

## Attitudes and perceptions of Alice township communities in Eastern Cape, South Africa on whether penile circumcision is a tool of HIV/AIDS prevention: A 2015 empirical study

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### Abstract

Current Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) statistics show that 68% of total HIV infections occur in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) [1]. Despite of the availability of already known HIV prevention methods, most new infections continue to occur in this region [1]. Recently, three randomized controlled trials in African countries have demonstrated that medical male circumcision reduces the risk of acquiring sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, from infected women to uninfected men by about 60% [2-4]. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNAIDS estimate that approximately 30% of males aged 15 years or older are circumcised globally, and two thirds are Muslims [5]. In addition, the report shows that ethnicity and social- or health-related factors are determinants of male circumcision, and that male circumcision is almost universal in North and most of West Africa. On the contrary, male circumcision is less common in South Africa (SA) [5] where the national HIV prevalence and male circumcision in SA is 18.1% and 35% respectively [6]. In line with the benefits of male circumcision, recently, population-based data from Orange Farm in SA have shown lower HIV prevalence and incidence among circumcised men compared to uncircumcised men [7]. Thus, WHO and UNAIDS have widely recommended the scaling up of male circumcision activities in countries and regions with heterosexual epidemics with high HIV and low male circumcision prevalence [1, 8]. It is emphasised that as male circumcision only provides partial protection of male acquisition of HIV, it should not replace other existing biomedical and behavioural interventions. Furthermore, male circumcision has proven to be effective in reducing the risks of penile cancer [9] and cervical cancer in female partners of circumcised men [10, 11], urinary tract infections in infants and children [12], ulcerative STIs [13], bacterial vaginosis and trichomonas among female partners of circumcised men [14]. One of the potential challenges in adopting male circumcision in African communities as an HIV intervention strategy may be the lack of awareness that it could minimize risks of HIV transmission. Male circumcision is one of the most established surgeries generally known to be embraced for social, social, strict or clinical reasons [1, 2]. It is a social practice which is

done any other way across societies. It is broadly polished yet transcendent in Africa where it has been seen as a transitional experience to masculinity [3]. Despite the fact that the training contrasts across societies, it basically includes the expulsion of the prepuce [2]. The commonness of conventional male circumcision was seen as 24.8% (contrasted with clinical male circumcision pace of 13.2%). Connolly, Simbayi, Shammugam and Nqeketo [4] found in a national study in South Africa in 2002 that, of 1067 men of 15 years and more seasoned who had been circumcised, the greater part (57.2%) had been circumcised generally and 42.8% restoratively.

Among the ethnic gatherings that generally performed male circumcision as a custom the inclination was on conventional than emergency clinic circumcision and a worry was more on safeguarding the social practice than issues, for example, sexual delight, cleanliness and security. Customary circumcision was favored more among Pedi's than other ethnic gatherings. Among Pedi ethnic gathering, conventional circumcision is viewed as pride of the country, implying that the Pedi's grew up with this social practice and it must remain some portion of their lives. For the vast majority of the members, contrasted and emergency clinic circumcision, conventional circumcision isn't just about the expulsion of the fore skin, it is likewise a spot where one learns values on the most proficient method to behave in a network and furthermore a commencement in to masculinity. As communicated by a portion of the members, "Commencement is given endorsement by the boss. You can't simply appear suddenly and start with the procedure," (FGD B). "Inception involves gathering," (FGD B). "It is an incredible thing to the family; everyone ought to be welcome to praise the accomplishment," (FGD B)

In spite of the fact that customary circumcision is by all accounts a social standard nearly among all African ethnic gatherings, it is additionally observed by the vast majority of the members as being about sexual delight. "There is likewise a conviction that men appreciate sex better after they have evacuated that skin" (FGD F) "The greater part of the individuals accept that if the fore-skin isn't expelled, one won't get sexual joy" (FGD F) "This may sound as a joke yet a circumcised penis looks entertaining yet it is charming (snickers)." (FGD C) "The circumcised one is having increasingly sexual delight. Be that as it may, when you are not

circumcised your penis is cold." (FGD F) "It may have a great deal of delight yet you can undoubtedly contract HIV without the prepuce and not utilizing your condom." (FGD's I)

There was a general inclination among the members that contrasted with the past, at present, the starts experience clinical exam first before going in to the mountains to be started, and this is viewed as being protected. " previously, no clinical specialists were permitted to go in to the inception school, yet of current, it is by all accounts a standard that starts should be checked by clinical professionals first," ( FGD B). "I realize that individuals are passing on during the time spent circumcision, however there are clinical specialists who aid the procedure to limit the pace of deaths."(FGD F) Although the greater part of the members (FGD's B and FGD's F) accepted that conventional circumcision is sheltered in view of the security quantifies that are being used as of now, there were a few concerns, for example, the craving to bring in cash out of the training. Greater part (FGD's D, J, E,I, G) felt that it has had some genuine dangers and entanglements. As communicated by a portion of the members; "It has gone in to lucrative plan, and is likewise performed by individuals with no experience," (FGD E). "What is terrible is when individuals don't make it up there in the shrubbery, they kick the bucket simultaneously," (FGD D). "At the point when my accomplice went for circumcision, I would stress over the utilization of the instrument which was utilized on everyone," (FGD D). "The burden would be that they probably won't change the cutting edge they use to cut the prepuce. They utilize exactly the same cutting edge that they have utilized in someone else without cleaning it," (FGD G) Having to go to the shrub, you put your youngster's life in danger. I think we have to grow out of a portion of the things that we have been doing since previously, we have to acknowledge change,"