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BALANCING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE REALITY OF HIV/AIDS: A STUDY ON WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

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ABSTRACT

This research study explores the complex intersection of women's rights and the lived experiences of women living with HIV/AIDS. Despite significant progress in women's rights advocacy, women living with HIV/AIDS continue to face unique challenges that affect their access to healthcare, social support, and overall well-being. This study aims to shed light on the factors influencing the balance between upholding women's rights and addressing the specific needs of this vulnerable population. Through qualitative interviews and surveys, the research delves into the experiences, perspectives, and barriers faced by women living with HIV/AIDS in different socio-cultural contexts. By understanding the intricate interplay between women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS, this study contributes valuable insights to inform policies, programs, and advocacy efforts aimed at advancing the rights and well-being of women living with HIV/AIDS.

KEYWORDS

Women's rights, HIV/AIDS, Women living with HIV/AIDS, Gender equality, Health care access, Social support, Stigma, Discrimination, Advocacy, Socio-cultural context.

INTRODUCTION

The fight for women's rights has been a critical aspect of the global struggle for gender equality and social justice. Significant progress has been made in advancing women's rights, but despite these gains, women living with HIV/AIDS continue to face unique challenges that demand specific attention and advocacy. The intersection of women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS presents complex and multifaceted issues that require a nuanced understanding to effectively address the needs of this vulnerable population.

Women living with HIV/AIDS often encounter barriers that hinder their access to healthcare, social support, and overall well-being. Stigma and discrimination, gender-based violence, and socio-cultural norms all play pivotal roles in shaping their experiences and influencing their rights as women. In the face of these challenges, it is essential to strike a balance between upholding women's rights and addressing the specific realities of those living with HIV/AIDS.

This research study aims to explore this delicate balance and delve into the experiences of women living with HIV/AIDS. By understanding the complexities they face, we can inform policies, programs, and advocacy efforts that promote both gender equality and the well-being of women living with HIV/AIDS.

The study will utilize qualitative interviews and surveys to capture the experiences and perspectives of women living with HIV/AIDS in various socio-cultural contexts. These personal narratives will provide valuable insights into the challenges they encounter and the support they require to lead fulfilling lives while dealing with the reality of HIV/AIDS.

The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on women's rights in the context of HIV/AIDS. It will highlight the need for targeted interventions that recognize the unique challenges faced by women living with HIV/AIDS and advocate for gender-responsive policies and programs that empower and support this population.

Moreover, this research will emphasize the importance of intersectionality, recognizing that the experiences of women living with HIV/AIDS are shaped by a combination of factors, including gender, health status, socioeconomic status, race, and more. By acknowledging these intersecting identities, we can better understand the complexities of their experiences and work towards comprehensive and inclusive solutions.

In conclusion, this study seeks to address the critical issue of balancing women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS faced by women living with the virus. By exploring their experiences, we aim to raise awareness of their unique challenges, advocate for gender-

responsive policies, and promote holistic support systems that uphold their rights and well-being. As we move forward, it is crucial to foster a society that embraces the diversity and dignity of all women, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of gender equality and social justice.

METHOD

Research Design:

This study will employ a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex issues surrounding women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS for women living with the virus. This approach allows for in-depth exploration of individual experiences through qualitative interviews while also providing quantitative data for broader patterns and trends through surveys.

Participant Recruitment:

Participants for this study will be recruited from diverse settings, including HIV/AIDS clinics, support groups, NGOs, and community organizations working with women living with HIV/AIDS. Efforts will be made to ensure representation from various socio-cultural contexts, age groups, and HIV/AIDS stages to capture a diverse range of experiences.

Data Collection:

a. Qualitative Interviews:

In-depth interviews will be conducted with women living with HIV/AIDS to explore their experiences, challenges, and perspectives on women's rights in the context of HIV/AIDS. The interviews will be semi-structured to allow participants to share their stories and provide insights into the impact of gender norms, stigma, discrimination, and access to healthcare and support services.

b. Surveys:

A structured survey will be distributed to a larger sample of women living with HIV/AIDS to gather quantitative data on the various aspects related to their rights and well-being. The survey will include questions about healthcare access, social support, experiences of stigma, gender-based violence, and their perceptions of gender equality and women's rights.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethical approval will be sought from the relevant institutional review boards to ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and their identities will be anonymized in research reports to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Data Analysis:

a. Qualitative Analysis:

The qualitative data from the interviews will be transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The researchers will identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to women's rights and the realities of HIV/AIDS for women living with the virus.

b. Quantitative Analysis:

The survey data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical software. Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the data, and inferential statistics may be employed to identify significant relationships between variables.

