



EMOTIONAL AND ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES IN CHILDREN WITH HIV: COMPARING CHILDREN WHOSE DIAGNOSES HAD BEEN DISCLOSED TO THOSE WHO HAVE NOT



ESSABELA FEWO
INSTRUCTOR: DR. SMADAR DOLEV
MENTOR: INBAR ARIAV-PARAIRA

INTERNATIONAL MA PROGRAM IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

Introduction

- ❖ Of the 36.9 million people living with HIV globally, 25.8 million live in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) and 90% of the 2.3 million children with HIV aged 0-14 years in SSA (UNAIDS 2014).
- ❖ In Cameroon, the prevalence of HIV in the general population is 4.3%. (EDS-MICS 2011) of them 8.5% are children aged 0-14 years (CNLS, 2010).
- ❖ Disclosure of children's HIV positive status is necessary for the long-term management of the HIV infection and the transition from pediatric care into adult-care settings (Mellin et al., 2007).
- ❖ However, disclosure is often challenging for children, caregivers, and medical personnel.
- ❖ A study by Pinzon-Iregui et al. (2013) found that the HIV disclosure median age was 9.6 years in low and middle income countries while in high income countries the median age was 8.3 years.
- ❖ For some children disclosure may be beneficial to their coping and development (Mburu et al., 2014, Vreeman et al., 2013) but for most disclosure may be a traumatic event and lead to feelings of hopelessness and social isolation (Ferris et al., 2007; Riekert, Wiener, & Battle., 1999)

Procedure

- ❖ An authorization to carry out the study will be obtained from the director of the hospital and ethical clearance will be obtained from the ethical committee.
- ❖ Prior to the study, three study personnel will be trained by the principal investigator on the assessment and coding of the study measures and its procedure.
- ❖ This will be followed by a supervised pilot study in the Bamenda Regional Hospital HIV Day Care Center by the trainer.
- ❖ Children will be classified as either having knowledge regarding their HIV status by administering the Disclosure Questionnaire to the parents and the children.
- ❖ Children will also be assessed on their emotional and adaptive problems using a Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire for the parent/caregiver and the teachers of these children.
- ❖ Other health related information will be obtained from the children's medical files through file review.

The Goal of this Study

To compare emotional and adaptive challenges in disclosed vs. non-disclosed children at the Ndop district Hospital in Cameroon.

Research Hypothesis

We hypothesize that children who know their HIV positive status will present higher rates of emotional and adaptive problems as compared to children who have not been disclosed.

Participants

- ❖ All HIV positive children enrolled in Ndop HIV treatment center (approximately 180 children) within the ages of 6-18 years.

Measures

- ❖ **Socio-demographic and Health-care related Questionnaire.** This questionnaire examines demographic information like the sex, age of the child, where the child lives etc. It also focuses on health related information such as duration of attendance at the clinic, the length of time since the child learnt of his HIV positive status etc.
- ❖ **Disclosure Questionnaire (Vreeman et al., 2014.):** Assesses the HIV Disclosure status of the child using a questionnaire designed for the parent/caregiver and the child.
- ❖ **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ, Goodman, 1997):** Assesses children's emotional and behavior problems as well as their pro-social behavior. 25 items are divided into 5 scales: Emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity and inattention, peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior. This questionnaire will be administered to the parent/caregiver of the children and the teachers of these children.

Conclusion.

- ❖ This study will provide knowledge about the impact of disclosure of the HIV positive status on children's emotional and adaptive state in Cameroon..
- ❖ Knowledge regarding children's state of mind following disclosure will enable the development of an intervention focusing on supporting children with HIV and their families.

essabelafewo2012@yahoo.com

