

**Exploring Underpinnings Weighing Down the Phenomenon of  
Adherence to Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARVs) among the People  
Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in South Africa and Botswana:  
A Literature Review**

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**ABSTRACT** It is critical that People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in African countries hard- hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic such as Botswana and South Africa be the cornerstone of a successful HIV/AIDS campaign by taking responsibility and accountability of taking the ARVs according to the drug regimen. Anti-retrovirals (ARVs) are very expensive and drains national coffers immensely that translates to a heavy burden on the tax payers. The aim of this paper is, through a review of literature methodology, to debate and discuss a few underpinnings behind the PLWHA defaulting their drug regimen. The following environment promotes defaulting: poverty and its ramifications such as lack of food; excessive intake of alcohol; capacity of the ARVs to deform body structure; use of both biomedical concoctions and those of traditional healers in tandem; sexual libido emanating to the use of ARVs; and stigma associated with taking ARVs. The paper recommends: strong awareness to strengthen PLWHA ownership of the campaign; immense community support of the PLWHA and the campaign generally; and further research on how to reduce food appetite and sexual libido.