



Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Programme

Sibasa, Limpopo, South Africa

**Gender Based Violence Workshops in Traditional Initiation Schools
as a driver for attitude change towards girls and women
in patriarchal villages of Limpopo, South Africa.**

**Fiona Nicholson
Tshilidzi Masikhwa
Fhatuwani Manthada
Itani Netshithuthuni
Tapiwa Mukaro
Simba Kativhu
Leo Chimeri**

May 2016

1. Background

TVEP is a non-government organisation that provides prevention and support services related to sexual and gender based violence (SBGV) and HIV and AIDS. TVEP runs two trauma centres in the Thulamela municipality; the trauma centres are based at Donald Fraser and Tshilidzini hospitals. Furthermore, there operate 10 clinic based Help Desks that expand their reach by providing health and psycho-social support services to residents in villages around the municipality. TVEP also facilitates the Zero Tolerance Village Alliance (ZTVA) intervention and community mobilisation programmes with activities targeting women, men, youths, the elderly, community and traditional leaders in rural and peri-urban settings. Funded by Irish Aid, TVEP has been testing an intervention with initiation schools in Vhembe District. This project was initiated in response to anecdotal reports from some areas that boys leaving the schools were demonstrating negative attitudes towards women.

Traditional Initiation Schools (also known as Winter Schools or Circumcision Schools) are regarded as a platform to shape “real men” in the area. This belief therefore makes it important to include men and boys in strategies aimed at reducing GBV. In June 2015, TVEP conducted training on their four thematic topics (sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse and HIV/AIDS) in two circumcisions’ schools under Thulamela Municipality, in the jurisdiction of Chief Gole Mphaphuli. One of the schools was located at Mbahe Village and the second school was at Mpandoni Village. The third school located in Mukovha wa Bale Village was the control school. The principle investigator of the study was Fiona Nicholson. The facilitator of the training workshops was Netshithuthuni I and Masikwa T was the co-facilitator. Data verification was done by Mukaro T and data analysis and discussion of results was done by Chimeri LM and Kativhu S. Pre and Post surveys were conducted by Netshithuthuni I in order to analyse initiated boy’s attitude towards gender based violence. All the personnel who took part in the study are employees of Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Programme (TVEP).

This was a good platform to gather youths and men and influence them to reduce the triggers of gender based violence and attitude changes in men towards women and children. The project recognized the knowledge and presence of the traditional leaders and chiefs in the District. These stakeholders provided guidance and support during the project implementation.

This initiative had the following objectives:

- To generate an attitude of zero tolerance towards sexual and gender based violence in rural Thulamela
- To inform boys and youths attending traditional initiation schools of the rights of women and children in accordance with the Bill of Rights and Constitution of South Africa
- To positively change the attitudes of men and boys towards women and girls

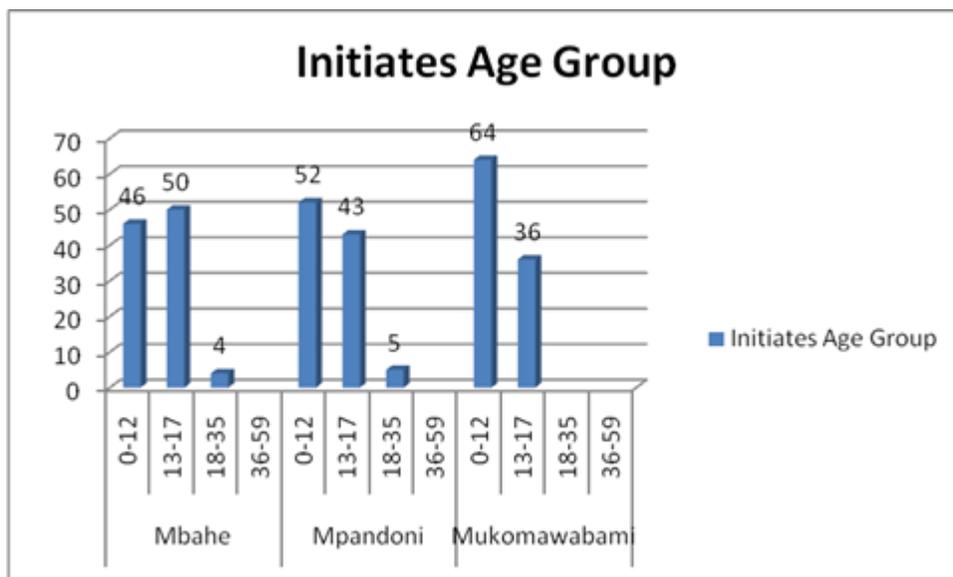
2. Methodology of the Study

A quantitative survey design was adopted in this study. It sought to quantify the attitudes of participants towards GBV. The location of the study was in Thulamela Municipality, in a village under the jurisdiction of Chief Gole Mphaphuli. The study was conducted at three schools namely Mukhovha waBale (control

