Factors Involved in the Choice between Surgery and Couching for Cataract Treatment in northern Ghana

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Introduction

Couching

Schematic of the couching procedure.
Methods

Study Site

• Rural areas surrounding Tamale, Ghana (population: 2 million)

1 ophthalmologist
Methods

Data collection and analysis

Study population

16 participants, Dagomba,
Age 69, M:F 3:2, Muslim,
No formal education, Poverty likelihood: 60.8
Results

Findings related to the couching procedure

• Procedure had occurred up to 20 years prior

• Cost varied
  ▫ 1/2 paid in cash
  ▫ 1/4 non-monetary
  ▫ 1/4 could not recall

• 4/5 same male coucher

• Visual Outcome
  ▫ Bilateral
  ▫ Better, Worse/complications,
  ▫ Better only immediately after
Results

Beliefs related to cause of eye disease

- Did not know
- Witchcraft
- God’s will
- Occupation as farmers
- Smoke
- Old age
- dirgu (pain in the head)
Factors involved in the choice of couching

Factors grouped according to internal or external origin

1) External: influential people
2) Internal: previous treatment experience

+ Barriers to hospital treatment
Results

Factors involved in the choice of couching

External: influential people
Results

Factors involved in the choice of couching

*Internal: previous treatment experience*
Discussion

Important points:

• Availability of an ophthalmologist is a minor factor?

• 63% of participants reported better vision following couching?

• Cost is a minor factor?
Thank-you!
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