FORCED SEX IN HAITI: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HIV EPIDEMIC AMONG MSM AND TRANS WOMEN

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BACKGROUND

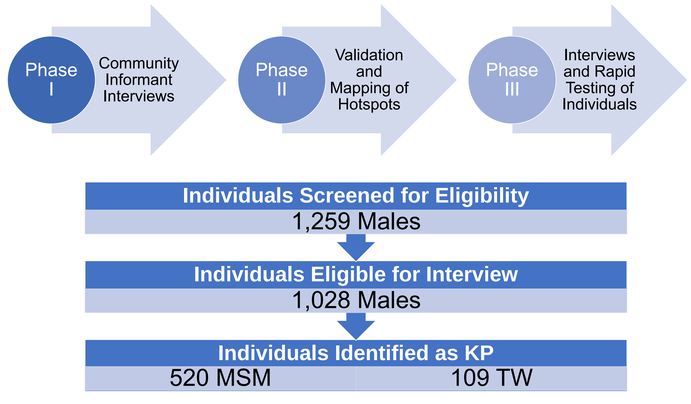
- Research Question: Is there an association between a history of forced sex and HIV prevalence among men who have sex with men and transgender women?

Sexual violence is an often perpetrated, but uncommonly studied risk factor for HIV, particularly among men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women (TW) living in the Caribbean. HIV is thought to be very prevalent among MSM and TW in Haiti; a 2011 study found the HIV prevalence among MSM and TW (study did not differentiate between MSM and TW) was 18.1%.[1] Studies from nearby Jamaica estimate the HIV prevalence among TW to be between 25.2-52.9%.[2-5] Sexual and physical violence are common among MSM in Haiti with 28% reporting history of sexual violence, 39% homophobia-cased assault, and 16% intimate partner violence (IPV).[1] In another study of TW in the Caribbean, 97.6% of participants had experienced gender-based violence.[6]

METHODS

- Social venues were selected using the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (**PLACE**) methodology, a multi-stage sampling design aimed at finding members of key populations (KP) in venues across the country
- 520 MSM and 109 TW were recruited from 2,339 venues where men and women meet new sexual partners
- A bio-behavioral survey and HIV test were administered to all participants

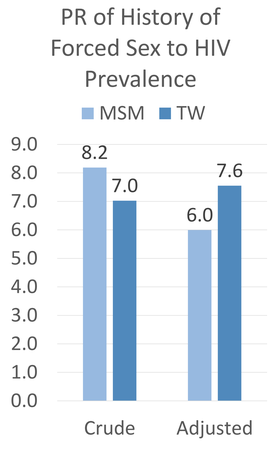
PLACE Method

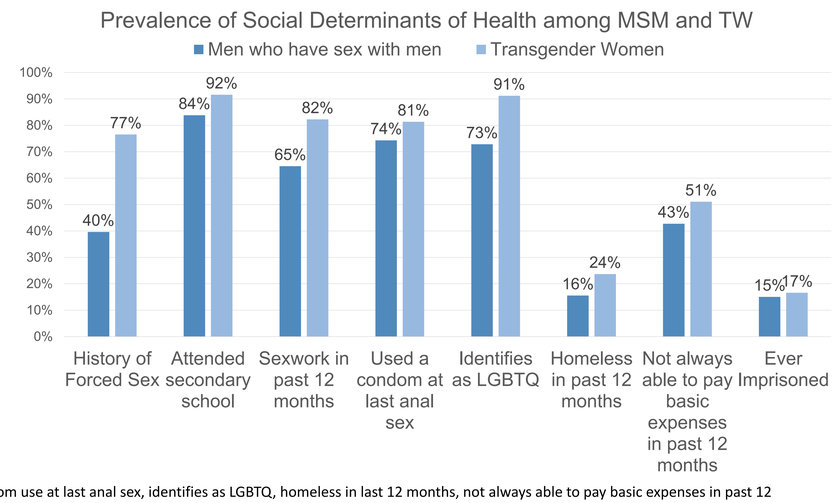


History of forced sex was very common and highly associated with HIV prevalence among MSM and TW in Haiti.

RESULTS

- **HIV prevalence** was **2.2%** (95% CI: 0.9, 5.3) among MSM and **27.6%** (95% CI: 5.0, 73.5) among TW
- **History of Forced Sex** was **39.6%** (95% CI:17.5, 67.1) among MSM and **76.5%** (95% CI:50.9, 91.1) among TW
- The **crude PR between history of forced sex and HIV** was **8.2** (95% CI: 3.1, 21.7) among MSM and **7.0** (95% CI: 1.9, 26.0) among TW; the **adjusted PR** was **6.0** (95% CI: 2.3, 15.4) among MSM and **7.6** (95% CI: 1.4, 39.7) among TW.





Variables adjusted for: age, education, condom use at last anal sex, identifies as LGBTQ, homeless in last 12 months, not always able to pay basic expenses in past 12 months, ever imprisoned, and sex work in the past 12 months. Sex work in the past 12 months was not included in the model for TW due high prevalence of sex work among HIV positive TW which led to sparse data.

CONCLUSIONS

- History of forced sex is associated with a higher prevalence of HIV among MSM and TW than among those without a history of forced sex.
- Understanding the pathways through which this adverse life event influences mental health and sexual risk behaviors can provide evidence for integration of mental health services in HIV prevention efforts among MSM and TW in Haiti.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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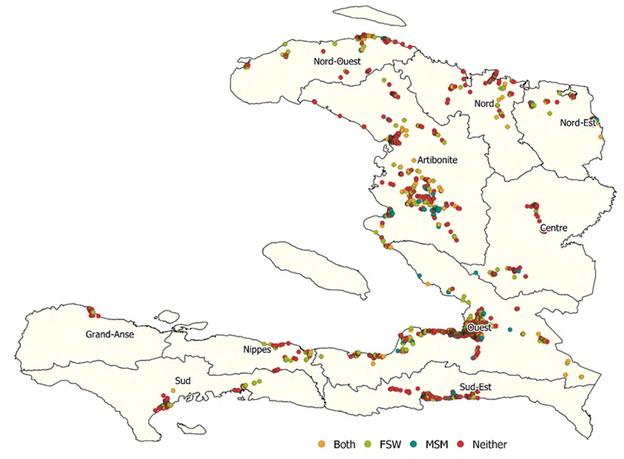
Map of hotspots identified in Haiti by main KP group



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