

FIFTH UAPS AFRICAN POPULATION CONFERENCE

Abstract

Title: *Determinants of Regional Differences in HIV Prevalence in North-Western and Southern Provinces of Zambia*

In Zambia, the predominant mode of HIV transmission is sexual intercourse between men and women, however, there are large variations in the prevalence rate and extent of the spread of HIV in different regions of the country. The prevalence rates according to the 2001-2002 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey range from 8.3% (lowest) to 22% (highest). The prevalence rate is lowest in the Northern region (8.3%) and highest in Lusaka region (22%). Northwestern region and Southern region have prevalence rates of 9.2% and 19.9% respectively. The variations in prevalence rates across regions point to the fact that there are determinants unique to each region fuelling the spread of the epidemic. There are gaps in terms of knowledge about the factors precipitating the spread of the epidemic in each region. This paper tries to identify some of the factors that could explain why HIV has spread more rapidly in some regions of Zambia than in others, but, with a focus on two regions of Zambia, the Northwestern region, with low prevalence rate, and the Southern region with a high prevalence rate. The Northwestern region practices male circumcision as part of its traditional culture, while the Southern region on the contrary does not, and it allows polygamous marriages.

The paper uses data from the Zambia Demographic and Health Survey, Zambia Sexual Behaviour Survey and Zambia Antenatal Clinic Sentinel surveillance. Analysis of data involves univariate, bivariate and multivariate.

The variables considered in the study include: socio-demographic variables (age; educational attainment; work status; mobility in the past 12 months; religion; ethnic group and alcohol consumption); behavioral variables (marital status, age at first sexual intercourse, residence in the city at age of first sex, number of sex partners, number of non-spousal partners and sex in exchange for money); and prevalence of sexually transmitted infections.

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