

A Study of Stigma towards HIV Infection/AIDS among Healthy Population

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Abstract

Background- HIV related stigma is present at all levels of the society which act as critical barriers for provision of care. This also influences the uptake and under- or non-participation in treatments available.

Aims- The present study was aimed to assess the stigma towards HIV infection/AIDS in healthy individuals of the community.

Method- The study was conducted on 100 healthy individuals (caregivers of patients with medical or psychiatric illnesses). Their responses were taken on self designed semi-structured questionnaire.

Results- The results showed that there was more perceived stigma in compared to enacted stigma. 46% individuals feel that HIV infected persons should be blamed for their illness and 41% individuals feel that they would feel ashamed if they would have HIV. It was also seen that older adults (between 46-55 years) had more stigma as compared to the younger ones (between 16-25 years). Most individuals would like to tell their partner if they were diagnosed with HIV.

Conclusion- Stigma related to HIV infection/AIDS is commonly prevalent in the society. Socio-demographic variables have a varied attribution to stigma. This needs to be addressed for prevention and better management of HIV infection/AIDS.

Keywords: Stigma, HIV infection/AIDS, Healthy Population.