

## Perceptions of Mothers on Their Role in the Prevention of the Spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus to Their Children and Childcare Received in the Healthcare Facility in a Rural Area

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**Abstract :** Introduction: Mother-to-child transmission persists owing to inadequate implementation of prevention of mother-to-child transmission programmes, particularly in rural areas. To achieve a target of zero new HIV infection in children born from women living with HIV, the involvement of mothers and caregivers is undeniable. Therefore, there is a need to explore the views of the mothers because of the role they play in their own right when it comes to preventing their children from contracting HIV by consistently adhering to the guidelines of the prevention of mother-to-child transmission programme. Thus, this study sought to explore and describe the perceptions of mothers on their role in the prevention of HIV to their children exposed to HIV and further explore their perceptions of the childcare received in the healthcare facility. Methods: The study was conducted in November-December 2019 in Ngaka Modiri Molema in North West Province in South Africa. A qualitative exploratory, descriptive research design was used. Purposive sampling was used to select the mothers of children exposed to HIV during the mother's clinic attendance. Data collection was done through semi-structured individual interviews with mothers of children exposed to HIV. Colaizzi's method of data analysis was used to analyse data in this study. Results: Seven themes emerged from data analysis, namely: health benefits from coming to the healthcare facility, communication, information needs, attitude of healthcare workers, healthcare administration system, the role of a mother, and disclosure of HIV status. Conclusion: This study revealed systematic gaps that exist in the programme, which hinder the childcare services of children exposed to HIV and socio-economically related hindrances. Mothers' roles, such as exclusive breastfeeding, taking their own medication, and child follow-up visits, remain inadequate. The study findings show that there is a need to develop a contextual-tailored intervention strategy that would improve the implementation of prevention of mother-to-child transmission in rural areas.

**Keywords :** children exposed to HIV, mothers' role to prevent MTCT, mothers' perceptions on childcare, PMTCT in rural areas

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