

## Does Stigma predict mental illness? A study of HIV/AIDS and Cancer patients in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

### Abstract

This study explores whether HIV patients suffer more stigma than cancer patients and the consequences of this for mental-health. Study used a factorial-design with a conveniently sampled 100 HIV and Cancer patients in clinics from Gauteng Province with age ranging from 20-73 years with mean age of 44.4 years. Results showed significant effect for enacted-stigma  $F=(1.98)=17.629, p<.001$  and anxiety  $F=(1.98)=5.750, p<.001$ . A post-hoc showed HIV patients with higher mean score of enacted-stigma  $\bar{X}=4.22$  than cancer patients  $\bar{X}=1.28$  and in addition, reporting more anxiety  $\bar{X}=8.81$  v  $\bar{X}=6.42$ . Enacted-stigma influenced GHQ Total ( $F=(98)=1.700, p<.05$ ); Anxiety ( $F=(97)=2.578, p<.004$ ); and Depression ( $F=(97)=3.39, p<.001$ ). Perceived-community stigma had one main-effect for depression ( $F=(1.98)=1.452, p<.05$ ). Recommendations include tailoring interventions to meet cultural needs of patients.

*Keywords:* Stigma; Mental Illness; HIV/AIDS; Cancer; Gauteng Province.