

Male involvement in reproductive health: a management perspective

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Aims The present study outlines the perceptions of participants on male involvement in reproductive health (RH) from a management perspective.

Background Namibia is one of the African countries affected by cultural and socio-economic influences that have persuaded gender roles in a way that hinders male-partner involvement in RH.

Method A qualitative, exploratory, descriptive design was followed. The target population included all male and female partners attending a health facility and all nurse managers (registered nurses in charge) that provided RH services in the health facility in a northern region in Namibia. Individual interviews were conducted until data saturation occurred.

Results The results indicate that the management principles, policy and legislation, as well as resources to facilitate male involvement in RH, were indicated as barriers for nurse managers to facilitate male involvement.

Conclusion Male involvement in RH care is needed for an interpersonal and interactive partnership.

Implications for Nurse Managers Recommendations are made to establish a partnership within the current health care framework in which reproductive health is provided.

Introduction

Previously, Jamison *et al.* (2006) as well as Abu-Raddad *et al.* (2010) have indicated that the majority of people in Africa have a limited knowledge of sexuality and reproductive health (RH), although statistics show that 250 000 mothers and 3 million babies die in Africa annually from complications that are related to sexuality and RH. The current health framework for reproductive health care (RHC) in public health care facilities in Namibia is designed to meet the needs of ante- or prenatal women. However, this framework lacks a focus on including male partners (PANOS/NRCS/SAFAIDS 2003).

The World Health Organization (WHO) regards RH as a basic human right of men and women, because it enables them to be well informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their own choice; allowing women to go through a safe pregnancy and childbirth and providing couples with the best chances of having healthy infants (WHO 2006). RH care is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) (2006) as: 'A constellation of methods, techniques and services that

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