

Risk sexual behaviors and consistent condom use among adults living with HIV/AIDS in Mtwara Urban District, Tanzania

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Abstract

Objective: People living with HIV/AIDS, aware or unaware of their sero-status, form the main source of HIV transmission. Risk sexual behaviors among HIV infected persons have been studied in different parts of the world, with considerable variations and contexts. Regular efforts to study their behaviors are imperative in the struggle to mitigate the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We set out to determine risk behaviors and condom use among people living with HIV/AIDS in Mtwara urban district in Tanzania.

Methods: Through a systematic sampling method, we selected 240 adults living with HIV/AIDS attending care and treatment centres in Mtwara urban district. We used an interview schedule to collect data from the respondents after individual verbal consent. Multivariate logistic regression models were employed to assess correlates of condom use.

Results: The mean age of respondents was 40.9 (± 10.3 SD) years, and 164 (68.4%) were female. Majority were married or cohabiting and had primary education. Sexual debut was generally early, with 43.3% and 42.1% of female and male respondents respectively reporting sexual debut before 18 years. All respondents had multiple sexual partners prior to HIV diagnosis, while only 6.7% of female and 15.8% of male reported having multiple sex partnerships post diagnosis. Consistent condom use increased significantly post HIV diagnosis, from 9.2% to 35.4% ($p < 0.0001$) among female and from 8.1% to 25.8% ($p = 0.013$) among males. Having post primary education increased the odds of using condom in the last sex (aOR 4.3, 95% CI: 1.1–17.5).

Conclusion: People living with HIV/AIDS in Mtwara reduced number of sex partners significantly post HIV testing. Although the proportion using condom consistently post HIV diagnosis increased significantly, findings suggest that condom use in this population is not a common practice, leading to an increased risk of re-infection and infecting their partners. We therefore recommend for more research to document motivational factors for using condom especially among people diagnosed with HIV infection.

Keywords: Sexual behavior, condom use, people living with HIV/AIDS