

BACKGROUND

- In Peru, HIV primarily affects men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women, and over 70% of the people living with HIV do not know their HIV status.
- HIV self-testing, which may be the first option for first-time testers by giving them the opportunity to test conveniently and privately in their homes.
- Some studies reported advantages people recognized about the oral self-test included being non-invasive, not needed trained personal to perform it and being less painful and uncomfortable.

METHODS

- We evaluated the availability and potential use of HIV self-test kits in Peruvian pharmacies, also attitudes and intentions towards the HIV self-test of people at high-risk for HIV infection.
- Four pharmacy chains in Peru that were identified on www.oraquick.com.pe as having the HIV self-test kit were surveyed to confirm availability.
- We asked questions to the manager in each chain of pharmacies about cost, purchase frequency and any restrictions for the purchase of the self-test kit.
- As part of an ongoing study we surveyed high-risk MSM and transgender women who attended either of two STI clinics, Barton and Epicentro, both located in Lima, Peru from June 2013 to May 2014.
- Data on demographics and willingness to use the HIV self-test kit were collected using an interviewer administered computer-based questionnaire.

Table 2: Men who have sex with men and transgender women willingness in using and receiving an HIV self-test kit by mail in Lima, Peru

	Transgender Women (n=33)	Men who have sex with men (n=88)	P-value	
If the HIV self-test were available for free through the mail or in an NGO, how many times a year you would perform this HIV test?				
Reported willingness to use the self-test	33 (100%)	84 (82%)	P=0.015	
If willing to use, No. of tests per year (mean sd)	4.36 (0.10)	4.11 (0.09)	P= 0.12	
If both services were free of charge, how would you prefer to use a self-test to HIV vs. a blood test at a health center or clinic?				
Always in a Clinic	0	8 (8%)	P<0.001	
Most always in a clinic	0	3 (3%)		
Sometimes in a clinic	0	7 (7%)		
Neutral	15 (48%)	47 (46%)		
Sometimes HIV self-test	4 (12%)	16 (16%)		
Most always HIV self-test	11 (33%)	6 (6%)		
Always HIV self-test	2 (6%)	0		
Don't know	0	1 (1%)		
If you get a positive result with the self-test, how likely is it for you to look for a confirmatory test or medical treatment with your doctor?				
Unlikely to do a confirmatory test	0	4 (4%)		P= 0.043
Neutral	8 (24%)	13 (13%)		
Somewhat likely to do a confirmatory test	6 (18%)	13 (13%)		
Sometimes do a confirmatory test	2 (6%)	1 (1%)		
Definitely do a confirmatory test	17 (52%)	57 (56%)		
How comfortable would you feel by getting an HIV self-test delivered by a delivery company?				
Very comfortable	25 (76%)	45 (44%)	P= 0.034	
Somewhat comfortable	7 (21%)	33 (32%)		
Neutral	1 (3%)	6 (6%)		
Somewhat uncomfortable	0	2 (2%)		
Very Uncomfortable	0	0		
Don't know	0	2 (2%)		
If you were asked for an HIV self-test kit by a mail company, where you want to receive it?				
My house	21 (64%)	25 (25%)	P<0.001	
A relative's house	1 (3%)	1 (1%)		
Friend's house	10 (30%)	56 (55%)		
Work place	1 (3%)	3 (3%)		
Community center	0	1 (1%)		
Don't know	0	1 (1%)		

*Missing data were excluded from affected answers only. Chi-square and t-tests were used as appropriate to calculate the reported p-values.

