



Protecting the Confidence of HIV Patients and the Role of Nurses

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Abstract

Introduction: The study reflects on the effects of HIV infection on the mental health of patients and the reduction of confidence among HIV patients due to poor mental health. Investigating the crucial role of nurses for protecting the confidence and improving mental health of HIV patients is the core purpose of this study.

Materials and methods: Secondary sources such as articles, journals and others have been used for collecting relevant data as well as narrative analysis processes have been adopted for evaluating all the findings.

Results: As a result, it is identified that only nurses spend most of the time with HIV patients and they can maintain a positive relationship with them to motivate them. Human interaction is important for the patients to protect their confidence and that can be possible by only nurses as others are generally not allowed. Therefore, it can be stated that nurses have a great role in protecting the confidence of HIV patients which is essential for their faster recovery.

Keywords: HIV patients, nurses, mental health, confidence, infectious, interaction, positive relationship

1. Introduction & Background

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is an infectious disease that affects different organs of the body. This virus spreads to physical contacts; illicit injection, breastfeeding as well as

other viruses can spread during pregnancy. The rate of HIV patients is increasing in India and among them a large percentage is children which signify most of the time HIV spread during pregnancy in India. It is identified that **about 2.4 million** people in the country are living with HIV in recent times among them **about 70000** are children [1]. Apart from that, **about 421 pregnant women** tested HIV positive in 2022-23 with a rate of **0.03%** in the country.

Considering this, HIV infection is not only impactful on the organs but also effective on mental health of the patients. It is identified that HIV patients majorly suffer from stress and depression. Lack of social support, unemployability and fear of death are the major sources of depression and stress among HIV patients. Thus, a strong mental health and confidence among HIV patients is important for faster recovery from the disease. In regard to this, identifying the role of nurses in protecting the confidence of HIV patients is the main purpose of this study.

2. Aim and objectives of study

The study aims to identify the role of nurses in protecting the confidence of HIV patients. In regard to this, particular objectives are,

- To investigate the impacts of HIV on mental health of the patients
- To understand the importance of a good mental health and confidence for HIV patients
- To demonstrate the role of nurses in developing a good mental health and protecting the confidence of HIV patients

3. Significance of study

There are many more articles and journals which are focused on the impacts of HIV on mental health of patients but none of the article does not specifically includes the importance of nurses in developing mental health stability of HIV patients. The study discusses the significant role of nurses for improving mental health and protecting the confidence of HIV patients and that enhances the significance of this study.

4. Materials and methods

The use of specific methods and tools plays a crucial role in conducting a research paper as it helps to gather adequate data. There are several methods and instruments that can be used in research studies but choosing the right one based on the requirements of research studies is important. At first, choosing a particular type of design is important for completing the article with a proper structure. There are two categories of research designs such as qualitative and quantitative which are known for their specific features and capabilities. Qualitative design refers to structuring the research study with non-numerical information whereas quantitative design is all about the use of statistics and numerical data [2]. The use of **qualitative design** is appropriate for this study as it is simpler and less time consuming than quantitative design.

Thereafter, the use of a research philosophy for understanding the findings from an improved perspective is important. Four categories of research philosophy are positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism. Positivism philosophy supports quantitative data, interpretivism philosophy supports qualitative data and pragmatism philosophy supports both quantitative and quantitative data [3]. It is previously mentioned that qualitative design has been chosen for this study and based on that the use of **interpretivism philosophy** is accurate for this study. On the other hand, choosing appropriate sources that support the chosen

research design is important for collecting accurate and relevant data for research topics. Qualitative design supports two types of sources for data collection such as primary sources and secondary sources.

Primary sources that help to collect qualitative data are interviews whereas secondary sources for qualitative data are articles, journals and other published sources [4]. It is identified that primary sources are capable of providing original data which are relevant for conducting a study and secondary sources are capable of providing relevant and objective data. Furthermore, interviewing people is quite a time consuming task and it is not relevant to this particular research topic. Therefore, the *secondary sources* have been used for gathering qualitative data regarding the role of nurses in protecting the confidence of HIV patients. There are many articles and scholarly journals that provide adequate and relevant information about HIV patients. Besides, there were a few criteria for selecting articles and collecting data which are selecting articles that are published between 2018 and 2022, eliminating doctoral dissertations, selecting articles that are related to the topic.

The first criterion ensures the collection of only recent data, second criteria ensures collecting relevant data and the third criteria ensures reliability. On the other hand, the use of specific methods and tools for data analysis was also important. There are different methods that are used for qualitative data analysis such as thematic analysis, narrative analysis, systematic analysis and others. Among all of these methods of data analysis, *narrative analysis* is one of the simplest processes and therefore this has been chosen for this study. Therefore, all the findings from the selected articles are narratively evaluated by creating particular points as well as briefly discussed in the data analysis section.

