

Social Support and Mental Health Status among HIV and Non-HIV People

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ABSTRACT

The major aim of the present study was to assess the social support and mental health status among HIV and non-HIV people. The sample of 200 (HIV-100 and non-HIV-100) was chosen from Mysore District on whom the social support and mental health scales were administered. After scoring, the data were subjected to t-test. The results revealed that there is significant difference in mental health status of the sample subgroups. The study also revealed significant gender difference in the amount of mental health status.

Keywords: Social Support, Mental Health, Psychological Health And Physiological Health And Society.

Social Support is the actual or perceived availability of resource in one's social environment that can be used for comfort or particularly in times of distress social support is provided, by one's social network with is all of the people with whom one has same form of regular social contact must social networks include family friends and co-workers not all social networks are supportive, but those that are supportive tend to bolster the health and well being of the recipients of the supportive social support appears to enhance individuals physical and psychological health directly and indirectly by reducing the negative effects of stressor on health.

Social support is “resources from the environment that can be beneficial to psychological that can be beneficial to psychological and physical health” according to the encyclopedia of psychology (Alan E. Kazclins Chiefed).

The term social support refers to the process through which help is provided to others. This process is influenced by characteristics of the social environment and individual participants, transactions the occur but wean. Participations the resources that are provided, and participants perceptions of these transactions and their implications.

The most vital of all resources against stress is social Support, Social ties and relationships, with others have long been regarded as an emotionally satisfying aspect of life. They can also

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mute the effects of stress, help an individual cope with stressful events, and reduce the likelihood that stress will lead to poor health. Social Support is very important to people with AIDS. Men with AIDS who have emotional, practical and informational support are less depressed. Informational support appeared to be especially important in buffering the stress associated with AIDS related symptoms.

The ability to talk to family members about AIDS is important, but fortunately families appear to have the potential to be especially helpful to men infected with AIDS, when men are depressed or have a large number of AIDS related symptoms. They are less likely to receive the support that they need. Such findings suggest that augmenting natural social support and providing social support to people with AIDS should be an important mental health services priority.

In 1953, the World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as a complete state of physical, mental, and social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. This marked a major shift in the emphasis and perspective of health. Health began to be viewed more positively and emphasis was on well being & positive health rather than absence of disease.

At around the same time, Psychiatrists made a concentrated effort to define mental health and normality. Earlier, it was assumed that mental health was the opposite of mental illness. The absence of gross psychopathology was often equated with normal behavior. However, it has become increasingly important for Psychiatrists to provide precise concepts and definitions of mental health and normality.

Health is an indispensable quality in human being. It has been described as soul from which the finest flowers grow. Health indicates psychosomatic well-being. To Bhatia (1982) "Health is a state of being hale, sound or whole in body and mind."

The preamble of the World Health Organization's charter defined health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Monopolis et. al. 1977).

Thus, health is a broader concept including physical, social, and mental health: Mental health has been reported as an important factor influencing individual's various behaviors, activities, happiness, and performance.

A healthy individual is not only, physically healthy, but is also mentally healthy. It includes a sound, efficient mind and controlled emotions. It means that both body and mind are working efficiently and harmoniously. Man is an integrated psychosomatic unit, whose behavior is determined by both physical and mental factors. Mental health is a basic factor that contributes to maintenance of physical, health as well as social effectiveness. It is normal state of well being. In the words of Johns and Webster, "It is a positive but relative quality of life. It is condition which is characteristic of the average person who meets the demands of life on the basis of his own capacities and limitations". It is a positive, active quality of the individual's daily living. It means the ability to face and accept the realities of life.

In recent years the role and status of HIV positive patients have been tremendously changed. With the advent of AIDS education and awareness programmes and more liberty for their rights and privileges, AIDS patients' attitudes and their stereotyped role are changing and their participation in social programmes and work place is increasing day by day. It has made them to combat increased socio-familial roles. The AIDS patients who work outside the home are required to make many socio-familial adjustments that even contribute to stress and anxiety.

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Hence attempt is made in the present study the social support and mental health status of HIV Positive patients. The study also includes normal persons for comparison.

METHODOLOGY

Problem

- To Study Social Support and Mental health status among HIV's and non-HIV's.

