Influence of perceived benefits of male circumcision on its acceptance among Luo high school students in Kisumu City

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Abstract:

The study was conducted to investigate how the perceived benefits of male circumcision influence the acceptance of male circumcision among Luo high school students in Kisumu East District. The study specifically investigated if the perceived benefits of male circumcision among the Luo high school students could have been influenced by factual information on and the sources of information on male circumcision and if these guided their decision to accept circumcision. The study's main concern was establishing whether the Luo male high school students fully understood how male circumcision (MC) could reduce the risks of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and Human Immune deficiency Virus (HIV), since lack of this understanding may fuel the epidemic. A systematic literature review was carried out on studies and reports involving the evidences supporting male circumcision's ability to reduce the infection rates of STI's and HIV and more specifically research has revealed that MC can reduce HIV infection rates from males to females through heterosexual contacts by 60%. A literature review also included the epidemiology of HIV in relation to Male circumcision, acceptability studies as well as barriers to male circumcision. The study was conducted through a simple descriptive survey, data being collected, using a self-administered questionnaire. Respondents were selected using multistage and purposive sampling to obtain a sample of 363 respondents, from 5 randomly selected high schools in Kisumu East District. The basic criterion of the participants was male high school students from the Luo community between the ages of 14 to 20 years. The study revealed that out of the 363 participants, 77(21.2%) had been circumcised and 187(51.5%) had the intention to seek male circumcision service because it had health and social benefits, 150(41.3%) and promoted hygiene (81(22.3%). Forty two percent of the high school students were capable of distinguishing facts about male circumcision from incorrect information. The study also revealed that 30.6% of Luo high school students had no intention of undergoing circumcision despite them being aware of the health benefits. Pain, culture, health risks, parents, lack of interest, and religion were identified as the barriers to circumcision uptake. The research concluded that the Luo high school students perceptions on the benefits of male circumcision are based 0 factual information. Myths could influence Luo high school students to get circumcised. The major barriers to male circumcision were pain and culture. Luo high school students were accessible to varied sources of information on male circumcision and print media had the greatest influence on their acceptance of male circumcision. This study recommended that circumcision services be made free and accessible to the young people. Adequate information should be given especially on pain management. Further research should be undertaken on myths surrounding sexuality as they may influence uptake of circumcision but with negative intentions. More research should be done on myths that surround reproductive
health issues and, the efficacy of information sources influencing behaviour change among the youth. This study could also be replicated in another district.