Introduction

With an estimated 34 million people worldwide living with HIV, individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 are said to be at the highest risk of being infected with HIV and AIDS in Botswana (HIV & AIDS in Botswana, 2011; E.P. Mukamaambo, 2012). This project is aimed at studying the relationship between socioeconomic background and students’ perceptions of contraception on campus at the University of Botswana, as students are considered to be the most sexually active population. Previous research has indicated that wealth plays a role in the knowledge and perception of the use of contraception; students from lower income households have been found to engage in riskier sexual behaviors (Selolwe, E.S., 2005). By using data from current UB students, this research supplements prior research and provides practical implications for lowering the prevalence of HIV amongst the student population while operating under the hypothesis that socioeconomic background does impact students’ perceptions of contraception and HIV.

Methods

An anonymous survey was used to collect data from students at locations across campus; surveys were administered anonymously to protect the identities and privacy of the respondents. 72 surveys were collected and analyzed. Of the respondents, 61% were female and 38% were male; 3% of respondents declined to provide their gender. The mean age of respondents was 22.5 years with a standard deviation of 4.6. Respondents represent a wide range of ethnicities, including but not limited to, Bakwena, Bakalapaleng, Batime and Bakwena. 34% of respondents are unaware of their family income statistics while 15% identified as coming from high income families, 42% from middle-income families and 14% from low-income families.

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Results

The following three relationships were examined: the age at which a respondent first learned about contraception and his/her level of family income and perception of use of contraception on campus, and the relationship between level of family income and perception of use of contraception on campus. The results indicate that a higher percentage of wealthier students feel as though students do not use contraception as often as they should be and the mean age of respondents was 22.5 years with a standard deviation of 4.6. Respondents represent a wide range of ethnicities, including but not limited to, Bakwena, Bakalapaleng, Batime and Bakwena. 34% of respondents are unaware of their family income statistics while 15% identified as coming from high income families, 42% from middle-income families and 14% from low-income families. The following three relationships were examined: the age at which a respondent first learned about contraception and his/her level of family income and perception of use of contraception on campus, and the relationship between level of family income and perception of use of contraception on campus. The results indicate that a higher percentage of wealthier students feel as though students do not use contraception as often as they should be and the mean age of respondents was 22.5 years with a standard deviation of 4.6. Respondents represent a wide range of ethnicities, including but not limited to, Bakwena, Bakalapaleng, Batime and Bakwena. 34% of respondents are unaware of their family income statistics while 15% identified as coming from high income families, 42% from middle-income families and 14% from low-income families.

Discussion

The results indicate that UB students are not using contraception as often as they should be and the Administration at UB should be more proactive about providing students with the contraceptive devices that they need. The results suggest that the University should strengthen student groups that are focused on combating HIV on campus, and work to provide a wide variety of contraceptive devices. Lastly, the University should work to address the points of weakness in the level of understanding of HIV and contraception on campus. This research is limited by the number of respondents and the system used for analysis. In the future, this research can be expanded to include more participants; the survey instrument can also be refined to lead to more conclusive answers.

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References


