

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of social interactions, coping strategies, and self-construals on the mental health of HIV infected people. Twenty-six HIV+ and AIDS Chinese patients receiving services in either one of the three largest AIDS-service non-governmental organizations were recruited for the study. Each participant completed a set of questionnaire consisted of Social Support Questionnaire, Negative Illness-related Network Interactions, Ways of Coping Scale, Self-Construal Scale, and General Health Questionnaire. Correlational analysis showed that negative and positive social support may have differential relationship with mental health. Positive social interaction had a significant relationship with proactive coping, whereas negative social interaction showed a significant relationship with avoidant coping. Results from regression analyses found that independent self-construal was predictive of mental health. Independent self-construal also had significant relationship with positive and negative social interactions, as well as proactive coping strategies. Interdependent self-construal was related to both positive social interaction and proactive coping. The greatest methodological limitation was the small sample size which limited the generalizability of this study result. The present study was a tentative or preliminary effort to study the effects of social interactions, coping strategies, and self-construals on mental health of the AIDS patient in Hong Kong. Implications of present study and psychosocial interventions for AIDS patients were proposed. Future research directions in this area were also suggested.