

The Socio-Demographics of HIV-Infected Persons with Psychological Morbidity in Zaria, Nigeria

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Abstract : Background: It is estimated that more than 330 million persons are living with HIV-infection globally and in Nigeria about 3.4 persons are living with the infection, with an annual death rate of 180,000. Psychological morbidity often accompany chronic illnesses and may be associated with substance abuse, poor health seeking behavior and adherence to treatment program; it may worsen existing health problems and the overall quality of life. Until the burden is effectively identified, intervention cannot be planned. Until there is a cure, the goal is to manage and cope effectively with HIV-infection. Little if any studies have been done in this area in the North West geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study would help to identify high risk groups and prevent the progression and spread of the infection. Aim: To identify HIV-infected persons with psychological morbidity, accessing HIV- clinic at Shika Hospital, Zaria, Kaduna State; and analyze their socio-demographic profile. Methods: A cross sectional descriptive study was carried out to assess and analyze the socio-demographic characteristics of HIV-infected persons attending Shika hospital Zaria Nigeria, who screened positive for psychological morbidity. A total of 109 HIV-infected persons receiving HAART at Shika clinic, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria, were administered questionnaires, the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) measuring psychological morbidity and socio-demographic data. The participants ranged in age between 18 and 75 years. Results: Data were analyzed using SPSS software 15. Both descriptive and inferential Statistics were performed on the data. Results indicate a total prevalent rate of psychological morbidity of 78 percent among participants. Of this, about 16.2 percent were severely distressed, 25.1 percent moderately distressed and 36.7 percent were mildly distressed. More females (65 percent of those with psychological morbidity) were found to be distressed than their male (55 percent) counterparts. It was (44 percent) for patients whose HIV-infection was of relatively shorter duration(2-4 years) than those of longer duration(5-9 years; and 10 years/above). The age group (21-30 years) was the most affected (35 percent). The rate was also 55 percent for Christians and 45 percent for Muslims. For married patients with partners it was 20 percent and for singles 30 percent; for the widowed (12 percent) and divorced (38 percent). At the level of tribal/ethnic groups, it was 13 percent for Ibos, 22 percent for Yorubas, 27 percent for Hausas and 33 percent for all the other minority tribes put together. Conclusion/Recommendation: The study has been able to identify the presence of psychological morbidity among HIV-infected persons as high and analyze the socio-demographic factors associated with it as significant. Periodic screening of HIV-infected persons for psychological morbidity and psychosocial intervention was recommended.

Keywords : socio-demographics, psychological morbidities, HIV-Infection, HAART

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