

UMSAEP UMSL-UWC
Visit to St. Louis Nov 13th –Nov 28th 2021
African Men for Culture & Education (AM4CE): An Explorative Cultural Comparison of
Male Success with Traditional Initiation.

Submitted by
Dr. Anam Nyembezi
Senior Lecturer
School of Public Health
Faculty of Community and Health Sciences
University of Western Cape

UMSL Host:
Dr. Timothy Mikando Makubuya
Assistant Professor, Health Physical Education & Exercise Science
Department of Educator Preparation and Leadership
College of Education, University of Missouri- St. Louis (UMSL)

November 14, 2022

Overview

I'm extremely thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with other international faculty members through the grant fund provided by the University of Missouri-South African Education Program (UMSAEP). The UMSAEP grant provided me with the opportunity to visit University of Missouri-St. Louis in Great St. Louis Region of Midwestern USA last year. During my visit (November 13, 2021th- November 28th, 2021), I interacted with Dr. T. Mikando Makubuya. Our interactions during my visit to St. Louis was not the first one, as my host had already visited and worked with me in Cape Town.

Our engagements have also demonstrated our long-term commitment for a long collaboration to enhance our scholarship around African male identity, initiation and traditional male circumcision (ITMC) practices and masculinity. Although our initial plans were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we utilized this opportunity to strengthen our collaborations and networks with other scholar in the field, such as Dr. Moses Okumu from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign. Dr. Okumu is an expert in the field of youth violence, mental health and his expertise allowed us to obtain a unique perspective on such issues, and how they impact African youth in Uganda, Kenya and South Africa. We were there invited to submit a manuscript on our work, "Newspaper coverage on ITMC and violence: a global perspective, by the Archives in Sexual behaviors journal.

As indicated in my UMSAEP application, the purpose of this visit was;

1. To explore an international partnership between the School of Public Health at UWC and the College of Education at UMSL that might promote the development of male support initiates for male students of African descent at UMSL and within the Greater St. Louis.

2. To consult with various faculty and stakeholders regarding the ways in which UWC and UMSL might collaborate to promote education and cultural exchange among African men.
3. To promote the collaboration and further the outreach to communities in Uganda and Kenya, where circumcision is rampant.
4. To explore collaborations for research in other areas with UMSL faculty especially in minority health, mental health, sexual health, substance abuse and other youth risk behaviors, and how they impact academic performance.
5. To share my knowledge and current research in areas of mental health among circumcised men.
6. To expand my knowledge about the African Diaspora culture, education, and health systems in ways that they meet needs of their differing populations.

Status of Proposed Objectives

My initial visit to St. Louis was timely and it created new opportunities that continue to lay foundation for the AM4CE program as it provided an avenue for continuous discussion and programming with my collaborator. This proposed project is intended for conducting both in-depth individual interviews and focus groups among men of African origin and to disseminate findings through presentations and scholarly publications such as manuscripts, books and scholarly presentations on the proposed topic(s).

1. I was able to explore partnerships with faculty at the School of Public Health and UWC through formal and informal discussions and I was able to identify students graduate students in St. Louis, who are working in the field but with similar research agendas in areas of mental health, violence and male circumcision.
2. I was able to engage in deeper conversations with my host and other stakeholders in African Diaspora's health and mental wellbeing through the African Men for Culture and Education platforms.
3. Since I left St. Louis, Dr. Makubuya, myself and our graduate student assistant have been able to initiate informal collaborations that will be vital to support our outreach communities in Uganda, Kenya and South Africa.
4. To date, we have been approached by one UMSL Faculty, Dr. Andresa De Souza, who connected us to another international visiting scholar from with interest in studying violence and African Initiation practices, with a unique lens in sports.
5. I was able to give a lecture at the University of Missouri-St. Louis Black Faculty and Staff Association meeting as "The Dr. Jerome E. Morris Public Lecture".
6. My host(s) in St. Louis treated me to local African an African American Cuisine, as well as introduce me to Afro-Caribbean culture through foods, music and other cultural

engagements. This expanded my knowledge of how the Social Determinants of health impact diverse groups of African people that are scattered globally.

