

MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN CAMEROON: RESULTS FROM AN INTEGRATED BEHAVIORAL AND BIOLOGICAL STUDY IN YAOUNDE AND DOUALA

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Homosexuality is still a big controversy in Africa. In most of the countries same sex relations is socially banned and in some places highly prohibited by law. In Cameroon, it is heavily stigmatized. In 2011, with USAID support through HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (HAPP) an integrated behavioral and biological survey was conducted in Yaoundé and Douala to measure the HIV and syphilis prevalence and the level of the condom use among MSM in Yaounde and Douala.

Objective:

The objective of this communication is to present the profil of MSM in Yaounde and Douala, the level of condom use and the HIV prevalence.

Methods:

The data were collected in 2011 using a Respondent Driven Sampling approach. Six seeds were primarily selected in each city in such a way to have in the final sampling the various social representations of the MSM community. In Douala one recruitment chain died out and was replaced (figure 1). The total sample size were respectively 239 and 272 in Yaounde and Douala.

The study design was approved

Descriptive analyses were conducted in RDSAT. Point estimates were produced for HIV and syphilis prevalence, condom use, lubricant use, HIV testing and number of sexual partners in the last 12 month.

Results:

The results showed that in Yaoundé and Douala, respectively 57% and 67% of MSM had between 18 and 24 years old. They were educated and at least 80% were are single in both cities. At least 60% self-identified as bisexual whereas at around 20% said they were gay. Around 45% were insertives, 30% receptives and 20% versatiles. Thirty seven percent and 30% in Yaoundé and Douala respectively had 4 sexual partners and more in the last 12 months. One MSM out of three used condom in their last sexual intercourse with a man in Yaoundé and 49% did so in Douala.

Around 50% had sex with women and 15% had sex in group in the last 12 months. Around 45% in Yaoundé and 30% in Douala didn't regularly use a water-based lubricant. In Yaoundé, 44% were HIV + and in Douala, they were are 24%.

Figure 1 : Recruitment chain in Douala

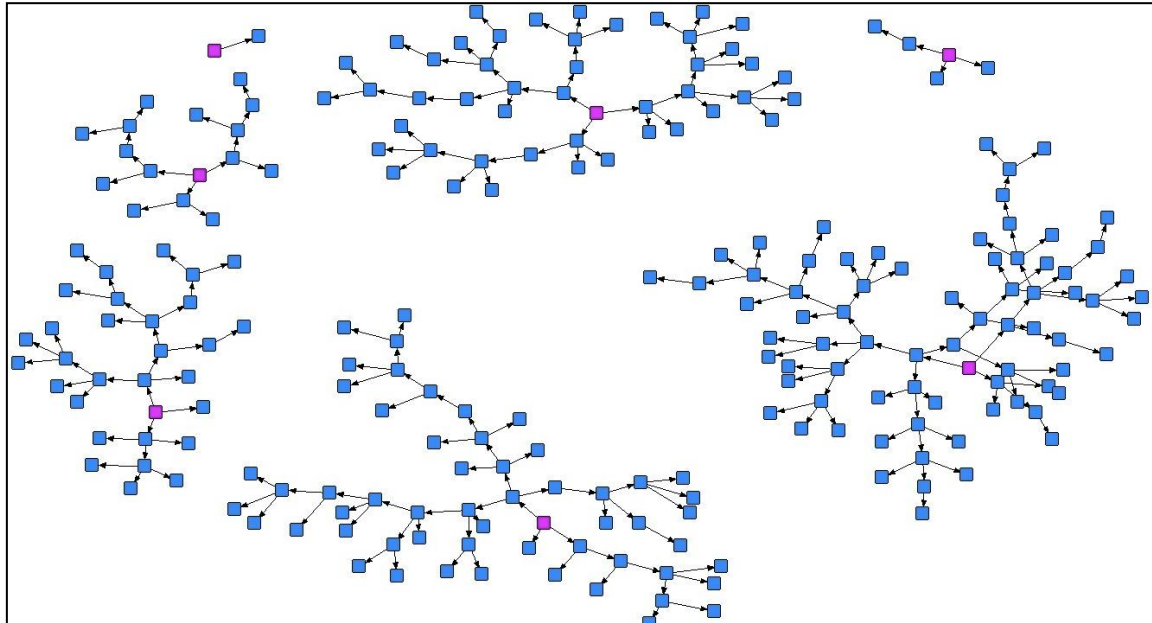


Table1: Characteristics				
	Yaoundé		Douala	
	%	IC 95%	%	IC 95%
Age groups				
18-24	57,0	(48,8 - 67,6)	67,3	(58,4 - 75,2)
25-30	31,8	(21,2 - 36,9)	20,9	(14,5 - 29,4)
30+	11,2	(7,4 - 18,6)	11,8	(6,7 - 17,3)
Median (Minimum-Maximum)	25(18-47)		23(18-51)	
Instruction				
No education or Primary	2,6	(0,2 - 6,9)	6,3	(3 - 10,2)
Secondary	72,1	(63,7 - 79,1)	71,1	(63,5 - 78,3)
University	25,4	(18,4 - 33,4)	22,6	(15,9 - 30)
Marital status				
Single	85,2	(79 - 90,9)	83,8	(78,1 - 91,1)
Homosexual union	7,7	(3,4 - 13,1)	9,5	(3,9 - 14)
Heterosexual union	6,9	(3,1 - 11,7)	6,4	(2,2 - 11,6)
Divorced/separed/widower	0,1	(0 - 0,3)	0,2	(0 - 0,5)

Table 2 : Syphilis and VIH prevalence				
	Yaoundé		Douala	
	%	IC 95%	%	IC 95%
Had syphilis	0,3	(0 - 0,5)	1,4	(0 - 2,3)
VIH+	44,3	(31,3 - 53,2)	24,2	(16 - 31,2)

Conclusion:

These results showed that MSM in Yaoundé and Douala were very young and had multiple sexual partners. Condom use is quite low and a lot of them didn't usually use a water-based lubricant. The HIV prevalence is very high especially in Yaoundé. These results suggested that HIV prevention and treatment care should be tailored and intensified among MSM in Cameroon. The activities should primarily target young MSM and the city of Yaoundé.