

PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION AND THE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH IT AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES: A POPULATION STUDY

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Abstract: To determine if there is a relationship between depression, education levels, working status, and HIV status among different age groups of African American Male Sex with Male (AA MSM) in Jackson, MS and Atlanta, GA and to analyze data from the MARI study by applying different statistical tools and software for prospective results on depression and the related factors among AA MSM. The study participants were 465 African American Male Sex with Male individuals, 243 from Atlanta, GA and 222 from Jackson MS aged 18 years and older, collected between the years 2013 and 2015. A total of 465 MSM participated in the study. However, we had depression data on 366 participants. Thus, the results presented here were based on the 366 participants with the depression data. The prevalence of depression among the study sample was 27% (99/366). The mean age and standard deviation of the sample was 30.47 years and 11.28 years respectively. Most of the study participants belonged to the age group 18-33 years (68%), and only 7.7% belonged to the age group 50-65 years. About 41.3% reported to have a minimum high school diploma. Nearly half of the study population were unemployed (56.1%), and 43.8% of the study participants were HIV positive. Majority of the study participants who were depressed were found in the age group of 18-32 years (73%), who had some college (38.6%) or High School Diploma (38.2%), and who were not-working (55.4%). More than fifty percent (62.4%) of the participants who are depressed were found to be HIV negative. Multiple linear regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between age ($p=0.047$) and depression, after controlling for education, employment and HIV status, and a marginally significant relationship between education ($p=0.066$) and depression after controlling for age, employment, and HIV status. The study's findings may be helpful in the preventive measures like policies and interventions that achieve the goals of the 2020 U.S. National HIV/AIDS Strategy. Could also help organizations serving African American Male Sex with Males (AA MSM) in the Deep South with high rates of depression address the prevention needs?

Key words: HIV/AIDS, AA MSM, depression

Acknowledgements: My Brother's Keeper, Inc, DeMarc A Hickson, PhD; Ying He, MD, MPH; Mohammed Shahbazi, PhD; Sophia Leggett, PhD, MPH; Delicia McGee, PhD; Jung Hye Sung Lee, PhD; and The School of Public Health, Jackson State University