

A Review of the Underlying Factors Influencing Female Genital Mutilation in Africa

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KEYWORDS Cluster. Genital-Mutilation. International. MDGS. Survey

ABSTRACT Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a re-occurring decimal in Africa. This phenomenon is estimated to occur in over twenty-five (25) countries in Africa. It is further estimated that FGM has been performed on nearly two million adolescent women globally and more than two million adolescent women probably undergo this process on a yearly basis. This paper compared FGM features across five African countries. UNICEF and WHO datasets were used in the analysis. Results show that selected variables swayed the FGM choices differently for each of the five countries used as case studies. Furthermore, results indicate that the FGM is anchored in cultural, religious and traditional processes. If religious and cultural dynamics are ignored, the outright use of laws and education policy framework would be less effective in mitigating the practice. The paper recommends that in addition to legislation and education, a re-orientation of norms and values of African leaders, both traditional and religious, could lower the prevalence of FGM..