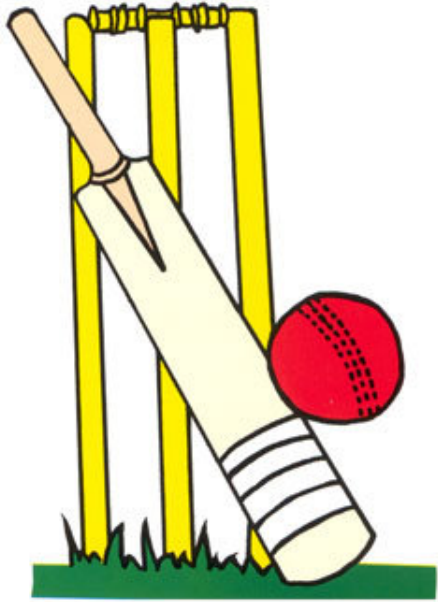


Measuring Behavior Change for Preventing HIV Transmission in Schools Using Cricket Games Through a Randomized Controlled Trial in Cameroon.

Authors: Olivette Chia, Deborah Pentesco-Gilbert, **Salamatu Buba**, Patrick Mbah Okwen

Centre for Development of Best Practice in Health, Cameroon

Funding provided by: Cricket Without Boundaries (CWB)



Background

Cameroon is one of the countries with highest HIV/AIDS rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, with prevalence of 4.3% and reaching 8.8% in certain regions. HIV awareness rates have improved in recent years.

Objectives

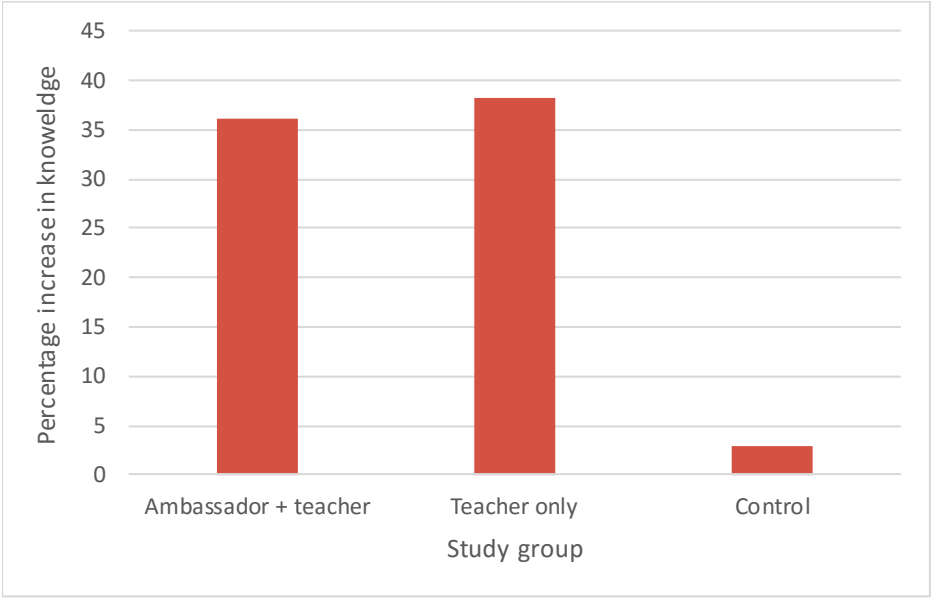
To measure change in knowledge, intention and behavior for HIV prevention in school kids in Cameroon using a Cricket games intervention.

Methods

We conducted a cluster randomized control trial of 13 schools in the city of Bamenda in Cameroon for change in knowledge and intention on sexually related HIV prevention approach. The 3-arm study consisted of group 1 where a cricket ambassador was attached to a school to further strengthen skills in cricket and HIV/AIDS prevention messages in addition to school sports teacher, group 2 with school sports teacher coaching only and group 3 a control group with standard national approach to HIV prevention. Data was collected at baseline, 1 month, 3 months and 6 months’ post intervention.

Results

A total of 909 students participated in the study. Analysis suggest cricket games increased knowledge by 36.1% when cricket games with ambassadors was used; by 38.2% when teachers only was used and by 2.9% when standard national approach was used. There was no difference in intention. The ambassador schools arm could reach out the most of students (444 students) as compared to the cricket only and control arms (250 and 209 students respectively).



Conclusion

Based on behavior change technics (BCT) taxonomy by Abraham and Michie, this intervention utilized 3 BCTs – prompt intention formation, teach to use prompts and cues, and prompt practice. However, measuring behavior change around issues of sexuality poses atypical challenges because young people will be timid in disclosing sexual behaviors. In our context, while the boys may claim sexual activity when in fact there has been no sexual activity, the girls may claim sexual inactivity when in fact there had been sexual activity. It is therefore important to conduct more unobtrusive observational studies and develop creative approaches in measuring behavior change in sexuality.

