FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HIV SEXUAL RISK MANAGEMENT AMONG HIV-NEGATIVE MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN LIVING IN QUEBEC AND WHO USE INTERNET TO FIND SEXUAL PARTNERS

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Abstract

Objectives: This study examined factors associated with HIV sexual risk management among HIV-negative men who have sex with men living in Quebec and who use Internet to find sexual partners. Methods: We used data from Net Gay Baromètre 2008, a non-representative online quantitative survey which took place on the Internet in Quebec from December 2007 to May 2008. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe factors associated with using the Internet to find sexual partners. Results: Overall respondents profile (n=3718)

Background

Based on an ecological model, 1-According to epidemiologic data, MSM are a particular seroconversion adapted to the reality of MSM who live in Quebec and use Internet to find sexual partners. Numerous studies have found that seeking partner in dating websites was associated with higher risk behaviors, but association between sexual risk behavior and Internet remain unclear. 2-A In the past 12 months, 15.7% of MSM in Quebec used Internet to find sexual partners. Based on an ecological model, the purpose of this study was to identify and describe factors associated with using the Internet to find sexual partners.

Methods

Data collection: We used data from Net Gay Baromètre 2008: a non-representative online quantitative survey which took place on the Internet in Quebec from December 2007 to May 2008. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe factors associated with using the Internet to find sexual partners. Results: Overall respondents profile (n=3718)

Results: HIV-negative respondents (n=1794)

Factors associated with UAI with a HIV-positive or a HIV-unknow casual sexual partner (UAI+/?)

Conclusion

In conclusion, Multivariate analysis show that homosocial identity, number of casual partners, marginal sexual practices, drug use, engagement in a couple relationship and history of STI in the past 12 months were significant predictors associated with UAI+/? among these respondents. Bivariate analysis show that these predictors were more often declared by respondents who live in Montreal region, are seeking partners, are seeking partners in sex venues and are regularly seeking partners on dating websites. This group of predictors and associated factors shows various sexual scenarios. Those sexual scenarios seem to be more frequent in certain spaces like Internet, which influence the management of sexual risks.

Prevention initiatives: Those results underline the importance to develop initiatives online to prevent HIV and other STI transmission in respect of values and norms of the gay dating websites where prevention is done. Those results also suggest to present different sexual scenarios in preventative initiatives. Condom and risk reduction strategies, drug use and sexual risk management with causal partners among MSM who are engaged in a couple relationship should be address in prevention messages.

Limits: This study has two important limits. First, like the majority of online studies, the sample was not representative of all MSM in Quebec, therefore, the results can not be generalized. Second, because of the design of the study, HIV status was auto-declared by respondents. So, it’s possible that a minority HIV-negative respondents was, in facts, HIV-positive without knowing their status.