

# **Deconstructing hegemonic masculinities and promoting prevention altruism and antiretroviral therapy adherence among couples**

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## **Abstract**

Through the use of a netnography research design, this research sets out to explore plausible strategies that can be adopted for adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for the management of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). The research posits that the successful management of HIV and AIDS is hindered by hegemonic masculinities, which accord power to men and subordinate women. Additionally, a number of societal beliefs linked with sociocultural masculine attitudes become repressive to men in terms of their health-seeking behaviour. This results in their disinclination towards disclosure of their HIV status and access to medicinal usage, which consequently affects the health and well-being of their female counterparts. This research acknowledges the importance of ART in managing HIV and AIDS. For HIV-positive persons, ART reduces the viral load and prolongs the timeframe between a diagnosis of the HIV and the AIDS. It prolongs the survival chances of the infected person. In order to promote adherence to ART and to minimise the risk of HIV infection for women, the research advocates for the promotion of prevention altruism as a mechanism for deconstructing hegemonic masculinities to enable the effective management of HIV and AIDS.

**Contribution:** This research recognises the negative interface between hegemonic masculinities and adherence to ART. Hence, the research suggests the practice of prevention altruism for promoting adherence to ART as well as the effective management of HIV and AIDS in a bid to prolong longevity and to promote Sustainable Development Goal 3.

**Keywords:** adherence; antiretroviral therapy; hegemonic masculinities; human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; people living with human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; prevention altruism.