Methods

Study Design and Participants: Baseline cross-sectional data from the Momentum Health study, a longitudinal prospective-cohort study of HIV-positive and negative GBM living in metro-Vancouver, Canada, was used to assess socio-demographic, psychosocial (e.g., McKinnon et al. 2001’s Escape Motives, study α=0.90), and relational sexual behavioral and substance use factors associated with event-level age-disparate partnerships.

Outcomes: In order to determine factors associated with relative age-difference among participants we asked men to report “What is the approximate age of this sex partner compared to yours?” for their 5 most recent sexual encounters. Available responses included: “younger”, “much younger”, “older”, “much older” or “same age” partners.

Statistical Analysis: A generalized linear mixed model for multivariable logistic regression was used to identify factors associated with event-level sex with younger and much younger versus same aged and older or much older versus same aged partners. Interaction tests were conducted and modeled for the effects of Age on HIV status.

Results

The majority (66.7%) of reported sexual encounters were with age-disparate partners (either, younger, much-younger, older or much-older). Within these encounters only 7.4% and 6.4% were between those much-younger and much-older respectively.

Results Cont’d

- Items positively associated with having older partners included being Asian versus White, increased cognitive escape scores, reporting partner using EDD, and receiving money, goods, or drugs for sex. Sexual encounters with older partners were negatively associated with being bisexual, event-level EDD use, and being HIV positive (see Table 2).
- Men with younger partners were independently less likely to meet in a sexualized space compared with online (aOR=0.65, 95%CI:0.46-0.92), and more likely to make more than $30,000CAN/year (aOR=1.75, 95%CI=1.25-2.47).
- An interaction effect for age on HIV status and found younger HIV-positive GBM were more likely to be with older partners than younger HIV-negative GBM (figure 2, above) while older HIV-negative GBM were more likely to be with younger partners than older HIV-positive GBM (aOR=1.06,95%CI:1.03-1.10) (figure 3, above).

Conclusions

- Younger HIV-positive and Asian GBM were more likely to report having older partners.
- Consistent with the literature, participants reporting older partners were more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behaviors, compared with similarly aged partnerships.
- Discrepancies reported in sexual HIV-risk and transactional sex among age-disparate partners highlight important targets for health promotion and future research.

References


Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (107544), National Institutes for Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse (R01DA026109) and Health Canada. We thank our community colleagues at the Health Initiatives Men, YouthCO HIV & Hep C Society of BC, and Positive Living BC for their support. We also thank the research participants for sharing their important data.

Table 2. Multivariable ordinal associations with older partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AOR (95%CI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Identity</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay (ref)</td>
<td>0.37 (0.21-0.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>1.56 (0.90-2.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>2.01 (1.31-3.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (ref)</td>
<td>1.49 (0.84-2.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.09 (0.58-2.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>0.68 (0.53-0.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.46 (0.26-0.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risky Sex</td>
<td>4.64 (2.49-8.64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

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