



Is hotel accommodation a predictor of multiple concurrent partnership and HIV risk amongst stable relationships in Tiv Land, North Central Nigeria?

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Abstract

The influence of commercial sexual activities in brothel on unsafe sexual behaviours and health risk have been documented in Nigeria. However, the role of hotel accommodation in encouraging multiple partnerships and HIV risk amongst those in stable relationships is yet to be given the desired attention, despite the fact that 42% of new HIV infections in 2013, came from 'low risk' stable relationships such as marriage or cohabitation. This paper examines the role of hotel accommodation in encouraging multiple partnerships and HIV risk in stable relationships amongst Tiv people of North Central Nigeria. A sample of 1,621 respondents was collected using multi-stage and purposive sampling methods. Structured and in-depth interviews were used for data collection. SPSS (version 21) was used for quantitative data analysis. There are multiple sexual partnership engagements (under generally low condom use) in hotels amongst those in stable relationship and HIV risk. Efforts towards reducing unsafe sexual behaviours in hotels amongst those in stable relationships may help in improving sexual health of partners and the public in the study area.

Keywords: accommodation; Multiple partnerships; Risky sexual behaviours; Stable relationships; Nigeria

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1. Introduction

The influence of commercial sexual activities in brothel on unsafe sexual behaviours and health risk have been documented in Nigeria (Imade et al., 2008). However, the role of hotel accommodation in encouraging multiple partnerships and risky sexual behaviours amongst those in stable relationships is yet to be given the desired attention, despite the fact that 42% of new HIV infections in 2013, came from 'low risk' stable relationships such as marriage or cohabitation (NACA, 2012). This paper examines the role of hotel accommodation in encouraging multiple partnership (under low condom use) in stable relationships amongst Tiv people of North Central Nigeria.

The quest to understand sexual behaviours and health risk within social institution is not a recent endeavour. Previous studies have identified the likely impact of sex business in brothel on unsafe sexual behaviours and HIV risk in Nigeria (Imade et al., 2008; Munoz et al., 2010; Onyeneho, 2009; Popoola, 2013), Northern Namibia (Fitzgerald-Husek et al., 2011), and Uganda (MacLachlan et al., 2009). While Others have suggested that the occurrence of risky sexual behaviour amongst college students (Zimba and Mostert, 1993) and in the hostels of educational institutions (Zimba and Likando, 2014) could be drivers of new HIV infections amongst college students in Namibia. Similarly, Ojedokun and Balogun (2008) have opined that premarital sex is common and may be a health risk factor amongst college students in Nigeria.

Another related study has observed that HIV infection rate amongst 744 individuals attending health care services at the Federal Medical Centre, Ogun State was 11.7%, with the highest infection rate of 7.8% amongst women (Motayo et al., 2012). Corroborating earlier findings, Akinjogunla and Adegoke (2009) have reported HIV infection rate of 34.2% amongst 316 patients including men and women attending services at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The authors have identified unprotected pre-marital and extra-marital sexual intercourse as the main factors influencing high rates of HIV infection.

There is the general perception that education and awareness could be antidote to the spread of HIV. However, evidence available have shown that new HIV infections are considerably high in Nigeria. In 2013, the burden of HIV in Nigeria was estimated to be about 220, 394 new infection, 210,031 HIV related deaths, 1,476,741 requiring drugs, and 3,229,757 individuals living with HIV (NACA, 2014). The Agency have also reported that over 80% of the new infection were from heterosexual relationships, while 42% were from seemingly low risk stable sexual relationships such as marriage or cohabitation (NACA, 2012). The phenomenon of unsafe sexual relationships amongst stable relationships could be a contributor of high incidence rates of HIV in the country. Consequently, there is the need to further understand the drivers of the spread of HIV epidemic. Hence understanding the role of hotel accommodation in encouraging unsafe sexual behaviours in stable relationships may be useful for social policy to curb further spread of HIV through this source in the country.

Several individuals have gotten money through political appointments, and other business engagements and have invested in hotel business as a way of preparing for the future. Thus hotels are found at nook and crannies of towns and villages in Tivland. Though the initial focus of such enterprises may be to provide decent accommodation for travellers and tourists, nonetheless, they provide accommodation for lovers for sexual intercourse.

2. Methods

2.1. Theory

It is assumed that sexual behaviour especially unsafe sex results to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV. Although there are contending opinions of what sexual act may constitute safe or unsafe sexual behaviours; the notion that once the sexual outcomes of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS are against the initial motives of the participants, it could be considered unsafe sexual behaviour. Unwanted pregnancies, STDs and HIV/AIDS are linked to unsafe sexual behaviours (Timiun, 2012).

