

Impact of Social support on the psychological wellbeing of people living with HIV in Aurangabad District

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Abstract

This study organized to investigate the association between age, gender, social support and the psychological wellbeing of people living with AIDS in Maharashtra. Cross-sectional data containing information on demographics, social support and psychological well-being (stress, depression, and anxiety), collected from 60 men and women living with HIV/AIDS. All participants selected from age range 25-45 year. Three questionnaires used, namely the demographic data questionnaire, Sources of Social Support Scale, and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS- 42). The result indicates that social support was negatively associated with depression, stress and anxiety. Compared with males living with HIV, women reported higher levels of stress, depression and anxiety. Female gender and low social support were significant predictors of depression and stress. Older participants experienced higher levels of stress.

Keywords: AIDS, Social Support, Depression, Stress.

Social support has been shown to be positively related to good health. It is associated with better health outcomes, better coping and less negative effects of stress (Cohen & Syme, 1985). The way through which social support exercise its useful effects are not clear, but its role in getting compliance, improved access to health care, better psychosocial and nutritional status and immune function, and reduction in the levels of stress are very useful (Uchino et al.,1996; Uchino, 2004). Previous studies have found a significant association of social support with psychological and physical concerns for HIV-infected individuals (Leserman et al., 1999; Ostrow et al., 1989). The function of social support is commonly viewed to diminish feelings of helplessness and to boost self-esteem, which in turn reduce stress-related depression (Becker and Schmalings, 1991). According to Unnikrishnan (Unnikrishnan et al., 2012), in India women get very good social

support because of closely knit family system and spouse.

AIDS is one of the most complicated and bewildering social challenges faced by contemporary societies due to its strong ties with sexual and societal stigmatized behavior. Contracting HIV may lead to difficulties related to self-esteem, coping, social isolation, and poor psychological well-being. Vanable et.al.,2006, Parker et.al.2010). By the end of 2009, 33.(UNAIDS & WHO, 2010) million people worldwide were living with HIV; 2.6 million people became newly infected and 1.8 million people had lost their lives to AIDS in the same year.3 With the alarming increase in the HIV/AIDS pandemic in developing countries, and the limited accessibility and availability of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), the majority of people living with HIV continue to suffer with the disease, with a serious impact on their well-being.(Leserman,2008 and Murri et.al.,2003)A considerable amount of research have been