


Psychosocial factors associated with symptoms of depression among African American men and women living with HIV



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Background: HIV and Depression

- A systematic review of 10 studies in 2001 concluded that there was evidence that HIV-positive individuals were at an elevated risk for depression (Ciesla & Roberts, 2001)
- The authors also suggested that other factors related to HIV may be more directly predictive of depression

[Study Purpose]

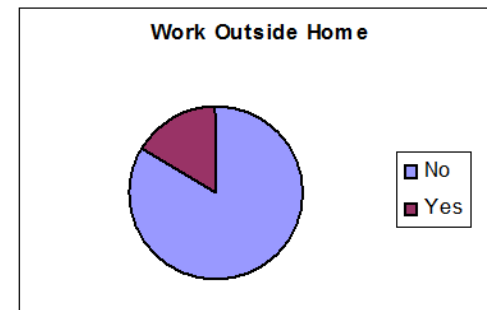
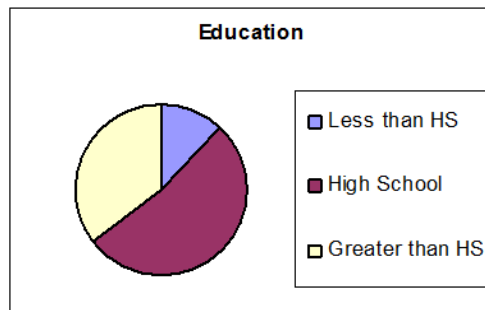
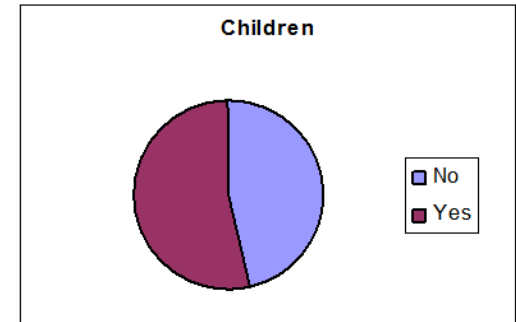
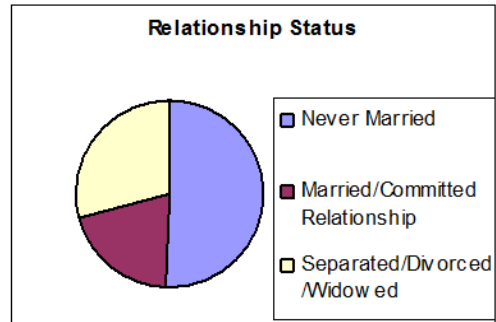
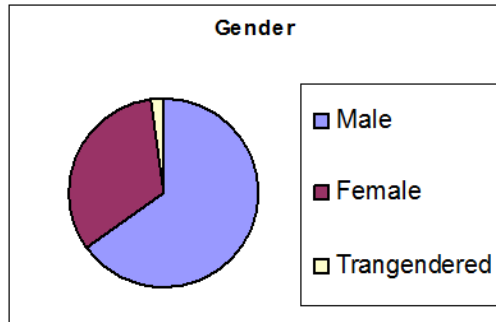
- To examine psychosocial factors associated with symptoms of depression among African American men and women
 - Risk factors
 - Difficult life circumstances (Mazure & Maciejewski, 2003)
 - Stigma (Lee, Kochman, & Sikkema, 2002).
 - Protective factors
 - Spirituality (Coleman & Holzemer, 1999)
 - Social Support (McClure, Catz, Prejean, Brantley, & Jones, 1996)

“Get Busy Living” (Dilorio et al., 2008, in press)

- A randomized controlled trial of an intervention designed to improve adherence to antiretroviral medications
- The setting was a clinic that serves people with HIV
- Located in a Southeastern city
- Baseline data were used in the current analysis

Description of Sample

- Only African American participants were included in the analysis (87.44%)



Description of Measures: Depression

- Centers for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) (Radloff, 1977)
- Designed to assess symptoms of depression
 - A score of 16 or higher on the CESD may be indicative of depression
 - “I felt sad”; “I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with the help of my family and friends”

Description of Measures: Risk

- **Difficult Life Circumstances Scale** (Barnard, 1994)
 - Assesses life events related to poverty or stressful circumstances
 - “Has one of your children been having serious emotional or behavioral problems at home”; “Does your partner have a problem with alcohol or drugs”
- **Personal Stigma Scale** (Pequegnat et al., 2001)
 - Assesses levels of perceived stigma related to HIV
 - “I understand why people would reject my friendship because I have HIV”; “Because of my HIV, I should not hold a new infant”