5. Results

5.1 Impact of HIV on the mental health of patients

AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is a critical health condition caused by the HIV or Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV weakens the immune system among people by destroying CD4+ T cells which are a type of white blood cell that is important for fighting infections [5]. HIV causes various physical health-related problems among people. On the other hand, it created multiple mental complications among the sufferers. HIV increases stress among the sufferers due to other physical illnesses or conditions. People who are living with HIV have a higher chance of developing anxiety, depression and different cognitive disorders. Infections due to HIV can also affect the brain and can develop mental illness among the sufferers. Infections can affect the central and rest of the nervous system and this may change the behaviours of people.

Besides, medications which are used to treat HIV infection have multiple side effects which may enhance mental complications among the sufferers. These are the primary cause of increasing depression and mental complications among people but there are a few other causes that can increase mental illness among the sufferers. Having trouble getting mental support and services is the major cause of developing mental complications among HIV sufferers [6]. In India, people who are suffering from different mental illnesses are not getting proper mental healthcare support due to the presence of a treatment gap in mental healthcare services. People who are living with HIV experience a loss of social support which increases anxiety and depression among HIV sufferers. The majority of sufferers isolate themselves

and society sometimes isolate the HIV sufferers from the community which enhance the mental complications among HIV patients and even it leads patients towards suicide.

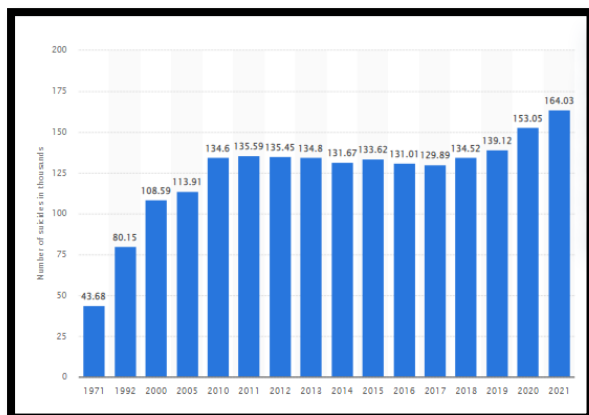


Figure 1: Number of suicide in India from 1971 to 2021

(Source: [7])

In 2021 over 164 thousand people in India committed suicide which signifies mental health and implications are the major threats to society [7]. Sometimes due to HIV infection, patients lose their employment and in different cases, they think they cannot perform well at their job. The loss of employment develops financial problems among the patients which can increase depression and other mental complications among them. In some cases, people having HIV lose their relationships and support from near family members which is the major cause of developing mental illness among HIV sufferers. Discrimination in the society and workplace also can increase mental distress and that can result in serious mental illness among HIV patients. Hence, it can be perceived that HIV has major negative impacts on the people among HIV patients and that can lead them to take suicidal decisions.

5.2 Importance of Protecting the Confidence of HIV Patients

HIV or Human immunodeficiency virus is a serious medical condition that affects the immune system and creates multiple physical and mental conditions among millions of people worldwide. Advanced medical treatments and healthcare services have made it possible for people with HIV to live healthy and long life [8]. Despite of advance medical treatments, people having HIV infections struggle with psychological and social complications that lead them towards depression and anxiety. This psychological disturbance among people can decrease the physical condition of the patients. One of the effective factors in managing HIV is building confidence which can improve the mental and physical health of patients. Confidence is important for managing any health-related complications and it is also useful for the fight against HIV infections. It enables patients to stick to their medication and make effective communications with healthcare experts. Enhanced confidence among HIV sufferers can help to reduce stress and anxiety in patients [9]. When people feel confident they are more likely to take care of themselves and that helps them to improve their health.

Additionally, confidence can help people to break down the stigma and discrimination which are created due to the disease. Confidence allows patients to openly discuss their health-related issues with the healthcare teams which is important for getting better treatment and improving health [10]. There are different strategies by which confidence among HIV

sufferers can be improved. First and foremost it is important to educate people about HIV and its treatment options. This gives the patients knowledge about the disease and helps them to inform their health-related issues to the health care providers. Additionally, it is important to build a strong support team to give proper treatment and diagnosis services to HIV patients which can increase confidence among them. Exercise and physical activity also play a significant role in removing depression from the patients which helps them to reduce their stress level and give them the confidence to fight against the infection [11]. The patient can build self-care routines and find healthy ways to cope with stress also can help them to improve confidence which is essential to reduce implications due to the infection.

