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The role of interpreter during qualitative data set collection in the context of the evaluation of the Gundo-So program

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Context

- The Gundo-So program is an intervention that aims to empower Malian women living with HIV (WLHIV) through supporting them in their decision-making process to disclose their serological status or not.
- The French study ANRS 12373 Gundo So is an evaluation of the impact of the Gundo-So program, which takes place from 2019 to 2021.
- To understand the effects of participating in the study, qualitative data for WLHIV were collected through semi-structured interviews.

Methods

- Interviews were performed by French-speaking researchers
- A Bambara interpreter was present during interviews to enable participants to adequately express themselves as many women did not speak French fluently.
- The interpreter's work during the interviews was observed.
- Interviews were fully retranscribed and her interventions were analysed.

Results

The interpreter's work filled different functions during the interviews:



She played a role in **the meaning** she communicated to the researchers of participants' discourses. She translates and adapted the questions to be understood



She also proved to be a **source of new information**. In particular, she enhanced some participant responses with explanations about Malian cultural traditions, and changed some words to improve comprehension.



She was also sources of **some bias** during the interviews : asked some questions, guided the answer etc. She omitted or summarized some information depending on what she felt was important or not to communicate.

Conclusion

- ⇒ Interpreters play a **key role in the comprehension and interpretation** of patients' discourses. They are necessary in some contexts.
- ⇒ They are also an advantage, as they **bring greater cultural awareness and therefore greater understanding** of the different issues at stake on the ground.
- ⇒ But they may be perceived as **bringing bias to scientific studies**.

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