Description of Measures: Protective

■ Spirituality

- Spiritual Well Being Scale: Assesses Religious Well Being and Existential Well Being (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982)
- “I feel that life is a positive experience”; “I feel most fulfilled when I’m in close communion with God”

■ Social Support

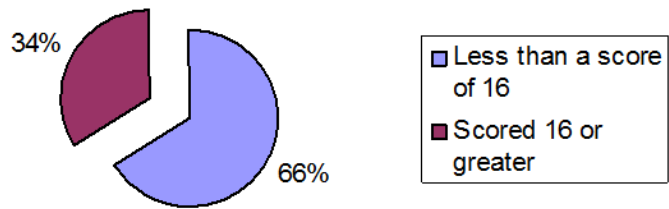
- Measured using the Personal Resources Questionnaire: Assesses multiple types of social support (Brandt & Weinert, 1981)
- “I belong to a group in which I feel important”; “My family lets me know that I am important for keeping the family running”

[Analysis]

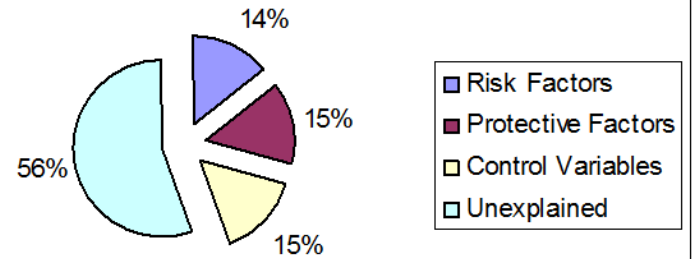
- Linear regression, a method to examine multiple associations, was used to analyze correlates of symptoms of depression
- Included in the model
 - **Risk:** Difficult Life Circumstances, Personal Stigma
 - **Protective:** Spirituality, Social Support
 - **Control Variables:** Age, Gender, General Health

[Results]

Symptoms of Depression



Explaining Symptoms of Depression



[Translation to Quality of Care]

- Mental health is an emerging issue in the context of quality of care
- The next slides will relate the findings of this study to the overall goals of this symposium

[Implications for Practice]

- It is important to assess symptoms of depression among African Americans living with HIV
- Other considerations include factors that are associated with symptoms of depression
 - Potential risk factors
 - Difficult life circumstances, stigma
 - Potential protective factors
 - Spirituality, social support

[Applicability for Practice]

- Knowledge of the associations between risk and protective factors and symptoms of depression may be useful at the individual and community level
- Caregivers and community based organizations can benefit from understanding how these factors are associated with symptoms of depression

Problem Addressed and Purpose of Practice

- This research addresses a broader understanding of the issue of the co-occurrence of symptoms of depression among individuals living with HIV
- The purpose of this research is to raise awareness of the importance of these factors to not only living with HIV, but specifically to symptoms of depression among those living with HIV

Context and Resources

- There may be resource implications (time, financial, personnel) for increasing the priority of mental health assessments and increasing support mechanisms
- Practitioners and community based organizations could consider implementing ways of assessing symptoms of depression as well as factors related to symptoms of depression through adding staff specifically to focus on issues related to mental health
- In order to accomplish this, additional funding may be required
- Other organizations within the community may be necessary to help provide support to people living with HIV
- Practitioners and community based organizations may be able to partner with other organizations such as churches or develop in-house volunteer based services designed to provide support

[BESAFE]

- Barriers to Care

- Access to care and resources can also have implications for recognizing symptoms of depression and factors that may be associated with symptoms of depression

- Ethics and Sensitivity of the Provider

- Although it is understandable that the physical aspects of HIV are of prime importance, assessing symptoms of depression and its correlates are also important
 - Quality of life
 - Associations with behaviors such as adherence (Dilorio et al., 2007)

[BESAFE]

■ Assessment

- Risk and protective factors that are associated with symptoms of depression should be assessed in addition to symptoms of depression

■ Facts—In this study

- Difficult life experiences and the perception of stigma related to HIV were associated with an increase in depressive symptoms
- Spiritual well being and social support were associated with a decrease in depressive symptoms

■ Encounters

- It is important to develop trust and to be nonjudgmental in assessing sensitive topics such as difficult life circumstances and symptoms of depression

[Conclusion]

- Depression and potentially related factors are important to consider in the context of caring for individuals living with HIV
- Challenges
 - The incorporation of the assessment of symptoms of depression and related factors into other kinds of social service assessments (e.g. insurance, housing)
 - The integration of mental health care with primary care
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