

AIDS, Stigma and Gender: Health Consequences in Urban India

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Project Description

This study is a collaboration between UCSF, UC Davis, the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore and the TATA Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. The field sites are located in Bangalore and Mumbai, two large Indian cities situated in high HIV prevalence states.



The study is designed to:

- Examine the nature, extent, and context of AIDS stigma and discrimination by gender, at multiple levels, among people coming into contact with urban health care systems, including: people living with HIV/AIDS, healthcare staff and the general population of patients seeking healthcare in outpatient settings.
- Measure the health-relevant consequences of AIDS stigma and discrimination among both perpetrators and targets of stigma. These include the influence of stigma on HIV testing, on disclosure, on treatment seeking, and on willingness to provide care and treatment.
- Develop a culturally-specific theoretical understanding of AIDS stigma and health in urban India as well as measures of AIDS stigma that can be used to evaluate future stigma reduction policies and programs in healthcare and community settings among victims and perpetrators.
- Develop empirically-based programs and policy recommendations to reduce AIDS-related stigma and discrimination in urban Indian healthcare settings and to disseminate these.

Interesting Findings

- Avoiding disclosure of HIV status leads to greater social isolation, poorer mental health, and continuing endorsement of HIV stigmatizing attitudes among HIV+ individuals in Southern India.
- By contrast, disclosure avoidance does not lead to fewer enactments of stigma, nor does it shield one from hearing stories about discrimination against others with HIV.
- Programs are urgently needed to support people living with HIV/AIDS in identifying and disclosing their infection to sympathetic friends and family.

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