Sexual Decision Making of Rural Men that have Sex with Men

Jessica Lecea, BSN, RN; Peri Kane, BSN, RN; Gregory Carter, MSN, RN; Desiree Hensel, PhD, RN, PCNS-BC

BACKGROUND

Sexual-orientation based discrimination, violence and stigma contributes to the greater sexual health disparities experienced by men that have sex with men by building larger barriers to access and utilization of sexual health services (Hubach, 2015; Satcher, Hook, & Coleman, 2015). The World Health Organization ([WHO], 2016) released a call to action to provide comprehensive and effective interventions aimed at HIV prevention and treatment of MSM in all countries regardless of income. Previous research stresses the importance of not viewing the MSM community as a homogenous group, but rather recognizing the existence of MSM subcultures and crafting interventions based on their individual beliefs and behaviors (Prestage et al., 2015).

METHODS

Pictured above is the sorting sheet utilized in the Q sort. The 44 statements were ranked & recorded by the participants on this sheet.

RESULTS

• All participants loaded on a single unrotated factor explained 62% of the variance
• Demographics: 75% ages 20-25 and 100% some college or college degree holders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasoning</th>
<th>Most Agree</th>
<th>Most Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather quantitative assessment data to determine safety</td>
<td>Safe sex includes asking my partner when he was last tested (Z-Score: 1.904)</td>
<td>Taking HIV prevention medication, such as PrEP, reduces the need to use condoms (Z-Score: -1.867)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alter practices to protect others</td>
<td>If I was diagnosed with HIV, I would change my sex practices (Z-Score: 1.816)</td>
<td>The pleasure I receive during bare-backing is worth the STI (Z-Score: -1.681)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoms serve as a more comprehensive means of protection</td>
<td>Value safety over pleasure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

On the need for early education:

“The complete absence of information on basic safe sex practices meant I had no idea how to put on a condom…I had to seek out information on how to have safe gay sex on my own and for a while, the porn I consumed was my only source of information on gay sex.”

“Looking back, I think someone could have easily taken advantage of me and my lack on knowledge.”

CONCLUSIONS

• Results gathered from this study serve as preliminary data
• Recruitment proved difficult due to the hidden nature of the rural MSM population as a possible result of the high rates of stigma faced by this group
• Further research with a larger sample size could be utilized to inform the development of targeted sexual health-based interventions tailored to this at-risk population