school), Mbahe and Mpandoni. The training workshops were held for 1 week at each of the participating schools. A 100 % sample was used in this study. This implies that all of the youths in selected initiation schools participated in the study based on their interest and consent. A formal survey questionnaire (Appendix 3.1) was used to collect data. A questionnaire was more appropriate because a large sample of a given population can be contacted, it is easy to analyse and administer given the fact that initiation schools are controlled environments with tight programmes for the initiates. All of the 125 questionnaires distributed to the participants were returned. This represented a return rate of 100%. All the questionnaires were complete and of sufficient quality in terms of consistencies in answers to be used for purposes of the study and the respondents who were struggling were helped by the facilitator, Netshithuthuni I. After collection, the data was coded and entered into the computer using the MS Excel 2010 software package. Thereafter, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0 was used to carry out data analysis.

3. Demographic information of Participants

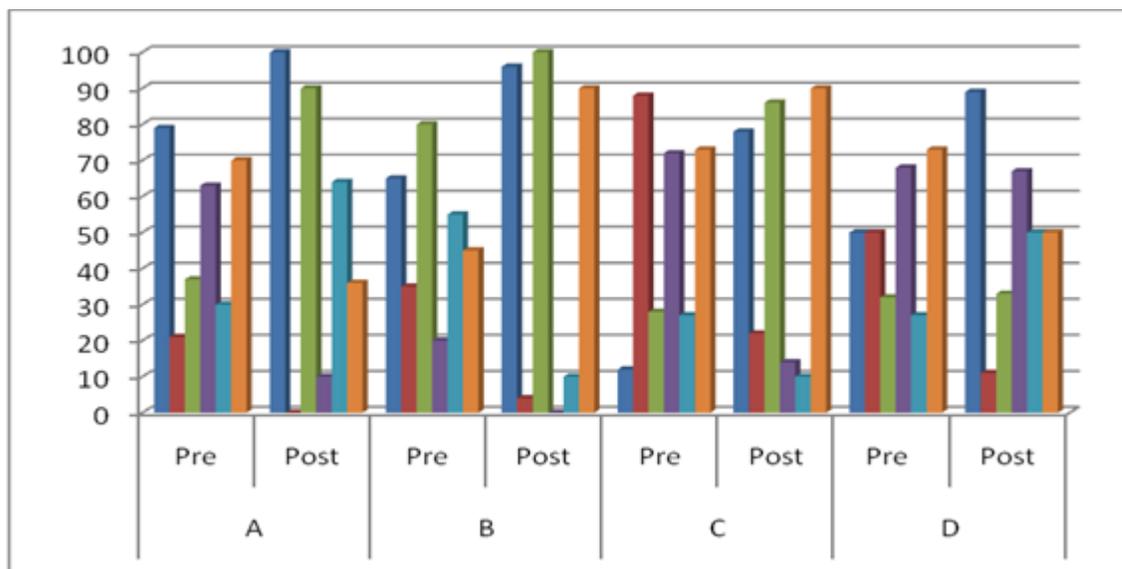
Table 1.1. Initiates Age Group



All the 125 participants of the study were South Africans. The participants were made up of 59 Initiates, 45 mentors and 3 Surgeons. Mentors are responsible for taking care and grooming initiates in the initiation schools. The age composition of the participants was as follows: Children (0-12) 30%, adolescents (13-17 years) 35%, youth (18-35) 33% and adults (36-59) 2%. The age of initiates who took part in the study is depicted by Table 1.1. Mukovha waBale had the highest number of initiates less than 12 years of age. In all three schools, there were no initiates who were older than 36 years.

