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Perceptions of rural women regarding sexual health communication in the era of HIV/AIDS in Vhembe district, Limpopo province: Implications for sexual health interventions

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Societal orientation places expectations about what it means to be a man and a woman, thus gender has powerful influence on sexual behavior. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the extent culture and gender influence communication relating to sexual health and health seeking behaviours among rural women in Thulamela B municipality in Vhembe district of Limpopo Province. A qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual research approach was used. A purposive sampling method was used to sample twenty five participants, where seven were interviewed and nineteen were subjected to focus group discussions. Data gathered from participants were analysed using Tesch's eight steps of open coding techniques. The results indicated that many African women face inequitable sexual relations. In addition, the nature of their sexual bond with their partners affects their sexual decision making; and above all, power inequity, emotional and financial dependence seem to present significant obstacles to sexual decision making. This study therefore, recommends that educational and outreach efforts should focus on motivating change by responding to the socio-cultural factors, expectations, gender stereotypes that apply to men and women regarding their protection from sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

Biography

Dorah Ursula Ramathuba completed her doctoral studies in 2011 at North-West University. She is a senior lecturer at the University of Venda. She has published articles in accredited journals. Her area of specialty is Oncology nursing and women sexual health

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