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# Substance Use Among Middle Aged Hispanic Men who have Sex with Men (HMSM) in South Florida

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# Background

- Research demonstrates a consistent association between alcohol and substance use and high risk sexual practices
- Research has shown that substance use lowers inhibitions, enhances sexual pleasure, and decreases condom usage
- High risk sexual behaviors are behavioral and clinical factors associated with transmission of HIV and other STIs which include:
  - **Substance use (including alcohol and injected and non-injected drugs) and use of non-sterile drug injection equipment,**
  - History of past STI diagnoses or treatment,
  - UAI,
  - Multiple partners, and
  - Sex under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

(References: Well, Golub & Parsons, 2011; CDC, 2013)

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# Purpose

- HMSM engage in high sexual risk behaviors because of:
  - Alcohol Use
  - Substance Use
- Despite the available research on high risk sexual behaviors among HMSM, relatively little is known about substance use which may lead to high risk sexual behaviors among middle aged HMSM
- This study explored the effects that substance use has on high risk sexual behaviors which predispose middle aged HMSM to STIs and HIV infection risk.

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# Substance Use/Abuse

- Hispanic men in the US are disproportionately affected by the consequences of substance use
- HMSM who engage in substance use have reported higher levels/rates of:
  - Loneliness
  - Psychological distress
  - UAI
  - Multiple partners
  - Inconsistent condom usage
- Research with HMSM has referenced that men with higher levels of sexual desire and intoxication were significantly less likely to have communicated about condom use during sex

(References: De Santis et al., 2014; De Santis et al., 2015; Fernandez et al., 2007; Fernandez et al., 2009; Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2010; Lo et al., 2011; Rhodes et al., 2012; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration [SAMHSA], 2010)

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# High Risk Sexual Behaviors

- High risk sexual behaviors include:
  - UAI
  - Multiple partners
  - Sex under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Research with HMSM has referenced high rates of HIV infection from their sexual risk behaviors
- Factors that influence high risk sexual behaviors among HMSM are: casual partners, substance use/abuse, depression, absent family support, IPV, monetary exchange, serostatus disclosure, and childhood sexual experiences

(References: Caraballo-Dieguez et al., 2005; De Santis et al., 2012; De Santis et al., 2015; Fernandez et al., 2007; Fernandez et al., 2009; Lo et al., 2011; O'Donnell et al., 2014)

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# Research Method

## Study Design

Non-experimental, cross-sectional research design

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# Sample/Research Setting

A convenience sample of 150-middle aged HMSM (40-65 years) were recruited from multiple sites across Miami-Dade county including health and support organizations, bars, barbershops, immigration offices, local stores and street fairs, where middle age HMSM are known to congregate/frequent.



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# Inclusion Criteria

- a. Self-identification as a Hispanic or Latino man
- b. self-identification as gay/homosexual or bisexual
- c. 40 to 65 years of age (middle aged)
- d. Required to be able to listen or read and comprehend English or Spanish
- e. Currently reside in Miami-Dade county before enrolling in the study

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# Procedure

- IRB approval Identified venues that middle age HMSM frequent to increase recruitment
- Flyers promoting the study
- Met and identified potential participants in a private setting
- Explained the study
- Verbal informed consent in the preferred language (English or Spanish) was obtained prior to enrolling in the study

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# Procedure

- A clipboard with a paper packet including the five instruments and a pen- “The Hispanic Men’s Health Study”
- 45 minutes to 1-hour was needed to complete the questionnaires
- Surveys were placed in a covered box and a \$10.00 stipend was given to participants
- Referrals of other middle age HMSM from social networks (snowball sampling)

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# Measures/Instruments

- Demographic Instrument
- The Behavioral Risk Assessment Tool (BRAT)
  - Developed collaborative from a CDC funded five state and 5-year project (Prevention With HIV-Infected Persons Project [PHIPP])
  - Designed to collect HIV risk behaviors, including **sexual and drug/alcohol behaviors**, homelessness, incarceration, and HIV testing history
  - Both sexual and drug/alcohol related behaviors were measured using the BRAT.