4. Results of the Study

Table 1.2 Results of the Study



Key

- Mbahe Disagree
- Mbahe Agree
- Mpandoni Disagree
- Mpandoni Agree
- Mukovha waBale
- Mukovha waBale

Table 1.2 depicts the results of a survey with regards to attitude change towards violence before and after training workshops. Worth noting is the fact that Mukovha waBale was the control group in the study. This gave the study a reliable baseline data to compare the results of the impact of training workshops in Mbahe and Mpandoni against Mukovha waBale School the control school. The Pre and Post results at Mbahe and Mpandoni show that TVEP workshops made a positive impact in changing the attitude of participants towards GBV. The most prominent attitude change was achieved at Mbahe high schools where the Pre-test was 79% and the Post-test was 100% (Table.1.2.A). All the initiates disagreed that man can beat his partner if she refuses him sex in the Post test survey.

Participants understood that parents do not have a right to beat their children when they feel it is deserved. This is evidenced by Mpandoni School Pre-test result which rose from 27% to 86% in Post test results. Initiates had a positive attitude after the training workshop with regards to woman tolerating violence from their partner to keep the family together (Table.1.2.C). The results show that, Mbahe School Pre-test survey was 26% and soared to 78% after Post-test Survey and Mpandoni baseline survey was 28% and shot to 86% after the training workshop. Women tolerate GBV and are afraid to report it to relevant authorities for various reasons such as keeping the family together, fear of victimization and

escalating of domestic violence and conformity to patriarchal norms such as accepting that men are the head of the family with sole responsibility to discipline the family whichever way they deem necessary. Fortunately, training workshops managed to dispel those beliefs in initiates and provide knowledge to the initiates that it is the right of women to report GBV and violence must not be tolerated at all and whenever it occurs it must be reported to the police and organisations such as TVEP. Consequently, to a larger extent training workshops effected attitude change towards violence in the initiation schools. However, on the other hand, juxtaposing the control schools results of Mukovha waBale and Mbahe and Mpandoni justify the fact that workshop intervention made a positive difference in change of attitude in initiates. As shown by Table Table.1.2 (B), the Post test results on Mukovha waBale indicate 75% of initiates agreed that a man who paid lobola/umalo is entitled to have sex with his wife. The coercion of married women to give conjugal rights even when they don't want indicates the dominance of patriarchy in traditional African societies. The percentage was high because there was no training workshop that was held in Mukomawabani. These results are a true reflection of the fact that training intervention leads to attitude change in initiation schools. Training intervention makes a positive difference in initiation schools; hence there is a need to continue these training interventions.

4. Summary of the Study Findings

The results of the baseline and end line survey showed that TVEP workshops effect attitude change in participants towards GBV. In majority of the responses, participants had very positive attitude change after undergoing training workshops. Table 1.2 shows that zero tolerance of violence in all its forms can be achieved in these initiation schools. Perhaps results of the study shows that TVEP has made great strides in its efforts to reduce incidents of sexual and gender based violence. Worth noting, is the fact that initiation schools are inherently patriarchal in nature and it's not easy to turn the culture and norms that has been passed from one generation to another ever since time immemorial. Need for training interventions is evidenced by a big difference of results between the control school Mukovha waBale and Mbahe and Mpandoni. The training workshops have made a positive impact but a lot still needs to be done. A major challenge is that there is no continuity of training workshops to the initiates after attending the initiation schools. Post initiation workshops are needed as a follow up to constantly endear knowledge and prevent any future negative behavioural change. However, the positives should not be laurels to rest on but should be springboards for more creative intervention measures that can reduce incidents of sexual and gender based violence in the community.

Appendix A: Consent Form and Questionnaire of the Study

Informed Consent

TVEP in partnership with Traditional initiation schools seeks to reduce incidents of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in Vhembe District by achieving the following expected results:

Result 1: To effect behavior change toward women and children;

Result 2: To mobilize participants to prevent and report SGBV, and provide support to survivors;

In order to measure the impact and effectiveness of the project, we are asking you to please respond to some questions which will take about 15 minutes of your time. Before responding please note that:

1. You are kindly expected and encouraged to fully participate in all sessions of the workshop.
2. The questions in this booklet are about things related to your *health, as well as general* questions about your background. Some questions ask about what you know; others ask your opinion on things; and others ask about things you may or may not have done. In order for this programme to succeed, it is important that you answer all questions honestly.
3. Some of the questions are very personal and ask about different sexual activities that some people do. These particular questions are direct and may be shocking to you. Most of the questions are not like this, however. If a question bothers you so much that you do not want to answer it, you can skip that question and continue with the questionnaire.
4. You acknowledge that someone has explained the purpose of this pre and post to you and that you can ask any questions before signing or answering the questions.

