

The Role of Culture in the Spread of HIV/AIDS among the Youth of Sub-Saharan Africa

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ABSTRACT The HIV pandemic, which is prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa has propelled countries to come up with interventions, such as, Adolescent Development Programmes (ADPs), which promote open discussions with and amongst the youth about sexuality and reproductive health. These attempts have to an extent yielded good responses but with limited efficacy as these efforts are largely curtailed by the prevailing cultural norms. Africa is generally classified as lagging behind in terms of development; this assertion is mainly because of its adherence to cultural and traditional practices that the developed world sees as peculiar. One such peculiarity is the reverence associated with sexual activity; this is one topic that is hardly discussed both within the family setting and in society in general. Thus this paper concludes that HIV/AIDS messaging can only be effective when they take cultural factors into consideration since the intervention strategies mentioned above have proven to be an inadequate mode in the prevention of HIV/AIDS among the youth.