Sexual motivations are the expected benefits or any other thing(s) that encourage individuals to engage in sex. The ways individuals intend to perform sexual act and obtain the expected benefits are part of motivation (Timiun, 2012). It is assumed that the more the favours a partner receives from the other, the greater the desire for the relationship. These favours may be in form of helping with farming work, jobs, sponsorship, gifts and several other things. Those who are favoured get more interested in the relationship. However, if the relationship is an illicit one, it may weaken the intimacy in the formal union or with the primary partner.

The period of 'stay away' from primary partner is also assumed to influence sexual intimacy. It is assumed that the longer the period a partner stays away from his or her primary partner, the lesser the sexual intimacy. The period of loneliness, if long, gives room for secret sexual engagement. Both men and women may engage in relationship to break the loneliness.

In addition, group sub-culture of the desire to be beautiful and attractive amongst women, which is strong and competitive, may translate into material needs. A lack of these needs may constitute strong motivations for sexual relationship with men for the purpose of satisfying them. Some of the married women may assist each other to engage in illicit sex to meet these needs rather than do without them, while down playing the reprisals from the men, if they are caught. This has reduced the sexual intimacy amongst formal unions or primary partners.

Furthermore, men may constitute peer groups, who may be drinkers who go to drinking places for appointments to meet new friends. They may assist each other to engage in illicit sexual relationships. Some women who have such husbands wait for them to leave the house first; as soon as the man had gone, they also leave for their 'appointments'. The hallmarks of such acts may be crisis in formal unions which sometimes leads to divorce, despite the impending consequences on the children. Sexual intimacy may be destroyed leaving the partners more prone to sexual engagements with multiple partners.

Despite the material gains, money may be needed to satisfy certain needs that the individual may not want to disclose. The desire to have money may be a strong motivation for sexual relationships, but those who have yielded to the desire may be faced with the problem of meeting the requirements of multiple relationships, hence there may be reduction in levels of sexual intimacy in formal unions or with the primary partner.

Procreation may be important in almost all the formal unions. It could be one of the motivations for sexual relationships. Failure for a woman to procreate may be a signal for the man to keep another partner who would procreate. It may be one of the reasons given by those keeping multiple partners.

2.2. Quantitative Methods

The multi-stage sampling method was used in selecting 1,601 respondents in four different locations (Mkar, Aliade, Udei and Jovkyundan which are towns and villages from Gboko, Gwer, Guma and Konshisha Local Government Areas respectively). A probability sampling without replacement (raffle draws) was used in selecting Gwer West (urban area) and Guma (rural area) from the homogeneous settlements of Ichongu block; while Gboko (urban area) and Konshisha (rural area) were selected from the Ipusu using the same method. General Hospital, Aliade was then selected from Gwer West, while NKST Hospital, Mkar was selected from Gboko to obtain samples of those living with HIV. The table of random numbers was used in selecting Udei from Guma out of several other rural settlements such as Kaseyor, Yerwata, Ukohor, Umenga, Agasha, Daudu, Uluva, Yogbo etc. Similarly, Jovkyundan was selected from Konshisha out of other rural settlements such as Tse-Agberagba, Gungul, Korinya, Agbeede, Awajir, Tsuwe, Mbaakpur, Achoho, Iber, Akputu etc.

An eight page questionnaire with closed and open ended questions was used for quantitative data collection amongst 805 HIV seropositive clinic attendees and 796 HIV seronegative individuals on background characteristics, sexual performance, risky sexual behaviours, and HIV in the first stage. In the second stage, face to face interviews were conducted with the respondents by the researcher (author), with the aid of some research assistants. The questionnaires were pretested by conducting a mock data collection with 50 respondents before the actual data collection exercise. The internal consistency and reliability of the data collection instrument was very high. The quantitative data collection lasted for five months between April and August, 2014. Completed questionnaires were scrutinised in the field to ensure exactness of the recorded information. Thereafter, they were retrieved and stored in a well secured office, accessed by the researcher alone.

At the completion of data collection, the responses were coded and entered into Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 21 software, which has provision for the Generalised Linear Regression with Cumulative Link, was used for the analysis of quantitative data. The response variable, multiple partnership is an ordinal variable. However, the data fit better in multinomial rather than ordinal distribution.

2.3. Qualitative Methods

In this segment of data collection, purposive sampling was used in selecting 20 respondents who participated in in-depth interviews. Five individuals were selected in each location. The interviews were conducted in Tiv language using a guide with questions on structural factors influencing sexual behaviours. An audio recorder was used for recording the discussions during the in-depth interviews for the purpose of transcription after the data collection sessions. The data were transcribed and analysed by the researcher. The findings from qualitative data provided further insight into the intricacies of illicit sexual behaviours in the hotels.