Objectives

- To study the mental health status among HIV and non-HIV people
- To examine differences in mental health status between two groups of social support.
- To study the Gender difference in mental health status.

Hypotheses

- There would be significant difference in mental health status among HIV's and non-HIV's.
- There would be significant difference in mental health status between high and low social support groups.
- There would be significant gender difference in mental health status.

Variables

1) Independent Variables

A) Social support B) Gender

2) Dependent Variable Mental health status

Sample

The sample of the present study consists of 100 HIV+ve patients & 100 Normal. The sample was randomly selected from Kalaburagi City. The sample design is as under:

Social support	HIV+ve		Non-HIV's		Total
	M	F	M	F	
High	25	25	25	25	100
Low	25	25	25	25	100
Total	50	50	50	50	200

Tools/Tests

1. Personal data schedule: this was prepared to collect the information like age, gender, religion, cast, course, class, faculty, parental data etc. of the sample.

2. Social Support Questionnaire:

This was developed by Nehara and Kulhara (1987) which consists of 18 items in all with four response categories like Fully agree, Maximum agree, Slightly agree and Disagree. The scoring is done with the help of scoring key provided in the manual. Accordingly, the one who scores high is said to have high social support and vice-vase. The reliability of scale is significant (test-rest: 0.04). The validity is found to be adequate.

3. Mental Health Inventory (Dr. Jagadish and Dr. Srivatsava)

Mental Health inventory: This inventory is developed by Jagadish & Srivastva (1988) which consists of 54 items distributed along 6 dimensions. There are 4 response categories always, often, rarely and never. The scoring is done with the help of scoring key. The higher score indicate the higher mental health and vice versa. The reliability of the inventory has been found to be 0.75 which is significant.

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Statistical Analysis:

t-test was used for analyze the results of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major objective of the study is to examine the differences in mental health status among HIV patients and non-HIV people. The sample was further classified into two groups of (high and low) social support by administering social support inventory on mental health status scale was administered. The mental health status scores were analyzed with the help of t-test. Thus the means, SD and t-values are present in tables.

Table – 1, Shows the Mean, SD and t-value of mental health status of the Total Sample (N=200)

Social Support	N	Mean	SD	t- value
High	100	58.91	5.01	19.12**
Low	100	47.55	4.12	

**Significant at 0.01 level.

Table– 1: shows the Mean, SD and t-value obtained from the sample. The mean value of high social support group is 58.91 and that of low is 47.55. The calculated t- value is 19.12 which is significant at 0.01 level. This indicates that there is significant difference in mental health status between high and low Social support groups. The high support increased mental health status while low support decreased the mental health status level. Thus Social Support is an important factor which produces significant differences in mental health status of sample.

Table – 2, Shows the Mean, SD and t-value of mental health status of the Normal and HIV +ve Patients Sample (N=200)

Sample subgroup	N	Mean	SD	t- value
HIV+ve patients	100	46.54	4.25	9.97**
Normal	100	51.12	5.02	

**Significant at 0.01 level.

Table – 2 shows the mean, SD and t-value of mental health status of normal and HIV+ve patients. The mean normal and HIV+ve patients is 51.12 and 46.54 respectively. The mean score of non HIV people is lower than the patients. The t-value of 9.97 is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This clearly shows that HIV+ve patients have low mental health status than normal people. The patients are usually the sufferers and are expected to exhibited to exhibit lower mental health status than normal. Thus the disease itself is a promoter of mental health status condition in the patients.

Table – 3, Shows the Mean, SD and t-values of mental health status of Total Sample (Male-Female) (N=200)

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t- value
Male	100	66.12	5.12	3.10 **
Female	100	63.15	5.44	

**Significant at 0.01 level.

Table – 3 shows the mean, SD and t-value of mental health status . The mean score of male is 66.12 and that of female is 63.15. The t-value is 3.10 which is significant at 0.01 level revealing the fact that there is significant difference in mental health status between male and

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female. Males have higher mental health status than the Females as the higher scores indicate.

CONCLUSION

- 1 There is a significant difference in mental health status between two groups of social support: High social support group has significantly higher mental health status than the low social support group.
- 2 HIV +ve patients showed significantly lower mental health status than the non HIV people.
- 3 There are significant gender differences in mental health status: male have higher mental health status than females.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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