

Promoting Psychosocial Intervention in Social Work to Manage Intersectional Stigma among Sexual Minorities during COVID-19 Pandemic in Uganda: Implications for Social Work Practice

Authors : Simon Mwima, Kasule Solomon Kibirige, Evans Jennifer Mann, Bosco Mukuba, Edson Chipalo, Agnes Nzomene, Eusebius Small, Moses Okumu

Abstract : Introduction: Social workers must create, implement, and evaluate client-centered psychosocial interventions (CCPI) to reduce the impact of intersectional stigma on HIV service utilization among sexual minorities. We contribute to the scarcity of evidence about sexual minorities in Uganda by using social support theory to explore clients' perceptions that shape CCPI. Based on Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with 31 adolescents recruited from Kampala's HIV clinics in 2021, our findings reveal the positive influence of instrumental, informational, esteem, emotional, and social network support as intersectional stigma reduction interventions. Men who have sex with men, lesbians, and bisexual women used such strategies to navigate a heavily criminalized and stigmatizing setting during the COVID-19 pandemic in Uganda. Conclusion: This study provides evidence for the social work profession to develop and implement psychosocial interventions that reduce HIV stigma and discrimination among MSM, lesbians, and bisexual young people living with HIV in Uganda.

Keywords : psychosocial interventions, social work, intersectional stigma, HIV/AIDS, adolescents, sexual minorities, Uganda

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