3. Results

Nigeria has a young population which is typical of countries with high fertility rates. The country has fertility rate of 5.5%; 46 percent of the population are under the age of 15 years, while 50% are between the ages of 15 and 64 years. Only 4% of the population are above 64 years of age (NDHS, 2013). Most of the respondents in this study, 1,488 (92.9%) are between the reproductive ages of 18 and 49 years, while 133 (7.1%) are above the age of 50 years. The young people are more sexually active and more exposed to the risk of HIV/AIDS; thus, they constitute a higher percentage of respondents in the present study (see Table 1)

With regard to educational attainment amongst the respondents, 7.6% have not obtained formal education, while 11.7% have completed only primary education. The percentage of completion of secondary education seems to be high (47.5%) because all respondents who have completed some form of secondary education (the junior secondary school) are in this category. The respondents who have completed some form of higher education (Diploma, Higher Diploma, First degree, Postgraduate) are 530 (33.1%, see Table 1). There are generally high levels of illiteracy amongst the population. For instance, 40% of women and 30% of men have no formal schooling. The figure is further higher for women (54%) and men (40%) in the rural areas. The regional percentages of no formal education are 38% and 22.6% for women and men respectively (NDHS, 2013).

Majority of the respondents, 1,186 (74.1 %) earn less than twenty five thousand naira (AUD 168.91) per month, while few others, 30(1.9%) earn more than one hundred thousand naira (AUD 675.67) per month. As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents are engaged in low income earning ventures such as subsistence farming and petty businesses (see Table 4.7 for the distribution of respondents by income). UNDP (2013) reports that 61.2% of the population in Nigeria are living on less than 1 USD per day. Similarly, the NDHS (2013) report on income and standard of living indicates that 81.0% of uneducated women, and 71.0% of uneducated men belong to the poorest homes in Nigeria.

Further on occupation amongst the respondents, 451 (28.2%) are engaged in farming, 363(22.7%) are in business, while 175 (10.9%) are unemployed and 366(22.9%) are students. Those in civil service are only 203 (12.7%). The unemployment rate reported here is only 10.9% because some individuals who would have reported been unemployed, choose to report either farming or business (what they are temporary doing).

The rate of condoms usage amongst individuals with more than one sexual partner in Nigeria is 29% amongst women and 20% amongst the men (NDHS, 2013). Amongst the respondents, 78 (4.9%) did not use condoms during intercourse in the last six months preceding the study; 920 (57.5%) used condoms sometimes and 286 (17.9%) used condoms always (see Table 1)

Multiple partnership is significantly associated with hotel accommodation for meeting lovers ($P < 0.001$), HIV positive status ($P = 0.003$) and relationship status ($P < 0.001$, see Table 2). Those in stable relationship who would like to avoid conflict with their primary partners meet lovers in hotels rather than their homes. They sometimes lie to their primary partners that they would like to travel, meanwhile they sneak into hotels and engage in sexual intercourse with their lovers. The phenomenon of multiple partnership outside the

primary one is reported as illicit or secret sexual relationships in the study area. This sexual behaviour has been reported by some of the respondents as stated below:

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by some Background Characteristics and Condoms Use in the last Six Months Preceding the Study

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-19yrs	163	10.2
20-24yrs	293	18.3
25-29yrs	342	21.4
30-34yrs	336	21.0
35-39yrs	120	7.5
40-44yrs	136	8.5
45-49yrs	98	6.1
50-54yrs	67	4.2
55-59yrs	35	2.2
60+	11	0.7
Total	1601	100
Educational attainment		
No formal schooling	137	8.6
Primary	209	13.1
Secondary	759	47.4
Tertiary	496	31.0
Total	1601	100
Monthly Income in Naira (USD 1 = N360)		
Less than 25,000	1186	74.1
25,000-49,000	287	17.9
50,000-90,000	98	6.1
100,000+	30	1.9
Total	1601	100
Occupation		
Farming	451	28.2
Civil service	203	12.7
Business	363	22.7
Student	366	22.9
Unemployed	175	10.9
Others	43	2.7
Total	1601	100
Condoms use in the last six months preceding study		
Did not use	78	4.9
Used sometimes	920	57.5
Used always	286	17.9
Never used	317	19.8
Total	1601	100

Note. The source of the data is from field survey, 2014

The hotels have helped many people commit adultery. They will tell the wife that they are going to Lagos, but they will not go to Lagos, instead they will go to a hotel with another woman, spend the whole time they said they would stay in Lagos there, and when they are satisfied, the man will take his car from where he has hidden it, and come home as if he had gone to Lagos. He will tell the wife that he is just returning from Lagos. This is the roles of hotels in this problem. The young people are also doing it (Female; 35 years; Married)

Table 2. Association between Multiple Partnership, Hotel Accommodation, HIV Positive Status and Stable Sexual Relationships

