4^+$ cell count $\geq 500$/cu.mm or $CD_4^+$ cell count between 200-500 cu.mm.

[B] LOW RISK GROUPS

[B] 5.1 SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AMONGST LOW RISK GROUPS

Regarding sources of knowledge on HIV/AIDS in our study television (42.00%) formed the main source (table 55). Other sources were books/magazines (38%), newspapers (11.33%) and family members/friends (8.67%). This may be due to awareness programmes about AIDS which are being displayed and due to easy availability of televisions.
5.3 KNOWLEDGE ON MODES OF TRANSMISSION AMONGST LOW RISK GROUP -

Sexual route of AIDS spread was known to 83% participants of our study, 81% participants reported sources of AIDS spread as infected needles and blood transfusion respectively. Vertical route was known to only 68.33% of respondents. Misconceptions were slightly reported amongst students only. Knowledge on sexual route as source of infection was low in students. Eighty percent students were unaware of vertical transmission of HIV. Fifty one percent students were aware of vertical transmission of HIV (Velhal et al, 1994).

5.4 OPINION REGARDING AIDS AMONGST LOW RISK GROUP -

In the present study, 92.33% respondents knew correctly that AIDS is major public health problem. In comparison to teachers and paramedical staff (100%) only 77% students knew the correct fact (Table 58), this could be explained on account of more accessibility of sources of knowledge on HIV/AIDS in teachers and paramedical staff.

In this study, 79% respondents said that investigation of HIV/AIDS should be necessary before marriage. About 98% and 91% paramedical staff and teachers respectively responded in favour of such testing but in case of students only 49% responded in favour of testing. It seems to be due to better knowledge of teachers and paramedical staff regarding mode of transmission of HIV (Table 57).

Out of total, 80% respondents accepted the idea of testing to all admitted patients in hospital, while only 5% rejected it. Hundred percent teachers and
paramedical staff accepted such testing. About 15% respondents were undecided on this account (Table 60).

In this study, 83.33% respondents opined that every foreign tourist should be investigated for HIV. Percentage of respondents in favour of such testing was 100% amongst teachers, 95% amongst paramedical staff and only 55% amongst students.

Again, it seems to the due to lack of knowledge among students about AIDS transmission. Eleven percent respondents were undecided on this account and those were only students.

About 68.33% percent respondents in the present study, favoured addition of information on sex, in the teaching curriculum of school, while 26.67% were against this and 5% were undecided. Positive response in this study on this issue was slightly lower among teachers and paramedical staff than students (table 62). This may be due to willingness of students to remove their ignorance regarding AIDS.

Only twelve percent of the respondents of our study were in favour of the separation of AIDS patients from the family, while 81% were against the separation (Table 63). Shegal (1992) in his study in different high risk and low risk groups also observed similar results.

Percentage of respondents (83%) who were in favour of touch and care of AIDS patients and only 10.33% respondents were against it (table 64). Benjamine et al (1997) found that 90% doctors, 71% lab technicians, 81% paramedical staff were ready to shake hand with AIDS patient.
In the present study, 89.33% respondents were in favour of avoiding sex with strangers where as, only 1.33% were ready to take risk and 9.34% respondents were undecided on this matter. Hundred percent teachers and paramedical staff were in favour of the statement while only 4% students were against the statement, this may be due to lack of knowledge about AIDS amongst some students (Table 56).

In this study, 76% respondents answered correctly that their should not be any restriction for AIDS patient to work in factory/office, while only 5.33% were against this idea. Forty five percent students in Lal et al (1994) and 33.5% respondents in the study of Sehgal (1992) opined that HIV infected AIDS cases should be totally isolated from society otherwise they will spread infection. This difference on the opinion in our study could be due to the ground of more awareness regarding different aspects of AIDS in present time.

In total 74% study subjects in our study were in favour of divorce of spouse who had AIDS (table 67). Similar results were found by Sehgal (1992), in his study. Percentage of respondents who were against divorce was higher among paramedical staff (94%) and teachers (88%) in comparison to students (40%).

About 10.33% respondents in this study stated that they would feel ashamed if they had AIDS, while 78.33% were against this statement. Maximum respondents in favour of this statement were students (44%). Hundred percent teachers were against this statement followed by paramedical staff (91%), (table 68).

Seventy five percent of respondents in this study stated that they will not
suggest a women with AIDS for marriage and child birth, while 17% were in favour of marriage and child birth. These findings also suggest about low level of awareness on AIDS. Most of the teachers (95%) were against this idea. Only 44% students were against the idea and about 20% students refused to answer. This was also due to lack of awareness among students.

[B] 5.5 PREVALENCE RATE OF HIV AMONGST LOW RISK GROUPS

The present study revealed an overall zero prevalence rate of HIV amongst low risk groups.