HIV Risk Among Deported Mexican Migrants

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Background

- There are approximately 7 million undocumented Mexican migrants and immigrants (MMIs) living in the U.S.
- Previous research has found high rates of behavioral risk factors for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among this population.
- Studies have linked the development of the HIV epidemic in Mexico to migration to the US.
- Data on the burden of HIV infection and prevalence of risk factors among MMIs is based on studies with small, nonrepresentative samples.
- Research on undocumented MMIs is challenged by the difficulties to reach this mobile, geographically widespread, and elusive population.

Objective

- To estimate the prevalence of HIV infection and HIV-related risk behaviors among a probability-based sample of deported MMIs in the border city of Tijuana (Baja California, Mexico)
- To identify structural, environmental, and cultural correlates of HIV risk, based on the Behavioral Ecological Model

Methods

Sampling Design & Procedures
- Cross-sectional, probability survey conducted outside the San Ysidro deportation station in Tijuana, Mexico
- MMIs returned by the US Border Patrol (N = 674; 96% response rate)
- A multi-stage, random sampling design
- Eligibility criteria included:
  - 18 years or older
  - Having been returned to Mexico by immigration authorities
  - Fluent in Spanish
  - No previous participation in the survey
  - Anonymous, Spanish questionnaire on sociodemographics, migration history, HIV risk factors, and theoretical correlates
  - Administered by trained interviewers using Questionnaire Development Survey (QDS™) Audio Computer-Administered Self-Interview (ACASI) software
  - On-site rapid HIV testing and laboratory confirmatory testing

Study Site

- A multi-stage, random sampling design
- MMIs returned by the US Border Patrol (N = 674; 96% response rate)

Selected HIV Risk Correlates*

- Time in the US During Last 12 Months
- Perceived Discrimination
- Acculturative Stress
- Social Support

Preliminary Results

Last-12 month Sexual Risk Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Males (N=625)</th>
<th>Females (N=49)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple sexual partners</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprotected vaginal or anal sex</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaginal or anal sex with casual partners or sex workers</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprotected vaginal or anal sex with casual partners or sex workers</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-sex anal sex</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprotected same-sex anal sex</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex with IV drug user</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex with partner who has multiple partners</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex in exchange for money, drugs, other goods</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced sex</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIV/STI Testing History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never tested for HIV</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not tested for HIV during last 12 months</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never tested for other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not tested for other STIs during last 12 months</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever had a STI</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a STI during last 12 months</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

- These results suggest high prevalence of risk behaviors for HIV infection and limited HIV/STI testing among deported MMIs
- Perceived discrimination and acculturative stress are associated with increased risk for HIV infection
- Time in the US and availability of social support show a complex association with HIV risk. They seem to increase sexual risk, but also HIV/STI testing practices.
- Binational HIV prevention programs targeting this disenfranchised population are needed on both sides of the US – Mexico border.

Contact Information

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Selected HIV Risk Correlates*

- * Based on bivariate analysis (t-tests for independent samples) using Z scores. Male subsample only (N=625)