

Differences and similarities between perceived community HIV stigma and TB stigma among TB evaluation patients offered same-day HIV counseling and testing.

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Background

Fear of stigma is often reported as a reason for not seeking HIV testing or evaluation for Tuberculosis (TB). Additionally, overlapping epidemics of HIV and TB have produced concerns of enhanced stigma towards HIV-TB co-infected persons. However, little is known about the differences and similarities between HIV and TB stigma.

Objectives

- How are HIV and TB related stigmas similar and different?
- What characteristics predict high levels of perceived stigma?
- Where do HIV and TB related stigmas overlap?

Methods



Cohort: Adult outpatients evaluated for TB at Mulago Hospital's National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Program TB clinic in Kampala, Uganda.

HIV testing:

- Rapid enzyme immunoassay (EIA) test.
- Blood taken from a finger prick while patient waits at TB clinic.
- Test results received the same day.



Questionnaire:

- 10 questions about subject's understanding of the biology of HIV and TB co-infection and feelings about HIV testing.
- Responses indicated as "Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree."
- 18 questions about perceptions of HIV related stigma in the community.
- 18 identical questions about perceptions of TB related stigma in the community.
- Order of TB/HIV community questions randomized.
- Responses indicated as "No One (0), Very Few People (1), Some People (2), or Most People (3)."
- Responses analyzed using Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed rank test and multivariate linear regression.

Results

Subject Demographic Characteristics

	n	(%)
Sex		
Female	89	(60)
Male	59	(40)
Age, years		
18 – 27	58	(39)
28 – 37	53	(36)
38 – 47	28	(19)
48 – 57	5	(3)
58 – 70	3	(2)
Marital Status		
Never married	43	(29)
Ever married	105	(71)
Monogamous union	58	(39)
Polygamous union	7	(5)
Separated or divorced	34	(23)
Widowed	6	(4)



Subject Demographic Characteristics Cont.

	n	(%)
Subjects' monthly income		
Less than 10,000 Ugandan Schillings (~6 USD)	51	(34)
10,000 – 100,000 US\$	61	(41)
More than 100,000	30	(20)
Don't know	6	(4)
Highest level of education		
None	15	(10)
Some primary school	64	(43)
Some secondary school	43	(29)
Completed A level	10	(7)
Technical or diploma training	8	(5)
University degree	8	(5)
Religion		
Roman Catholic	52	(35)
Anglican	49	(33)
Muslim	29	(20)
Born again	14	(9)
Other	4	(3)

HIV Testing Attitudes and Practices

	n/N	(%)
Agree/Strongly agree: People in my community are embarrassed to be seen coming out of an HIV testing clinic.	68/147	(46)
Consider self to be at risk for HIV infection	62/146	(42)
Ever had an HIV test	78/148	(53)
Accept TB clinic VCT	116/148	(78)
Reasons for testing (N=116)		
Doctor's recommendation	10/116	(9)
Test is free	96/116	(83)
TB clinic VCT is convenient	114/116	(98)
Results available the same day	115/116	(99)
Worried that symptoms prompting TB clinic visit are due to HIV	43/116	(37)
Concerned about having both HIV and TB	41/116	(35)

Overall HIV and TB related Stigma

HIV Testing History	Total HIV Stigma	Total TB Stigma
All Testers	1.46	1.62
Never Tested	1.32	1.47
Prior Pos. Test	1.70	1.82
Prior Neg. Test	1.30	1.63

p=0.0435 (HIV vs TB comparison for All Testers and Never Tested)
p=0.0202 (HIV vs TB comparison for Prior Pos. Test and Prior Neg. Test)

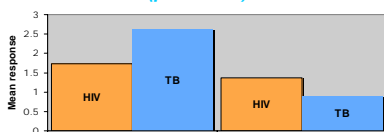
Stigma Domain	HIV Mean	HIV Median	TB Mean	TB Median	Spearman Correlation	p-value
Avoidance	1.83	2.00	2.63	3.00	0.28	0.0006
Blame	1.32	1.40	1.17	1.10	0.64	<0.0001
Shame	1.49	1.50	1.84	2.00	0.54	<0.0001
Healthcare Denial	1.19	1.00	0.92	0.00	0.43	<0.0001
Total Stigma	1.46	1.50	1.62	1.67	0.66	<0.0001

Comparison between HIV and TB Stigma

	HIV	TB	p-value*
1 In your community, how many mothers would <u>not</u> want someone with HIV/TB to hold their new baby?	1.73	2.62	0.0000
2 In your community, how many mothers would <u>want</u> a person with HIV/TB to feed their children?	1.93	2.64	0.0000
3 In your community, how many people avoid visiting the homes of people with HIV/TB?	1.22	2.24	0.0000
4 In your community, how many people think that people with HIV/TB have brought shame on their families?	1.59	1.60	0.9244
5 In your community, how many people are uncomfortable around someone with HIV/TB?	1.45	2.36	0.0000
6 In your community, how many people think that if you have HIV/TB you have done wrong behaviors?	1.74	1.09	0.0000
7 In your community, how many people think that it is acceptable for families to insist that a person with HIV/TB move out of the house?	0.83	1.13	0.0067
8 In your community, how many people think people with HIV/TB are paying for their sins?	1.37	0.89	0.0000
9 In your community, how many people think that individuals with HIV/TB deserve their disease?	1.31	0.95	0.0001
10 In your community, how many people think that people with HIV/TB should feel guilty about it?	1.27	0.99	0.0240
11 In your community, how many people think that a person with HIV/TB is disgusting?	1.79	1.89	0.1902
12 In your community, how many people are refused medical care or denied hospital services because of their HIV/TB?	1.19	0.92	0.0121

*p-values are for the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Significantly higher values (p<0.0002) are in bold.

How are HIV and TB Related Stigmas Different? (p<0.00005)



In your community, how many mothers would not want someone with HIV/TB to hold their new baby? In your community, how many people think people with HIV/TB are paying for their sins?

Conclusions

- TB and HIV are linked in patients' minds.
- TB stigma is associated with fears of casual contagion.
- HIV stigma is associated with blaming and shaming attitudes towards persons with HIV.

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