

High Prevalence of First forced Sex and Risk Factor of HIV/AIDS among Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) in South India

Presented by

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- In India, the prevalence of HIV infection has decreased since the last decade.
- But, the prevalence of HIV has increased among MSM in the southern states of India.
- In the Indian context, discussion about sexuality in public is stigmatized and restrained culturally. Consequently, quantitative data among MSM in India is inadequate.
- However, India's nodal agency for prevention and control HIV/AIDS, National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has estimated HIV prevalence in India as 7.4% in 2009 among MSM, which was more than that amongst female sex workers (prevalence - 4.9%).

Objectives

The fundamental objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the prevalence of first forced Sex with male in selected districts of South India.
2. To identify the relationship between first forced sex and HIV infection in selected districts.

Introduction

- Forced sex raises the risk factors of psychological morbidities, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections (STI).
- Previous studies have suggested that experiencing sexual violence in childhood/adulthood has a negative impact on the health of those who experienced it. It also increased the prevalence of HIV infection, physical and mental disability, for instance, depression.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM) are the most exposed population at high risk of HIV/AIDS in the world.
- MSM in developing countries like India are at a high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Why this study is important?

- Numerous studies have been carried out on forced sex and its magnitude on women, but very few studies are available which consider forced sex among Men who have sex with men (MSM).
- There has been no systematic attempt made to know the impact of first forced sex with male and HIV infection.

Data Sources and Sample Size

- The present study has used data of the second series of cross sectional survey known as Integrated Behavioural and Biological Assessment (IBBA) during the period 2009-10.
- The survey was conducted in selected districts of states, namely Andhra Pradesh (East Godavari, Hyderabad, and Vizag), Tamil Nadu (Dharmapuri, Madurai, and Salem) and Maharashtra (Pune and Mumbai/Thane) in India.
- Time location clustering sampling (TLC) methods has used to recruit the MSM participants from cruising sites such as parks and local train stations.
- A sample size of MSM was 3875 in selected districts

Inclusion Criteria

In Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra

- self-identified MSM who were 18 years of age and had any type of sex (oral, anal, and manual) with another man in exchange for cash/kind in the past month.

In Tamil Nadu

- Similar criteria were adopted except the type of sex (anal) with another man in last one month.

Diagnostic criteria:

- Blood and urine samples were collected for HIV/STI diagnosis.

Statistical Analysis

• *Dependent variables:*

Were you forced to have sex during the first sexual encounter with a male? Yes/No

• *Independent Variables:*

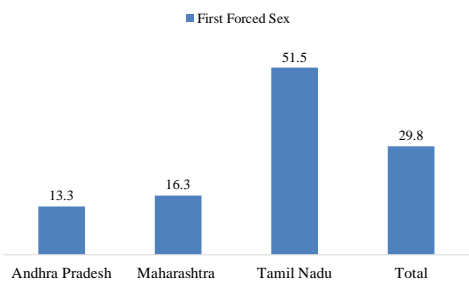
Socio-demographic Characteristics: It includes respondents age, education, self-identity (MSM).

Socioeconomic characteristics, Sexual characteristics and Biological characteristics

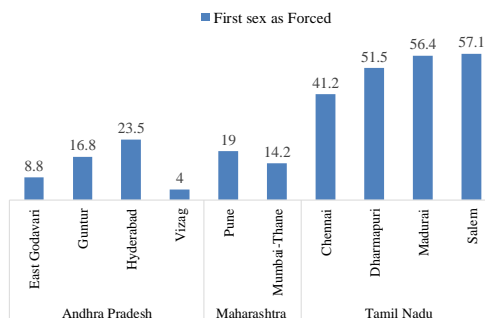
Multivariate Logistic Regression Analysis has been used to see the relationship between first forced sex and HIV infection.

Results

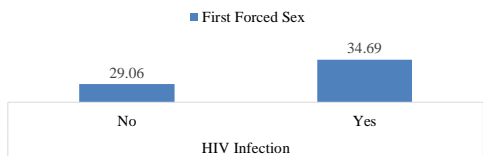
Prevalence of First Forced Sex among MSM in Selected States



Prevalence of First Forced Sex among MSM in selected Districts



HIV infection v/s First Forced Sex



First Forced Sex vs MSM identity

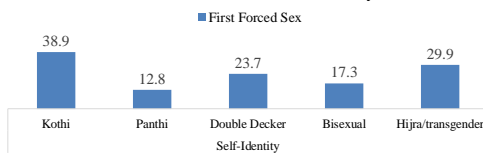
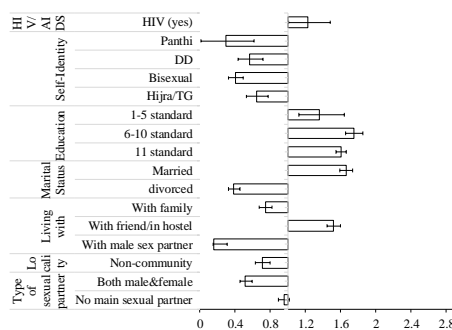


Figure 1: Logistic regression analysis (odds ratio) of first forced sex by their background characteristics among MSM in South India, IBBA, 2009-10.



Summary and Conclusions

- To the author's knowledge, this is the first attempt to examine the association of first forced sex with HIV/AIDS among MSM in India.
- The present study has found a high prevalence of first forced sex (29.8%) among MSM in the southern states of India.
- The study found strong evidence of first forced sex as the risk factor of HIV/AIDS among MSM.
- MSM, who have reported to be living in the hostel or with friends, were more vulnerable to be HIV infected than MSM, who lived alone.
- The present study has found that kothis were more likely to have had first forced sex as compared to other self-identified subpopulation of MSM.
- The study findings revealed that first forced sex was more significantly found within the community among MSM as compared to others.
- There is a need for an innovative program that works with MSM who had first forced sex, and provide proper care to come out of the depression, substance abuse disorder, risky sexual behavior and HIV.

Limitations of Study

- As very limited literature is available on the first forced sex among MSM in India, it's very difficult to compare the findings with the previous literature.
- A second limitation is that the results of the study are totally based on a cross-sectional survey. Very limited questions were available in the survey based on the first forced sex among MSM in South India.

Future Research

1. The study only paves the way for further rigorous research to understand the association of first forced sex on MSM's health and transmission of HIV infection.
2. Future research is required to estimate the prevalence of forced sex and its association with other factors among MSM. This will help to see the impact of violence on the health of MSM.

Thanks