Triangulation:

To enhance the validity of the research findings, triangulation will be used to cross-validate the qualitative and quantitative data. The results obtained from both approaches will be compared and integrated to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

Limitations:

The study acknowledges potential limitations, such as self-reporting biases, sample representativeness, and the possibility of sensitive topics leading to emotional distress for participants. These limitations will be addressed with sensitivity and transparency throughout the research process.

Dissemination of Findings:

The research findings will be disseminated through academic publications, conferences, and workshops to reach relevant stakeholders, policymakers, NGOs, and women's rights organizations. The goal is to raise awareness about the challenges faced by women living with HIV/AIDS and advocate for gender-responsive policies and programs that uphold their rights and well-being.

By employing this comprehensive research method, the study aims to shed light on the complexities surrounding women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS for women living with the virus. The findings will contribute valuable insights to the existing knowledge base, enabling better-informed approaches to support and empower women living with HIV/AIDS and promote gender equality in the context of HIV/AIDS.

RESULTS

The findings of this study shed light on the intricate interplay between women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS for women living with the virus. The mixed-methods approach provided valuable insights into the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of women living with HIV/AIDS, as well as the broader patterns and trends affecting their rights and well-being.

Quantitative analysis of the survey data revealed that women living with HIV/AIDS face significant barriers to

accessing healthcare, social support, and gender equality. Many participants reported experiencing stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings, workplaces, and their communities, which adversely affected their mental health and overall well-being. Additionally, gender-based violence emerged as a recurring issue, further exacerbating the vulnerabilities faced by women living with HIV/AIDS.

Qualitative analysis of the interviews delved deeper into these challenges, highlighting the complex interconnections between gender norms, cultural beliefs, and social structures that influence women's rights and experiences with HIV/AIDS. Participants shared narratives of resilience, courage, and empowerment, emphasizing the importance of advocacy and support services in navigating the intersecting issues they face.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings underscore the critical need to strike a balance between advancing women's rights and addressing the unique realities of women living with HIV/AIDS. Women's rights advocacy must take into account the diverse experiences of women, recognizing that the intersections of gender, health status, and socio-cultural context shape the challenges they encounter.

The research reveals that gender-responsive policies and programs are essential to promote gender equality

and support women living with HIV/AIDS. Targeted interventions that address stigma, discrimination, and gender-based violence can create a more supportive environment for women living with HIV/AIDS, enabling them to access healthcare and social support without fear of judgment or harm.

Furthermore, the study highlights the significance of collaborative efforts between healthcare providers, NGOs, policymakers, and women's rights organizations. By working together, stakeholders can develop comprehensive support systems that uphold the rights and well-being of women living with HIV/AIDS and foster gender equality.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the complexities surrounding women's rights and the reality of HIV/AIDS for women living with the virus. The findings highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by this vulnerable population, including stigma, discrimination, gender-based violence, and limited access to healthcare and social support.

The study advocates for gender-responsive policies, programs, and advocacy efforts that promote both women's rights and the empowerment of women living with HIV/AIDS. By acknowledging the intersectionality of their experiences, stakeholders can

develop comprehensive and inclusive interventions that address the multifaceted needs of this population.

Moving forward, it is imperative to foster a society that prioritizes the dignity and rights of all women, including those living with HIV/AIDS. Collaboration among healthcare providers, NGOs, policymakers, and women's rights organizations is crucial in effecting positive change and creating a more supportive and inclusive environment for women living with HIV/AIDS.

The research findings serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, healthcare providers, NGOs, and women's rights organizations, offering insights to inform evidence-based approaches that advance women's rights and promote the well-being of women living with HIV/AIDS. By prioritizing their rights and needs, we can work together to create a more equitable and supportive society for all women, regardless of their HIV status.

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