(Reference: Wisconsin HIV Prevention Evaluation Work Group, 2000)

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# RESULTS

# Demographic Characteristics

Age of the Study's Participants ( $n = 150$ )

Mean	SD	Median	Range
45.54 years	4.71	44.00	20 (40-60)

Birth of Participants ( $n = 150$ )

Variable	Descriptive Statistics (n and %)
USA	21; 14%
Foreign-born	129; 86%

Length of Time in the US ( $n = 150$ )

Mean	SD	Median	Range
18.09	15.97	11.50	57.0 (1-58)

# Country of Origin

Country of Origin ( $n = 150$ )

Country	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Cuba	52	34.7%
USA	21	14%
Colombia	16	10.7%
Venezuela	10	6.7%
Argentina	9	6%
Peru	8	5.3%
Puerto Rico	7	4.7%
Dominican Republic	6	4%
Guatemala	5	3.3%
Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama	2	1.3%
Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, Uruguay, Other	1	0.7%

# Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics of Illicit Drug Use in Past 30 Days ( $n = 146$ )

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percent
No Illicit Drug Use <sup>a</sup>	94	62.7%
Illicit Drug Use <sup>a</sup>	52	34.7%
Alcohol <sup>b</sup>	106	70.7%
Tobacco <sup>b</sup>	54	36%
Marijuana <sup>b</sup>	28	18.7%
Amil Nitrates <sup>b</sup>	14	9.3%
Prescription Narcotics <sup>b</sup>	13	8.7%
Club Drugs, i.e., Ecstasy <sup>b</sup>	9	6%
Cocaine <sup>b</sup>	7	4.7%

Some data are missing: <sup>a</sup> $n = 146$ ; <sup>b</sup> $n = 147$



# Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics of Substance Use in Past 30 Days ( $n = 150$ )

Variables	Yes	No	$\chi^2$	P value
History of Substance Use during Sex and Substance Use <sup>a</sup>	60	84	9.56*	.003
History of Diagnosed STIs and Substance Use <sup>b</sup>	57	84	2.45	.15
Unprotected Sex with Unknown HIV Status Partner and Substance Use <sup>c</sup>	17	109	16.46***	.000
Unprotected Sex with HIV Infected Partner and Substance Use <sup>d</sup>	20	112	4.22	.07

Some data are missing: <sup>a</sup> $n = 144$ ; <sup>b</sup> $n = 141$ ; <sup>c</sup> $n = 132$ ; <sup>d</sup> $n = 126$

\* $p = .003$ , \*\* $p = .001$ , \*\*\* $p = .000$

# Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics of Alcohol Use in Past 30 Days ( $n = 150$ )

Variables	Yes	No	$\chi^2$	P value
History of Substance Use during Sex and Alcohol Use <sup>e</sup>	61	84	13.68***	.000
History of Diagnosed STIs and Alcohol Use <sup>f</sup>	57	85	11.88**	.001
Unprotected Sex with Unknown HIV Status Partner and Alcohol Use <sup>g</sup>	18	109	1.76	.27
Unprotected Sex with HIV Infected Partner and Alcohol Use <sup>h</sup>	20	113	.366	.60

Some data are missing: <sup>e</sup> $n = 145$ ; <sup>f</sup> $n = 142$ ; <sup>g</sup> $n = 127$ ; <sup>h</sup> $n = 133$

\* $p = .003$ , \*\* $p = .001$ , \*\*\* $p = .000$

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# Implications for Nursing Practice

## Nursing Education

- Nursing Curricula, Substance Use/Abuse risk as part of health promotion and disease prevention

## Nursing Practice

### Education and skills

- Screen for substance use and mental health issues
- Facilitate confidence in addressing sexuality and sexual health
- Build Trust and rapport while having cultural sensitivity

### Research

- Develop effective behavioral interventions focusing on sexual safety, condom use and partner negotiation

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**Thank You!**

**¡Gracias!**