

**USES OF PREVENTION OF MOTHER-TO-CHILD
TRANSMISSION OF HIV SERVICES: A STUDY OF
HIV-POSITIVE WOMEN IN YINING, XINJIANG, CHINA**

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M. A. (HEALTH SOCIAL SCIENCE)

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ABSTRACT

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) is an important way to reduce children getting HIV. This study focuses on the use of PMTCT services by pregnant women with HIV and how HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination and gender inequalities influenced their behavior.

The data of this study was obtained from Yining, a town in Xinjiang with a population which is 41% Uigur. The data is derived from qualitative research, in-depth interviews and observation. The key informants included twenty-one women with HIV, six of their husbands, three service providers, and two local people in Yining society.

Most women did not refuse the use of PMTCT services. The biggest barrier to using PMTCT services is the quality of prenatal care and PMTCT services. Stigma and discrimination towards HIV/AIDS comes from service providers, their family members, women themselves, and the community. The strongest stigma and discrimination comes from service providers. Stigma and discrimination limited women with HIV to access PMTCT services, and made them suffer from their experiences in hospital. Based on the cultural understanding of HIV/AIDS, women try to carefully conceal the information on their HIV positive status. The majority of women in this study contracted HIV from their husbands or ex-husbands. Condoms were rarely used in the families. Men had dominant power to make decisions in the families. In cases where the husband was HIV negative, the wife suffered domestic violence. All husbands supported their wives in using PMTCT services. The main reason was that the husband wanted to have a healthy baby free from HIV.

We should use culturally specific methods for health education in ethnic minority areas. Reducing the stigma and discrimination shown by service providers becomes an urgent task to improve the utilization of PMTCT services in Yining. A supportive and understanding husband is an important factor in the shaping of a pregnant woman's decision to use PMTCT services.

KEY WORDS: PMTCT SERVICES/WOMEN WITH HIV/STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION/GENDER INEQUALITY

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