

HIV Stigma and Access to Care among People Living with HIV in Rural China



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OVERVIEW

This cross-sectional study examined the impacts of HIV-related stigma on access to care among people living with HIV (PLH) in rural China.

INTRODUCTION

Access to care for PLH is often hampered by HIV-related stigma. This study aimed to examine association between HIV-related stigma and access to care in a sample of PLH in rural China.

METHODS

- 522 PLH participated in this study.
- The trained research staffs conducted the assessment using the computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI).
- Multiple linear regression models were employed to estimate the association between PLH's access to care and HIV-related stigma, including perceived stigma and internalized shame associated with HIV.



RESULTS

- Higher levels of perceived HIV stigma was associated with lower levels of access to care ($\beta = -0.11$, $p = 0.0003$).
- Internalized HIV shame was not significantly associated with access to care.
- Demographic characteristics were not associated with access to care.

Table 1. Sample Demographics

	n	%
Gender Male	234	44.8
Age, mean (SD)	48.6	8.8
Marital status		
Married	425	81.4
Not married	97	18.6
Family income, median	10,000 Yuan	USD 12,327
Education		
None	210	40.2
1-6	241	46.2
More than 6	71	13.6

Table 2. Regression models on access to care

	Access to care		
	β	SE	p-value
Gender	0.02	0.02	0.34
Age	-0.44	0.35	0.21
Married	-0.88	0.45	0.05
Family income	< -0.01	< -0.01	0.26
Perceived stigma	-0.11	0.03	< 0.01
Internalized shame	-0.03	0.03	0.28

CONCLUSION

Addressing HIV-related stigma should be incorporated into the funding, policy, research, and programming efforts in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was funded by National Institute of Child and Human Development/NIH [grant number R01HD068165]. We thank the project team members in China for their contributions to this study.