

Synopsis

- Transgender (TG) people are those whose assigned sex at birth differs from their currently gender identity or expression.
- TG people include people who decide not to transition, make a social transition only, or both.
- TG women are disproportionately affected by HIV infection and have poor health outcomes when compared to cisgender women. Psychosocial factors such as violence or abuse, depression and stigma, likely contribute to HIV risk and poor health outcomes among this population.

Aim

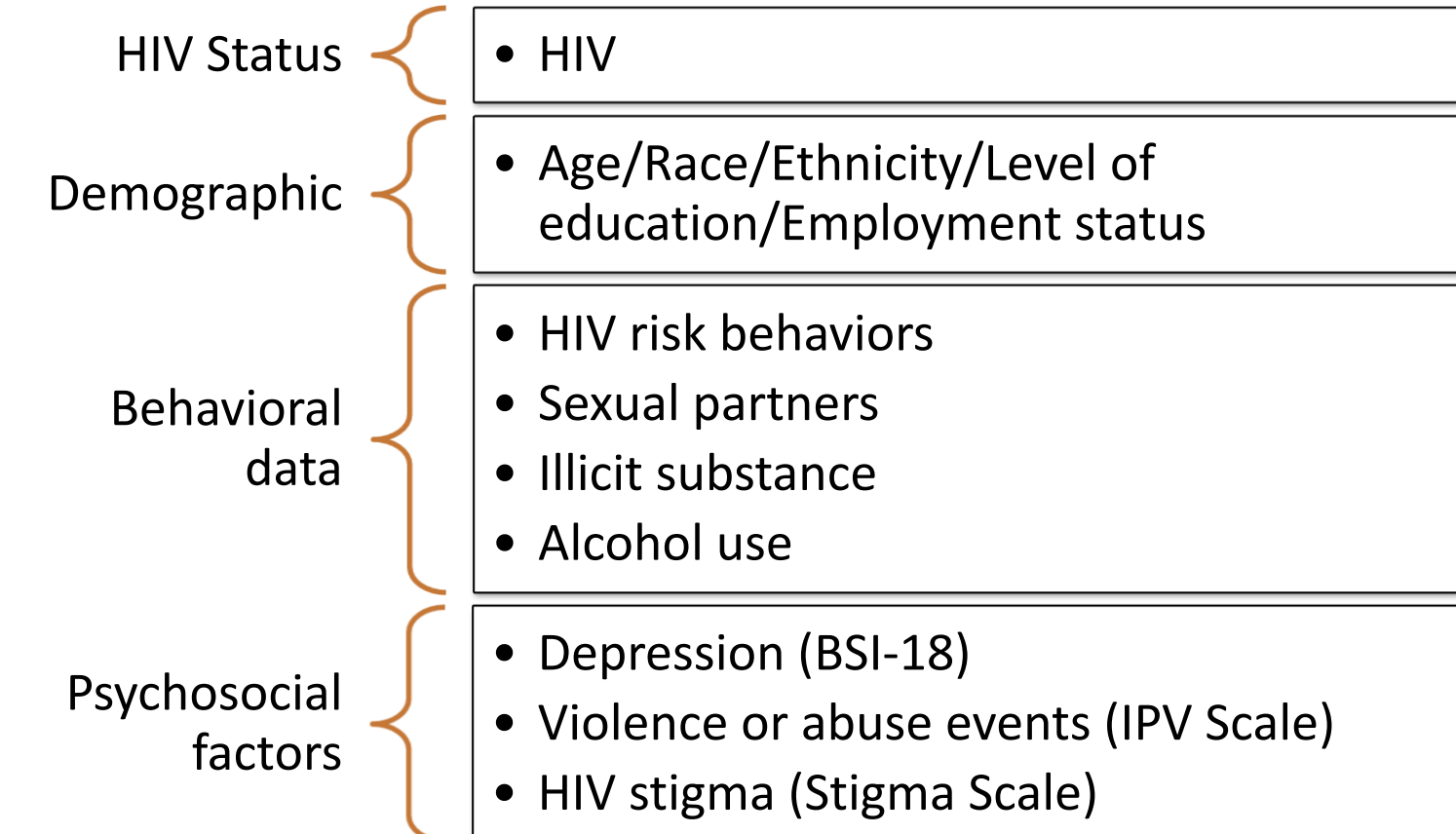
- Evaluate psychosocial factors, and HIV risk among transgender women with and without HIV infection living in Miami, FL.

