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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PREDICTORS OF SELF-EFFICACY FOR CONDOM USE AND SEXUAL NEGOTIATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH

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INTRODUCTION: The objectives of this study were:

- 1) to identify potential predictors of self-efficacy for sexual negotiation and condom use in a sample of South African youth, and
- 2) to describe how predictors of self-efficacy may differ by gender.

METHODS: Our sample included all sexually active youth ($n=7,686$) from the Reproductive Health Research Unit (RHRU) National Youth Survey, a nationally representative household survey of South African youth aged 15-24. Frequencies, chi-squares and logistic regression were used to identify significant predictors of self-efficacy stratified by gender, as well as to determine the association between self-efficacy and condom use at last sex.

RESULTS: High self-efficacy was associated with increased odds of condom use in males (AOR 3.26, 95% CI 2.06-5.15) and in females (AOR 2.59, 95% CI 1.98-3.39). Significant predictors of self-efficacy differed by gender. Factors associated with high self-efficacy in females included HIV knowledge (AOR 1.96, 95% CI 1.08-3.57), speaking with others about HIV (AOR 1.94, 95% CI 1.30-2.90), having future goals (AOR 2.60, 95% CI 1.52-4.43) and a positive outlook on life (AOR 1.41, 95% CI 1.02-1.97). Both females and males had reduced odds of reporting high self-efficacy if they had a history of unwanted sex (AOR 0.56, 95% CI 0.40-0.79 females and AOR 0.65, 95% CI 0.48-0.88 males), if they would not be friends with someone with HIV (AOR 0.55, 95% CI 0.31-0.98 females and AOR 0.30, 95% CI 0.16-0.59 males), and if they believe

that condoms indicate mistrust (AOR 0.45, 95% CI, 0.32-0.63 females and AOR 0.53, 95% CI 0.37-0.73 males).

CONCLUSIONS: High self-efficacy was significantly associated with condom use at last sex. Predictors of self-efficacy varied by gender, suggesting that interventions to improve self-efficacy for women should be aimed at increasing HIV knowledge, communication, and self-esteem, while targeting negative attitudes toward condom use and stigma may be more effective interventions for men.

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