

The experiences among pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS regarding inadequate nutritional food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region

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Abstract—The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS regarding inadequate nutritional food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region.

Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the bodies dietary needs. Good nutrition combined with physical activity is the foundation of good health and more so for a pregnant woman. Poor nutrition can cause reduced immunity, increased defencelessness due to illness, impaired physical and mental development and reduced productivity (World Health Organisation 2018)

Nutrition is important for good health and well-being. A balanced diet provides the body with energy, protein, essential fats, vitamins and minerals in order to live, grow and function correctly. The body needs a variety of diverse foods to provide the right amount of nutrients for good health. To partake in a healthy diet can be a great benefit to life for individuals (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2012).

This study was conducted among pregnant women living with HIV and AID, visiting the Antenatal Care at Windhoek, Hospital A, Khomas Region. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the experiences of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek, Hospital A, Antenatal Care, Khomas Region.

The objective of the study was to explore and describe the experiences of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region. The study determined the challenges experienced by pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region.

Keywords: HIV, AIDS, pregnant women, nutritional food.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the bodies dietary needs. Good nutrition combined with physical activity is the foundation of good health. Poor nutrition can cause reduced immunity, increased defencelessness to illness, impaired physical and mental development and reduced productivity (World Health Organisation, 2018)

Nutrition is important for good health and wellbeing. A balanced diet provides the body with energy, protein, essential fats, vitamins and minerals in order to live, grow and function correctly. The body needs a variety of diverse foods to provide the right amount of nutrients for good health. A healthy diet can be a great benefit of life for individuals (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2017).

A balance diet plays a vital role in the life of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS (National Operational Guidelines for Health Workers, 2013). A balanced diet means eating variety of foods from all the main food groups. Such variety provides all the nutrients that are essential for the body (Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Republic of Tanzania)

Pregnant women need additional nutrients to meet their body requirements and also to support foetal growth and lactation. Pregnant women living with HV requires increased energy, therefore good nutrition is important for the mother and foetus. Therefore HIV infected pregnant women are advised to keep a healthy diet by consuming food from locally available sources and take recommended nutrient supplements such as iron and folic acid daily (Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre, 2009)

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Pregnant women require both extra energy and micronutrients in order to remain well and gain weight normally (World Health Organisation, 2017) In order to avoid poor nutrition, pregnant women should consume adequate micronutrients to maintain

proper body functions. Calcium help bones to grow, macronutrients gives the body energy as well as proteins and carbohydrates. (Virtual Medical Centre, 2018).

HIV infections have deteriorated the nutritional profile of African women. About 13.1 million African women aged 1-49 years live with HIV/AIDS. Poor nutritional status quickly hastens maternal malnutrition. Maternal malnutrition status during pregnancy sets the stage for poor pregnancy outcomes, affecting the survival and quality of life for the offspring (Lartey, 2008), there is a relationship between maternal health during pregnancy and lactation, for it is associated with stress, anxiety, and depression during pregnancy. HIV positive pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity and as a result it has a huge influence on maternal and infant health. Therefore, there is a relationship between household food insecurity, maternal nutritional status and infant feeding practices among HIV infected women. Poor maternal nutritional status is highly prevalent and contributes substantially to morbidity and mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa (Young et al, 2014)

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to explore the experiences of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were identified for the study

- To describe the experiences of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region
- To determine the challenges experienced by pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS on inadequate nutritious food at Windhoek Hospital A, Khomas Region

V. STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

According to Creswell (2014) qualitative research design involves discussing the sample of the study and data collection and recording procedure. Creswell (2014) describe qualitative design as a complete process of research from conceptualising a problem to writing a narrative. Therefore, qualitative design was used in the researcher's study by observing experiences, feelings and reactions of participants regarding the research topic, and conceptualized themes and sub-themes. The researcher employed purposeful sampling which is a non-probability sampling method which selects participants based on characteristics of a population and the objectives of the study. The researcher used a sample of 20 respondents that was drawn from pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS who visited the Antenatal Care at Centre at Hospital A in/Windhoek.

VI. ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethics is defined as striving for honesty in all communications, in reporting data, results, methods and procedure. It is also to keep promise and agreements, act with sincerity to strive for consistency of thought and action (Resnik, 2015). The researcher based on what du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) suggested, design a consent form for all the respondents, explained to them in detail what the form entails and also assured them that information they would share would remain confidential. The respondents were informed by the researcher about confidentiality and privacy and that the researcher will ensure that it is maintained throughout the interviews.

VII. PRINCIPLE OF BENEFICENCE

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014) advice that respondents should not be harmed in any form, for example, causing participants to recall emotionally painful memories. The researcher explained to participants that they have a right to withdraw any time for answering research questions posed to them.

VIII. PRINCIPLE OF JUSTICE

Attending to principle of justice means that the respondents are offered a reasonable and equal distribution of burdens and benefits (Townsend et al., 2010). The principle of justice in this research addressed the sharing of the burdens and benefits of the research, that is; it should not be the case that one group bears the costs of research while the other group reaps the benefits.

IX. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discussions of results were done by using themes and subthemes. In theme 1, challenges faced by pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS were discussed, while theme 2 discussed poor living conditions faced by pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS and theme 3 discussed knowledge of nutritional food by pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS.

Subthemes discussed complications women faced as a result of HIV/AIDS, lack of healthy diet for pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS, and unemployment faced by pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS. Stigmatizations of pregnant women, living with HIV/AIDS were discussed among others.

Only females participated in the entire research as research topic was about challenges pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS are facing regarding inadequate nutritional food.

X. CONCLUSION

The study reveal that lack of adequate nutrition is a challenge for pregnant women and they cannot adhere to prescribed antiretroviral regimen. Therefore, the study contributes to improve the quality of life of pregnant women living with HIV and AIDS by identifying their nutritional needs and challenges.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommended that further research be conducted by health professionals on nutritional needs for pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS. The study also strongly recommends that the Ministry of Health and Social Services come up with a project that can benefit pregnant women living with HIV/AIDS that are visiting the Antenatal Care at Hospital A. The project can be in the form of a soup kitchen where the women can be served soup and warm tea. Only those who come regularly for antenatal care can benefit from the

XII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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XIII. COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no financial or any personal relationship(s) which may have inappropriately influenced them.

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