Methodology

Study type: cross sectional study conducted at the University of Miami Infectious Diseases Research Unit.

Populations: Adults (18 years or older) who identified themselves as TG living in Miami were recruited from the community and local clinics.

Interviewer administered questionnaires and data was directly entered in RedCap



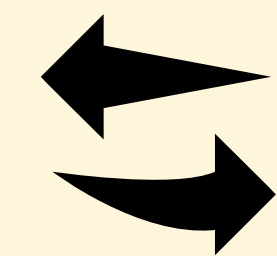
- Variables of interest by HIV status were compared using Fisher exact test (categorical variables) and Mann-Whitney U test (continuous variables).

Violence/Abuse events

Interpersonal Violence (IPV)

Please check the most accurate answer.

In the past 12 months...	Check
IPV1. Have you ever engaged in sex for money?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV2. As a child, were you ever beaten, physically attacked, or physically abused?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV3. As a child, were you ever sexually attacked, raped, or sexually abused?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV4. As an adult, have you ever been beaten, physically attacked, or physically abused?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV5. Were you ever in a relationship where a sexual partner did this to you?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV6. As an adult, have you ever been sexually attacked, raped, or sexually abused?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV7. Were you ever in a relationship where a sexual partner did this to you?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV8. Have you ever been in a relationship where a sexual partner threatened you with violence?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV9. Have you ever been in a relationship where a sexual partner threw, broke, or punched things?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
IPV10. Have you ever been in a relationship where you felt controlled by a sexual partner?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes



Stigma Scale

(HIV Stigma Scale-revised; Berger et al., 2001; Bunn et al., 2007)	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly agree
STIGMA1. In many areas of my life, no one knows that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA2. I feel guilty because I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA3. People's attitudes about HIV/AIDS make me feel worse about myself.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA4. Telling someone I have HIV/AIDS is risky.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA5. Most people with HIV/AIDS lose their jobs when employers learn that they have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA6. I work hard to keep my HIV a secret.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA7. I feel I'm not as good as others because I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA8. I never feel ashamed of having HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA9. People with HIV/AIDS are treated like outcasts.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA10. Most people believe a person who has HIV/AIDS is dirty.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA11. Having HIV/AIDS makes me feel unclean.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA12. Most people think that a person with HIV/AIDS is disgusting.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA13. Having HIV/AIDS makes me feel that I'm a bad person.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA14. Most people with HIV/AIDS are rejected when others learn that they have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA15. I am very careful who I tell that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA16. Some people who know that I have HIV/AIDS have grown more distant.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA17. Most people are uncomfortable around someone with HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA18. I never felt that I have to hide the fact that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA19. I worry that people may judge me when they learn that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA20. Having HIV/AIDS is disgusting to me.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA21. I am hurt by how people reacted to learning I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA22. I worry people who know I have HIV/AIDS will tell others.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA23. I regret having told some people that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA24. People avoid touching me if they know I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA25. People I care about stopped calling me after learning that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA26. People don't want me around their children once they know that I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA27. People have physically backed away from me because I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA28. I have stopped socializing with some people due to their reactions.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA29. I have lost friends by telling them I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA30. I told people close to me to keep my HIV/AIDS a secret.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA31. People who know that I have HIV/AIDS ignore my good points.	1	2	3	4
STIGMA32. People seem afraid of me because I have HIV/AIDS.	1	2	3	4

Results

- A total of **22 participants** completed assessments.
 - HIV- : **10 (45.5%)**
 - HIV+ : **12 (54.5%)**
- Gender-affirmative procedures**
- feminizing hormones **15 (68%)**
 - feminizing surgeries **11 (50%)**

