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Perceived barriers to the low uptake of medical male circumcision in Mutare rural district, Zimbabwe

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Background: Medical male circumcision has become a significant dimension of HIV prevention interventions, after the results of three randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in Uganda, South Africa and Kenya demonstrated that circumcision has a protective effect against contracting HIV of up to 60 percent. Following recommendations by the WHO, Zimbabwe in 2009 adopted voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) as an additional HIV prevention strategy to the existing ABC behavior change model.

Purpose: The purpose of this study thus is to investigate the perceived barriers to the low uptake of medical male circumcision.

Methods: The study was quantitative cross-sectional survey conducted in Mutare rural district, Zimbabwe. Questionnaires with open and closed ended questions were administered to the eligible respondents. The target populations were males aged 15-29 who met the inclusion criteria. The households were systematically selected with a sample size of 234. The statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data.

Results: Socio-culturally, circumcised men are viewed as worthless (37%), shameful (30%) and are tainted as promiscuous (20%), psychological factors reported were infection and delayed healing (39%), being ashamed and dehumanized (58%); stigmatized and discriminated (40.2%) and fear of having an erection during treatment period (89.7%) while socio-economic factors were not having time, as it will take their time from work (58%) and complications may end up spending money on treatment (84%).

Conclusion: Knowledge deficits regarding male medical circumcision leads to low uptake, education on male medical circumcision and its benefits. Comprehensive sexual health education should target men and dispel negative attitudes related to use of health services.

Biography

Ntsieni Mashau has completed holds a Ph.D. in Rural Development from the University of Venda, South Africa. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Public Health, University of Venda. She has published 15 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as a peer reviewer of manuscripts in accredited journals.

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