

Approach to Eradicating Female Genital Mutilation in FGM Practicing Communities

Author: Ajayi Esohe Anwansedo; Mentor: Victor Mbarika

Prospective PhD Student; ICT University, Baton Rouge Louisiana

Introduction:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), involves altering of the external part of the female. Over 125 million girls and women alive have been circumcised in 29 countries in Africa and in the Middle East, an additional 30 million girls are at risk of being cut in the next decade and an unknown number has been mutilated and is at risk of being mutilated in other parts of the world. One of the strongest reasons given for the continuation of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is that it is tradition.

What is Tradition:

- Tradition, according to the Oxford dictionary, connotes beliefs passed on from one generation to the next.
- Traditional rulers or custodians of tradition are a minority of the community, who can modify, continue or discontinue traditional practices.
- FGM is a tradition in FGM practicing communities and traditional rulers have the power to modify, continue or discontinue the practice.
- Traditional institutions are the most effective channel for reaching people in FGM practicing communities.



Research Questions:

- What are the perception of individuals in FGM practicing communities about Anti-FGM campaigns?
- Who is/are the most influential stakeholder(s) in the decision to continue or discontinue FGM as a tradition in the community?
- What strategy is most effective in combating FGM in the community?

Aim:

To determine the most effective strategy in combating FGM In FGM practicing communities.

Objectives:

- Review of various approach to combat FGM
- Perform a Case study analysis of a practicing FGM community to determine existing power/communication structure.
- Gather information from members of the community using semi structured interviews

Methods:

- Conduct semi-Structured interviews with individuals in FGM practicing communities.
- Case study analysis of a typical FGM practicing communities.

Structure of a Typical FGM practicing Community



CONCLUSIONS:

Often, parents who oppose FGM have had to circumcise their daughters, in accordance with tradition in order to be accepted in their community. A focus on the most influential stakeholder in an FGM practicing community will mean;

- Reaching most individuals with less resources.
- Ensuring Sustainable solution to FGM, as individuals in the community take ownership of eradication efforts.
- Maximizing the effect of targeted Anti-FGM campaigns.

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Contacts:

Ajayi Esohe Ekuase
Mail: Ajayi.anwansedo@gmail.com
Phone: +2348032012564, +2348032002564

Professor Victor Mbarika
Mail: vmbarika@yahoo.com
Phone: +1 225 572 - 1042