Table 1. Demographics by HIV Status

Variable	HIV- (n = 10)	HIV+ (n = 12)	Overall Sample (N = 22)	p
Birth Gender				
Male	10 (100%)	12 (100%)	22 (100%)	
Self-identified Gender				
Female or woman	6 (60%)	5 (41.7%)	11 (50%)	
Trans Female	0 (0%)	2 (16.7%)	2 (9.1%)	
Transgender Woman	1 (10%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (9.1%)	
Male-to-female (MTF)	2 (20%)	3 (25%)	5 (22.7%)	
Transfeminine, trans femme	0 (0%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (4.5%)	
Woman of trans experience	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.5%)	
Race				
Black/African-American	0 (0%)	5 (41.7%)	5 (22.7%)	
White	9 (90%)	6 (50%)	15 (68.2%)	.05
Other	1 (10%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (9.1%)	
Employment Status				
Working part time	1 (10%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (9.1%)	
Unable to work for health reasons	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	2 (9.1%)	
On disability	2 (20%)	9 (75%)	11 (50%)	
In school	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	2 (9.1%)	.013
Keeping house	1 (10%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (9.1%)	
Never worked	0 (0%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (4.5%)	
Other	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	2 (9.1%)	

Sociodemographic:

- Median age was 55 yo (20, 69)
- White: 15 (69%)
- Black: 5 (23%)
- Hispanic: 15 (69%)
- Level of education Median of 11 years (12; 1.8)
- 12 (55%) had completed at least high school
- 2 (9%) were employed

Table 2. Behavioral by HIV Status

Variable	HIV- (n = 10)	HIV+ (n = 12)	Overall Sample (N = 22)	p
Number of Sexual Partners (Last Month)	1.1 (1; 0.74)	1.83 (1; 2.82)	1.5 (1; 2.13)	.945
Condom Use				
Always	7 (70%)	6 (50%)	13 (59.1%)	
Most of the time	1 (10%)	3 (25%)	4 (18.2%)	.721
Never	2 (20%)	3 (25%)	5 (22.7%)	
Sex for Money				
No	8 (80%)	5 (41.7%)	13 (59.1%)	.099
Yes	2 (20%)	7 (58.3%)	9 (40.9%)	
Alcohol Use (Last Year)				
No	2 (20%)	5 (41.7%)	7 (31.8%)	.381
Yes	8 (80%)	7 (58.3%)	15 (68.2%)	
Cannabis Use (Last Year)				
No	8 (80%)	10 (83.3%)	18 (81.8%)	1
Yes	2 (20%)	2 (16.7%)	4 (18.2%)	
Cocaine Use (Last Year)				
No	10 (100%)	9 (75%)	19 (86.4%)	.221
Yes	0 (0%)	3 (25%)	3 (13.6%)	
Drinking Frequency				
Never	6 (60%)	7 (58.3%)	13 (59.1%)	
Monthly or less	4 (40%)	3 (25%)	7 (31.8%)	1
2-4 times per month	0 (0%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (4.5%)	
2-3 times a week	0 (0%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (4.5%)	
Binge Drinking (6+ in one episode)				
Never	9 (90%)	9 (75%)	18 (81.8%)	.221
Less than monthly	0 (0%)	3 (25%)	3 (13.6%)	
Monthly	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.5%)	

Results

Behavioral:

- Sexually active previous month: 16 (73%)
- Number of partners in the last month: Median 1.5 (1; 2.13)
- Reported consistent condom use in the last sexual encounter: 13 (60%)
- Engaged in receptive anal sex: 14 (64%)
- Reported ever engaging in sex for money: 9 (41%)
- Reported binge drinking or use of cocaine in the previous year: 3 (13%)

Psychosocial:

- Violence or abuse events** were common. Participants had experienced an average of:

3.9 lifetime events (Median = 3; SD = 3.45)

- Depression** measured by the BSI-18 scale revealed low depression scores:

Mean = 1.77; SD = 0.82

- Among HIV+ participants, **HIV stigma** measured by the 'Stigma Scale' was low:

Mean = 1.71; SD = 0.41

- HIV infected** participants were more likely to be black (p=0.05) and unemployed.

We did not find significant differences by HIV status in other variables, including depressive symptomatology and violence or abuse.

Conclusion

- In this small sample of middle age TG women with and without HIV infection living in Miami, we identified high rates of events of violence or abuse, that did not differ by HIV status.
- HIV infection was more common among black TG women, highlighting the need for targeted prevention interventions among TG individuals from ethnic minorities.
- Further research is necessary to identify potential targets for HIV prevention and care in the vulnerable population of TG women.

Acknowledgment

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