

Sexual Desire and Expression among Girls in a Traditional Shona Context

Calvin Gwandure

*University of the Witwatersrand, Thokozile Mayekiso,
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*

KEYWORDS Sexual Desire. Girls, Expression. Taboo. Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT The study explored sexual fantasy, sexual desire, sexual expression, girl fertility awareness, and *mubobobo* among girls in a traditional Shona context. The study used snowballing technique to recruit participants. Inclusion in the study was voluntary. Teenage girls were asked about their sexuality in the era of HIV and AIDS. The study was qualitative in nature and used thematic content analysis to analyse the data. The girls described their experiences growing up following Shona traditions about puberty, sexual beliefs and practices. The results showed that girls in this study experienced sexual desire, sexual fantasy, sexual expression and some experienced unconscious sexual expression in their sleep. The girls explained how cultural teachings interfered with free sexual expression in adulthood. The findings of this study can be used in the advancement of girl child rights, reproductive health rights and sexual rights activism. Health educators could use the findings of this study in the advocacy for change in legislation on sexual beliefs and the promotion of adolescent sexual health. Further research can focus on sexual expression advocacy in culturally restrictive environments in Africa.