Timeline of Activities and Meetings

- Nov 14- Anam Arrived in St. Louis
- Nov 15- Pick up Check and Airport Shuttle
- Nov 16- Rest Day
- Nov 17- Meet with Dr. Makubuya in conference Room
- Nov 17-Attend the UMSL Black Faculty and Staff Association Meeting
- Nov 17-Dr. Nyembezi gives a lecture on
- Nov 18-Dr. Nyembezi meets with graduate students from Saint Louis University's School of Public Health and University of Missouri-St. Louis's College of Education
- Nov 19-Interviews
- Nov 20-Interviews
- Nov 21-Data Analysis
- Nov 22-Data Analysis
- Nov 23-Data Analysis
- Nov 24-Manuscript Drafting
- Nov 25-Manuscript sent to friendly editor
- Nov 26- Preparation for Departure
- Nov 27-Dr. Nyembezi departs for South Africa

Summary

The AM4CE program is a promising project for both myself and my colleague and host. As early career faculty, I believe that this is an opportunity to design a long term trajectory of research ideas that would span from the AM4CE proposed objectives. The UMSAEP investment will not only be impactful to us, but also to the students at UMSL and UWC, and the communities in various South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and the U.S.

Presentations:

Nyembezi, A. (2021): Keynote: The Dr. Jerome E. Morris Public Lecture: Unmet Mental Health Priorities among Vulnerable groups

Nyembezi, A. & Makubuya, T. (February 2019). Current Thinking & Practices in Health Promotion: Intervention Planning for Health Promotion (Setting Aims and Goals). *Lecture at School of Public Health, University of Western Cape: Western Cape, South Africa.*

Publications:

Makubuya, T., Nyembezi, A., Kibii, K. (Under Review). Newspaper coverage of Initiation and Traditional Circumcision in South Africa. *Archives of Sexual Behavior.*

Moving Forward

1. Await review results for our manuscript
2. Draft our next manuscript
3. Brainstorm a book project
4. Write commentaries on this topic to appear in international outlets

Other Relevant Activities

In addition, I was introduced to UMSL faculty in the Department of Educator Preparation and Department of Education Sciences and Professional Programs at the College of Education Meeting by my host Dr. Makubuya and had a discussion on a possibility for future scholarly engagements.

References

- Bulled, N., & Green, E.C. (2006). Making voluntary medical circumcision a viable HIV prevention strategy in high prevalence countries by engaging the traditional sector. *Critical Public Health*, 26(3), 258-268.
- Boyle, G. (2015). Circumcision of Infants and Children: Short-Term Trauma and Long-Term Psychosexual Harm. *Advances in Sexual Medicine*, 5, 22-38
- Gaskill, R.L. and Perry, B.D. (2012) Child Sexual Abuse, Traumatic Experiences and Their Effect on the Developing Brain. In: Goodyear-Brown, P., Ed., *Handbook of Child Sexual Abuse: Identification, Assessment and Treatment*, Wiley, New York, 29-49
- Beggs, S., Currie, G., Salter, M.W., Fitzgerald, M. and Walker, S.M. (2003) Priming of Adult Pain Responses by Neo- natal Pain Experience: Maintenance by Central Neuroimmune Activity. *Brain*, 135, 404-417. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/brain/awr288>
- Cansever, G. (1965) Psychological Effects of Circumcision. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 38, 321-331. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8341.1965.tb01314.x>
- Chamberlain, D.B. (1989). Babies Remember Pain. *Pre-and Perinatal Psychology Journal*, 3, 297-310
- Chamberlain, D.B. (1995). Birth and the Origins of Violence. *Pre-and Perinatal Psychology Journal*, 10, 57-74
- Mogotlane, S.m., Ntlangulela, J.T., & Ogunbanjo, B.g.A. (2004). Mortality and morbidity among traditionally circumcised Xhosa boys in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa. *Curations*, 27(2), 57-62

Moodley, K., & Rennie, S. (2007). Penile transplantation as an appropriate response to botched traditional circumcisions in South Africa: an argument against. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, medethics-2016-103515.

Paley, J. & Alpert, J. (2003). Memory of Infant Trauma. *Psychanalytic Psychology*, 20, 329-347

Sabet Sarvestani, A., Bufumbo, L., Geiger, J. D., & Sienko, K. H. (2012). Traditional Male Circumcision in Uganda: A Qualitative Focus Group Discussion Analysis. *PLoS ONE*, 7(10). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0045316>

[Ssekubugu, R., Leontsini, E., Wawer, M. J., Serwadda, D., Kigozi, G., Kennedy, C.E....Gray, R.H. \(2013\). Contextual barriers and motivators to adult male medical circumcision in Rakai, Uganda. *Qualitative Health Research*, 23\(6\), 795-804](#)

[Venters, H., Adekugbe, O., Massaquoi, J., Nadeau, C., Saul, J. & Gany, F. \(2011\). Mental health concerns among African Immigrants. *Journal of Immigrant Minority Health*, 13\(4\), 795-797](#)

Vincent, L. (2008). Cutting tradition: The political regulation of traditional circumcision rites in South Africa's liberal democratic order. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34(1), 77-91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070701832890>