The information you will provide will not identify you as a participant. Instead, we will use a number to identify you on the questionnaire. Any information you give us will be treated with extreme confidentiality and will be used only for the purposes of this study.

Village: _____

Location: _____

Cell Number: _____

Next of kin, contact: _____

Date: ____/07/2014

Signature: _____

Time Started: _____

Time Finished: _____

We would like some general information about you, like your age, so we can describe the kinds of people who answered these questions.
--

South Africa	
--------------	--

1. How old are you? _____ years

Zimbabwe	
Other specify	

2. Which country do you come from? Tick or cross the appropriate

box.

3. Are you a mentor or initiate? Tick or cross the appropriate

Mentor/Surgeon	
Initiate	

box.

4. What is your gender?

1 Male

2 Female

3 Transgender

A. ATTITUDES TOWARD VIOLENCE

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements

5. A man who has paid lobola/ umalo is entitled to have sex with his wife even if she doesn't want to.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

6. A man can beat his partner if she refuses him sex.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

7. If I were raped or assaulted, I would report it to a close friend, family member or a police officer

1 Disagree

2 Agree

B. ATTITUDES TOWARD MEN AND WOMEN

The following statements are about different roles for males and females. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements by circling how you best feel about the statement.

8. If a girl engages in kissing and touching, it is her own fault if sex is forced on her.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

9. Women who get raped while at a shebeen get what they deserve.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

10. An unfaithful woman deserves to be beaten.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

11. A woman should tolerate violence from her partner to keep her family together.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

12. An unfaithful man deserves to be beaten.

1 Disagree

2 Agree

C. HIV/AIDS AND RELATED QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions about HIV/AIDS:

13. Do you know your HIV status?

1 No 2 Yes

14. Do you feel like you don't want to be friends with or associate with people who have HIV/AIDS?

1 No 2 Yes

15. Now that I am circumcised I don't need to use any condoms?

1 No 2 Yes

16. People living with HIV and AIDS take ARV medication because it

1 Cures HIV completely 2 prolongs one's life

17. Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is medication that prevents HIV infection.

1 No 2 Yes

D. SEXUAL ATTITUDES

The following questions ask how you feel about different behaviour. Please indicate how well or bad an idea it is to do the following, whether others would agree or disagree with the behaviour, and whether you plan to do these behaviours in the next 3 months (90 days). Circle the NUMBER that best describes your feelings. (Try to answer the questions even if you have not had sex or have never used condoms.)

18. Have you ever talked about sex activities with your parents?

1 No 2 Yes

19. Were you encouraged to have sex with a girl or women after circumcision?

1 No 2 Yes

20. I think it's ok for me to use male condom if I have sex?

1 Disagree 2 Agree

21. How do you feel about your partner wearing a female condom when you have sex?

1 Bad idea 2 Good idea

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about sex?
How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about condoms?
(Try to answer the questions even if you have not had sex or have never used condoms.)**

22. If I use a condom, sex would not feel as good.

1 Disagree 2 Agree

23. Condoms help prevent HIV/ AIDS, STI's & pregnancy.

1 Disagree 2 Agree

Try to answer the following questions even if you do not have a person with whom you have sex.

24. If I refuse to have sex with my partner, then she / he will break up with me.

1 Disagree 2 Agree

25. I can talk to the person with whom I have sex about using condoms.

1 No 2 Yes

26. I know how to use a male condom.

1 No 2 Yes

27. If you do not like to wear a male condom, would you prefer your partner to use a female condom?"

1 No 2 Yes

28. Do you use Female/Male condom when you have sex with your partner?

1 Every time 2 Don't use them at all 3 Sometimes

29. Does circumcision mean that I can demand sex with my partner?

1 Disagree 2 Agree

**How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Child Abuse?
(Try to answer the questions honestly)**

30. Parents have the right to beat their children if and when they feel it is deserved?

1 Disagree 2 Agree

31. List three Children Rights which you may know

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your time.