

Abstract

The factors influencing widows' sexual practices have been attributed culture, poverty, and biology without examining the dynamic nature of these factors. This study described these factors. The study was guided by Social Exchange Theory. This theory explains the alternative courses of action while guided by cost-benefit considerations. A cross sectional research design was used in the study. The study population comprised of widows living with HIV and AIDS receiving care and support in Kondele location. Non probability /purposive sampling procedures were used to identify and recruit study participants. The study conducted 17 key informant interviews, 20 individual in-depth interviews and 4 Focus Group Discussion (FGDs). A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 105 respondents to obtain quantitative data. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) Version 18.0 was used for data analysis. MS Excel software was used to present frequencies, percentages, tables, pie charts, and bar graphs. Qualitative data was analyzed using ethnographic content analysis. The findings show that the sexual practices were influenced by biological, economic, psychological, social, cultural and physical factors. Psychological factors were found to influence sexual anesthesia, as there were no widows who experienced total sexual abstinence. The study recommends to policy makers and HIV/AIDS program implementers to include widows living with HIV and AIDS in the list of key populations. Further to this, the study recommends remarriage for young widows as this will assist them manage their sexual desires, fulfill culture and get male companionship.