

Association between enacted stigma and HIV related risk behavior among MSM, National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System— 2011

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Background

- Men who have sex with men (MSM) bear a disproportionate burden of the HIV epidemic.
- Enacted stigma (overt negative actions) against sexual minorities may play an important role in increasing HIV risk among this population.
- We report data on the association between measures of enacted stigma and HIV risk.

Methods

Data

- Data from 20 cities that participated in the 2011 National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) among MSM. Venue-based, time-space sampling was used to recruit men for interview and HIV testing.
- Eligibility criteria: male, at least 18 years of age, resident of the urban area where sampled, able to complete the survey in English or Spanish.
- Analyzed data from men who had a completed, valid survey and had a positive or negative HIV test result.

Analysis

- Used separate GEE models with a robust error variance procedure to estimate prevalence ratios and confidence intervals for the independent associations between three self-reported measures of enacted stigma (verbal harassment, discrimination, physical assault) and engagement in each of three sexual risk behaviors in the past 12 months as outcomes: condom-less anal intercourse, ≥4male sex partners, and exchange sex.
- The three models were adjusted for demographic and behavioral characteristics.

NHBS Sites: 2011



Results

Table 1: Selected characteristics of men who have sex with men, National HIV Behavioral Surveillance, 2011

Characteristic	N	%
Age (years)		
18-19	350	3.9
20-24	1906	21.4
25-29	1683	18.9
30-39	2074	23.3
40-49	1816	20.4
50+	1093	12.3
Race/ethnicity		
Black, not Hispanic	2335	26.2
Hispanic	2340	26.3
Other ^a	671	7.5
White, not Hispanic	3553	39.9
Education		
Less than high school graduate	519	5.8
High school diploma or equivalent	2179	24.4
Some college or technical degree	3050	34.2
College degree or postgraduate education	3174	35.6
Annual household income		
≤\$19,999	3035	34.0
\$20,000-\$39,000	2195	24.6
\$40,000-\$74,999	2068	23.2
≥\$75,000	1624	18.2
Region		
South	3394	38.0
Midwest	895	10.0
West	2343	26.3
Territories	364	4.1
Northeast	1926	21.6
Homeless, past 12 months		
Yes	767	8.6
No	8152	91.4
Health insurance		
Yes	6149	69.0
No	2765	31.0
Incarceration, past 12 months^b		
Yes	573	6.4
No	8346	93.6
Sexual identity		
Homosexual or gay	7163	80.6
Bisexual or heterosexual	1729	19.4
Out^d		
Yes	8308	93.1
No	612	6.9
Self-reported HIV positive		
Yes	1113	12.5
No	7806	87.5
TOTAL	8922	100.0

NOTE: Numbers might not add to total because of missing data.

^aIncludes persons who indicated American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, multiple races or other race.

^bHeld in a detention center, jail, or prison for more than 24 hrs.

^cBoston, Nassau, New York City, Newark, Philadelphia=Northeast; Baltimore, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Miami, New Orleans=South; Chicago, Detroit=Midwest; Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego=West; San Juan=US Territories.

^dEver told anyone that you are attracted to or have sex with men?

Figure 1: Enacted stigma among MSM in the past 12 months, National HIV Behavioral Surveillance, 2011

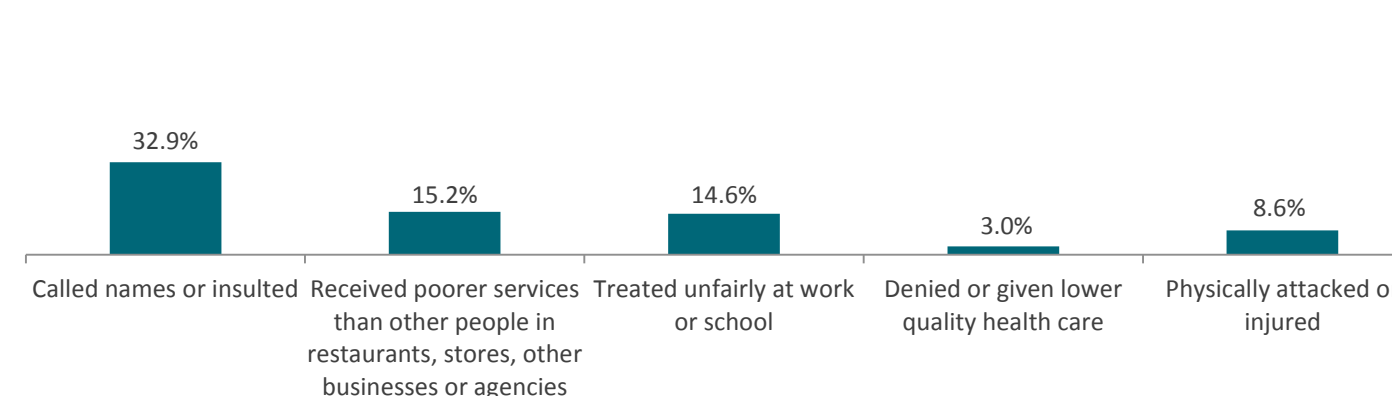


Table 2: Association between enacted stigma and HIV-related risk behavior among MSM, National HIV Behavioral Surveillance, 2011

	Condomless anal sex, past 12 months		4 or more male partners, Past 12 months		Exchange sex ^a , past 12 months	
	aPR (95% CI)	P value	aPR (95% CI)	P value	aPR (95% CI)	P value
Verbal harassment^b						
Yes	1.08 (1.04-1.12)	<0.001	1.14 (1.09-1.20)	<0.0001	1.42 (1.26-1.61)	<0.0001
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Discrimination^c						
Yes	1.09 (1.05-1.14)	<0.0001	1.12 (1.06-1.17)	<0.0001	1.51 (1.32-1.73)	<0.0001
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Physical assault^d						
Yes	1.08 (1.02-1.14)	0.01	1.12 (1.04-1.21)	0.003	1.67 (1.42-1.97)	<0.0001
No	1.00		1.00		1.00	

Note: n= 8423; Those who did not report sex with another man in past 12 months are excluded.

^aExchange sex partners included persons who gave or received things "like money or drugs" in exchange for sex.

^bParticipant had been called names or insulted.

^cParticipants reported receiving poorer services than other people in restaurants, stores, or other businesses or agencies, being treated unfairly at work or school, or being denied or given lower quality health care.

^dParticipant was physically attacked or injured.

Adjusted PR controlled for age, race/ethnicity, education, annual household income, region, sexual identity, outness, self-reported HIV status, health insurance, incarceration in past 12 months. In univariate models, these factors were associated with the enacted stigma variables at P less than 0.1 level.

Limitations

- Participants were recruited at venues in 20 U.S. cities with high AIDS prevalence and are not representative of all MSM.
- Data in this study are not weighted to account for variations in venue attendance or likelihood of being selected to participate in the survey.
- Some participants who had previously been diagnosed with HIV infection may not have reported their positive HIV status, resulting in their inclusion in the analysis.
- Data were self-reported and may have associated biases.
- Findings show an association between enacted stigma and HIV-related risk behavior; however, the directionality of the relationship cannot be ascertained.

Conclusions

- Findings indicate that a sizable proportion of MSM report occurrences of enacted stigma.
- These experiences are associated with HIV risk behavior.
- Interventions to increase the acceptance of sexual minorities may contribute to reductions in sexual risk by reducing the occurrence of stigma events.

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