Variables	Parameter Estimates			95% Confidence Interval for Odd Ratio		
	B	df	Sig.	Odd Ratio	Lower	Upper
Number of Partners						
One partners	-1.610	1	0.000	0.200	0.153	0.262
Two partners	1.075	1	0.000	2.929	2.264	3.789
Hotel accommodation (strongly disagree)	0.051	1	0.850	1.052	0.621	1.782
Disagree	-0.966	1	0.000	0.380	0.264	0.548
Agree	-0.591	1	0.000	0.554	0.445	0.689
HIV status						
HIV positive	0.309	1	0.003	1.362	1.113	1.667
Relationship status						
Single	0.406	1	0.000	1.501	1.234	1.826
Cohabitation	1.468	1	0.058	4.342	0.954	19.756

Note. The source of the data is from field survey, 2014

Another respondent expressing a similar view about the influence of hotels on illicit sex says those from responsible families who are afraid to be seen in public, engage in illicit sex in the hotels:

You see, if there are no hotels, some people will find it difficult to have sex, because some are many in a room where they live. Some find it difficult to go to people's houses for the fear that they will be seen, and it will become an open issue. Married women and young women from responsible families are afraid to go to people houses for such things but they go to hotels instead (Female, 30years; Married).

The phenomenon of having secret sex in the hotels has brought crisis in some families leading to divorce. A male respondent reports on the issue this way:

Many people have secret sex in the hotel. My younger brother is married but he takes another lady to a hotel; people have seen that and have reported to the wife. As I am talking with you, the woman is no longer with my brother. Hotels are a big problem (Male; 31 years; Married).

As a result of the roles of hotels in providing accommodation for illicit sex, some individuals resent anything to do with them. Another male respondents says:

Hotels are the worst. Beer parlours are better than hotels. A man will take your wife to the hotel and sleep with her there, and come out. You would not know. They will come and even sit with you. This is also very bad (Male; 35 years; Married).

4. Discussion

Zimba and Mostert (1993), and Zimba and Nuujoma-Kalomo (2002) once opined that several factors could influence HIV infection in settings such as hostels and tertiary institution. They enumerated some of the factors as hostel overcrowding, lack of safety in ablution facilities, the manner in which basic needs for food, shelter and clothing are met by hostel residents, general safety and security in the hostels, risk of sexual abuse in the hostels and lack of guidance and psychosocial support. While other studies were apt to document sex work in brothel and attendant health risk of HIV infection (Imade et al., 2008; Munoz et al., 2010; Onyeneho, 2009; Popoola, 2013; Fitzgerald-Husek et al., 2011; MacLachlan et al., 2009).

The general belief that education and awareness could halt the spread of HIV has not been effectively applicable in Africa. The interplay between certain factors may be responsible for high new cases of new HIV cases in some African countries such as Nigeria. Poverty and commercial sex (Munoz et al., 2010; Onyeneho, 2009; Popoola, 2013), pleasure seeking through sexual intercourse (Adebiyi and Asuzu, 2009) and procreation (Smith, 2004) have function to encourage multiple partnership amongst partners in Nigeria. However, the phenomenon of hotel accommodation aiding multiple parterships in stable relationships has not received the desired attention.

It may not be difficult to perceive that Individuals who are in stable relationships such as cohabitation and marriage would want to avoid taking their new partners to their homes for the fear of unforeseen consequences. Hence hotel accomodation would then be a good alternative as meeting point for the lovers. With the prevailing circumstances of high unemployment, low education, very active population, cultural value for procreation, desire for money and material gains, several individuals in the study area are engaged in multiple relationships to satisfy their yearnings. Those who are in stable relationships sometimes meet in hotels instead of their homes. Given that condoms use is generally low in the study area (only 17.9% used condoms regularly during intercourse in the last six months preceding study), such sexual engagements may be unsafe. Changing of sexual partners within short periods may be dangerous because a recently effected HIV positive individual can transmit the virus to the unsuspecting partner.

The availability of hotel accomodation as meeting point for lovers, HIV positive status and being in stable relation is associated with multiple partnerships. This finding adds to what previous studies have observed and should attract the attention of policy makers to the possibilities of regulating hotel accomodation as meeting point for lovers who are in stable relationships. This sexual behaviour should receive considerable attention such as the one in the brothel to forestall further HIV infection through ths source.

5. Conclusion

Multiple partnership is associated with hotel accommodation as meeting point for lovers, HIV positive status and being in stable sexual relationship. Hotel accommodation may be a contributor to the spread of HIV amongst those in stable sexual relationships and the population in general.

I recommend that there should be a law requiring hotels owners to put warning notices at the hotels for their customers that illicit sex with married individuals is a crime (under customary law), and that the hotel can be a witness against any customer who breaks the law and is prosecuted by the husband or wife of the unfaithful partner in any court of law, should they are called to do so. There is also the need to re-educate individuals on the need to always use condoms during intercourse with non-regular partners.

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