5.3 Role of nurses in protecting the confidence of HIV Patients

The critical role of nurses in protecting the mental health and confidence of HIV patients is discussed in this section as it is identified that nurses play a very important role in faster recovery of HIV patients. HIV is an infectious disease and due to that the patients are not allowed to meet their family members for a certain time. Doctors and nurses follow certain restrictions for meeting the patients and only nurses stay with the patients to take care of them. On the other hand, lack of interaction, fear of death and other implications reduces the confidence of the HIV patients and that might take more time to recover [12]. In this type of situation, nurses can maintain an interactive and positive relationship with the HIV patients for improving their mental health conditions. Motivational interaction with nurses can protect the confidence of the patients and that is good for their faster recovery [13]. This requires effective communication skills among the nurses.

On the other hand, the nurses can educate the HIV patients about the entire process of treatment which will make the patients stronger. Adequate knowledge about the treatment and medication helps to reduce the fear of the patients and that is important for protecting their confidence. As only the nurses spend most of the time with HIV patients therefore they have the higher chances to motivate the patients and make them stronger to face all the challenges [14]. In addition to that, the nurses can provide emotional support to the HIV patients who are also important for protecting the confidence and improving mental health of the patients. Hence, the healthcare institutions should ensure that all their nurses have effective communication skills as it is important for positively interacting with the HIV patients. Therefore, it can be stated that nurses have an important role in protecting the confidence of HIV patients and they should play this role significantly for better mental health and faster recovery of the patients.

6. Discussion

HIV is a critical health condition that weakens the immune system among people by destroying CD4+ T cells which are the type of white blood cell that is important to fight against the infection. HIV causes various physical implications and it also negatively affects the psychological and mental health of people. HIV creates multiple mental complications among the sufferers [15]. HIV increase stress among patients due to other physical illness which occurs due to the poor immune system. Medications which is used to reduce HIV infection also can negatively affect the brain and nervous system which can increase different mental illnesses among HIV sufferers. People having HIV infection sometimes treated badly in the community this leads them towards depression. Loss of employment and decreased

productivity among the sufferers also lead them towards trauma and anxiety which are the major cause of increasing mental illness among the people.

The majority of sufferers isolate themselves from society due to societal non-acceptance which is the major cause of increasing mental complications and even suicide. Discrimination in society and the workplace leads patients towards mental illness which deteriorates their health and decreases the chance of survival from the disease [16]. In order to reduce mental illness and mental complications from the patients, confidence building among the sufferers is essential. Enhancing confidence among the patients helps them to improve their mental condition which reflects in their physical health. Despite physical illness people living with HIV struggle with psychological and social complications which lead patients towards anxiety and depression. One of the effective factors in managing and improving health from HIV infection is building confidence which can improve the mental and physical health of patients. It helps patients to stick to their medication or treatments and make effective communications with healthcare experts. Enhanced confidence among HIV sufferers can reduce stress and anxiety from the patients.

When people feel confident they are more likely to take care of themselves and that helps to improve their physical and mental health. Increasing confidence among HIV sufferers helps patients to openly discuss different health-related implications and side effects with healthcare service providers. There are different strategies that can improve confidence among people who are suffering from HIV. Improving education and healthcare facilities can enhance confidence among HIV patients which is essential to fight against the virus [17]. The patient also can enhance their level of confidence by involving themselves in exercise and other activities which help them to improve their health. Building confidence and reducing mental illness among HIV sufferers are interlinked factors. The mental health of patients can be improved by developing confidence among them and nurses have an important role in developing confidence among patients. People who are living with HIV do not interact with others they only interact with the healthcare professionals such as nurses and doctors.

Therefore, nurses have enough opportunity to encourage them and develop the confidence to fight the infection. Motivational interaction with the nurses helps patients to make them confident which is essential for their faster recovery. Besides, nurses can educate patients about HIV and its whole treatment process which helps patients to enhance their confidence among them [18]. As nurse spends more time with the patients they have a higher chance to motivate patients and make them able to fight with society which is essential for their recovery. Therefore, it can be stated that nurses have a crucial role in enhancing the confidence of HIV patients and nurses should play an important role in the betterment of mental health among the patients. Enhancing motivation and confidence among patients can help them in faster recovery from the disease.

7. Conclusion

It can be concluded that HIV is a poorly impactful disease and this not only affects the physical health but also the mental health of patients. It is identified that HIV can negatively impact the lungs, heart and other organs of the body as well as the patients might have neurological complications due to all the medications. Therefore, these complications reduce the confidence of the patients and that is more impactful as they need to be strong and fight

back with the diseases. The nurses only can spend time with HIV patients and they can motivate the patients to be strong and protect their confidence. Thus, the nurses have a very effective and crucial role in the recovery of HIV patients by protecting the confidence of the patients.

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