

“Empowering intersectional interventions addressing adolescent girls and women from formative, efficacy and implementation science”

All the speakers were from the programme “Substance use, gender and applied research” at RTI International (non-profit research institute in the US)

Felicia Browne: “Baseline HIV-related risks among out-of-school adolescent girls and young women in Cape Town, South Africa”

- Young women are a key population but are still not prioritized
- South Africa has the biggest HIV epidemic in the world, 7,9 million people living with HIV in 2017
- Parallel focus on substance use and gender-based violence is needed
 - o Alcohol consumption (South Africa has one of the highest rates of alcohol consumption in the world)
 - o What we work with: How does AOD (Alcohol and Other Drug) use, sex risk behavior and gender-based violence relate to HIV
- Our focus: Young women who have dropped out of school in South Africa
- Study:
 - o Train and evaluate peer role models
 - o Test the efficacy of “The Young Women’s Health CoOp”
 - o Eligibility criteria for the study (who could take part):
 - Identify as female, aged 16-19, recent/regular AOD use, dropped out of school, condomless sex with male partner (in last 90 days), cognitively able
 - o 500 young women participated
 - 39% used marijuana, 17% methaqualone
 - 6% were HIV-positive
 - 11% were pregnant
- Sexual risk behavior
 - o 80% said their last sexual encounter was condomless
- HIV/STIs
 - o 87% had a prior HIV test (testing is widespread in South Africa)
 - Median number of tests taken were 3
 - o 9% reported ever being diagnosed with an STI
 - But: 40% reported having one or more STI symptoms
- Violence/victimization
 - o Many reported having been abused physically
- Conclusions:
 - o Women were reached at a critical period through the study
 - o We need to address diversity in order to address the young women’s needs

Margaret Gichane: “Using visual participatory research methods to understand AGYW [Adolescent Girls and Young Women] sexual behavior: innovative strategies for research and interventions

- There is a growing recognition for engaging youth in research – how can we engage them in new ways?
- A study from Tanzania on cash transfers and sexual behaviors
- Method:
 - o “Visual narrative timeline interviews”
 - Method developed by Goldberg (?)
- Method
 - o Create timeline
 - o Add partners
 - o List emotions or qualities for each relationship
 - o Draw pre-determined symbols
 - o Add major life-events
- Timeline drawing was followed by a semi-structured interview
 - o Relationship characteristics, relationship quality, among others
- Women in the study were able to compare different relationships using this method
- Analysis that the investigators did:
 - o Review of the timeline
 - o Memos summarizing the visuals of each timeline
 - o Comparison of timeline to interview
- Benefits of a visual participatory research method
 - o Active engagement of the participant
 - o Rich narratives
 - o The approach can reveal complexities in sexual relationship histories
 - o Easy to contrast different relationships/partners [experiences]
 - o Appropriate and engaging method for youth
- Challenges:
 - o Interviews can get lengthy
 - o Drawing timelines can be difficult, a pressure to “make it perfect”
 - Important to give some freedom in the process

Wendee Wechsberg: Addressing stigma and gender inequalities as antecedents to ending AIDS with adolescent women: who has the power? (ongoing process)

- “The PrEPARE Study”/PrEPARE Pretoria Project (from South Africa)
- Based on the Women’s Health CoOp study
 - o Intervention applied both in the US and different African countries
- Phases of the PrEPARE Pretoria Project
 - o Phase 1: formative
 - Engaging stakeholders and AGYW
 - o Phase 2: Randomized trial
 - Evaluating the impact on stigma training
 - o Meetings with clinical staff: findings
 - Nurses treated AGYW as their “daughters” – did not want them to have sex
 - o Meetings with AGYW: findings

- Most had not heard about PreP
- Many were afraid to receive bad treatment in clinics
- Interested in PreP
- AGYW perceived nurses as really rude
- Many were worried about the lack of confidentiality
- Young women did not trust the healthcare staff, but: they have to rely on them in order to get support
- Stigma and discrimination trainings were done in 6 clinics, in three out of six clinics the training was combined with training on PreP (trainings of clinicians)
 - Illustrations/visuals as a tool
 - Analysis of different situations
- Who has the power to change things? Clinics or adolescent girls and young women?

Wendee Wechsberg: Adapting an implementation science framework for women living with HIV in usual care in Cape Town, South Africa

- Different trials (especially Women’s health CoOp) are the base of the study
- Alcoholism in South Africa – very widespread
 - In some cases, people have been paid in alcohol instead of money in South Africa, and fetal alcohol syndrome is also widespread
- Implementation the Women’s Coop in different clinics
 - Marketing of the interventions for the specific clinics
- Average of women’s drinking is high – studying women in risk of developing AUD (Alcohol Use Disorder) – many in the study had AUD according to existing definitions
 - Goal of study: women drinking less, taking more ARVs
 - Textual data evidences that alcohol consumption influenced the ARV use
- Sustainability:
 - Reduction of alcohol use is an important goal in improving HIV care, re-initiation and adherence
 - “What happens when we go away”?