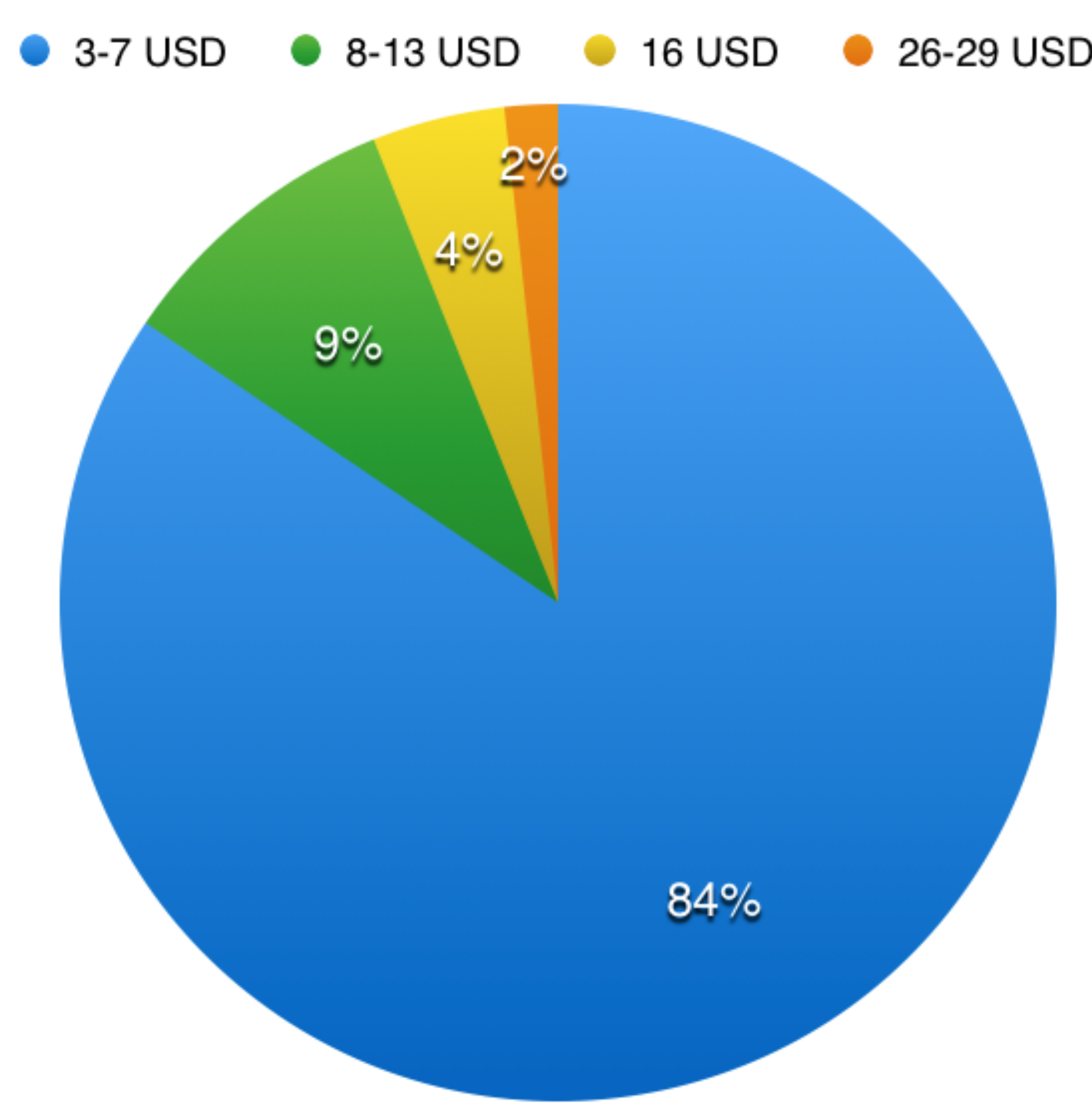
Table 1: Participant Socio-demographics

	MSM (n=102, 76%)	Trans (n=33, 26%)
Age (mean sd)	34.1 (10.4)	36.6 (12.0)
Had post-secondary education	24%	62%
Reported a previous HIV test	80%	82%
Had condomless anal sex (last 3 months)	44%	24%

RESULTS

- Our survey revealed that transgender women were more likely to report intentions of using the oral HIV self-test test compared to MSM (100% vs. 82%, p-value 0.015).
- Participants reported:
 - Willingness to perform the self-test an average of 4 times per year.
 - Willingness to pay an average of 3-7 USD for the test kits.
 - 87% (n=117) reported being comfortable getting HIV self-test kit in a clinic or by mail.
- Transgender women preferred to get the self-test kit at home and MSM preferred to get the self-test kit delivered at a friend's house (Table 1).
- Among the four pharmacy chains surveyed, the average self-test kit cost was 17.72 USD. Self-test kits were available to individuals 18 years old for over-the-counter purchase.
- The test kit available was a self-test kit for physician use not intended for individual sale. The HIV self-test kit did not come with user instructions.
- The self-test kit included a swab, a test tube, a test tube rack and an HIV information sheet in English and Spanish.

FIGURE 1: Average of how much money participants were willing to pay for the self-test kit



SELF-TEST KIT



DISCUSSION

- The Oraquick® in home HIV test kit was not available for purchase in Peru; instead the available test was the physician version that comes with no user instructions, not intended for individual sell or home use.
- The average cost of this self-test kit version was 18 USD.
- Respondents reported willingness to pay 3-7 USD for the test, less than half the current price.
- Transgender women were willing to use oral HIV self-test instead of the regular blood test performed in a clinic as compared to MSM.
- Findings are consistent with other studies reporting the overall acceptability and preferences of self-testing.
- The principal barrier is the cost of the test, this would need to be changed for people to use it.

CONTACT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contact: Maria Jose Bustamante maria.bustamante.w@upch.pe



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