



DESPITE HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS, INCLUDING CHEMSEX, BARRIERS EXIST FOR HCV TESTING FOR MSM THROUGHOUT INDIA

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Background and Objectives

- Indian MSM are increasingly using social media to seek community and find partners
- Little is known about HCV testing and sexual and drug using behaviors among MSM in India
- **Objectives**
 - To estimate HCV testing rates among a sample of online Indian MSM, particularly among high risk individuals.
 - To understand reasons for not having an HCV test among those never tested.

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Methods

- **Design:** Cross-sectional, web-based, self administered survey in Hindi or English. Larger study was to assess HIV testing.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** MSM (cis- or trans- MSM), 18 years or older, sexually active in past 2 years, live in India, not an immigrant.
- **Recruitment:** via advertisements on multiple MSM dating apps, Facebook, Instagram from Jan-Feb 2017. Incentive: raffle for online gift card
- **Measures:** HCV testing and sexual behaviors (including drug use with sex), access to testing, and sociodemographics
- **Primary Outcome:** Ever having an HCV test: Yes vs. No/Don't know
 - "Have you ever been tested for Hepatitis C (different than hepatitis A or B)?"
- **Analysis:** Summary statistics and multivariable logistic regression with GEE (to account for clustering by state) to identify factors associated with HCV testing

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Sociodemographic Characteristics	Total (n=4150) %
Age	
18-23	26.8
24-29	42.7
30-39	24.6
40-49	4.9
50+	1.0
Language Survey Taken	
Hindi	17.9
English	82.1
Highest Education	
Less than High School	2.7
High School	6.4
Some College	7.7
College	69.2
Graduate school	14.0
Household Income (Indian Rs/Month)	
≤ 10,000	15.1
10,001-15,000	9.9
15,001-20,000	11.3
20,001 – 40,000	21.6
> 40,000	42.2
City Size	
Rural	7.8
Semi-rural	9.3
Urban	29.3
Metropolis	53.6

Results

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Behavioral Characteristics	Total (n=4150) %
Sexual Identity	
Gay/Homosexual	48.8
Bisexual	45.8
Straight/ Heterosexual	5.4
Anal sex in past 6 months	76.3
Condomless anal sex (CAS) in past 6 months	42.2
>6 sex partners in past 6 months	40.6
Drug use with sex in past 12 months	5.4
Meow Meow	21.6
Poppers	44.1
Cocaine	5.7
Heroin	2
Crystal Meth	7.4
Drug or alcohol use with sex in past 12 months	29.9
Diagnosed with STI in past 12 months	6.9

Results

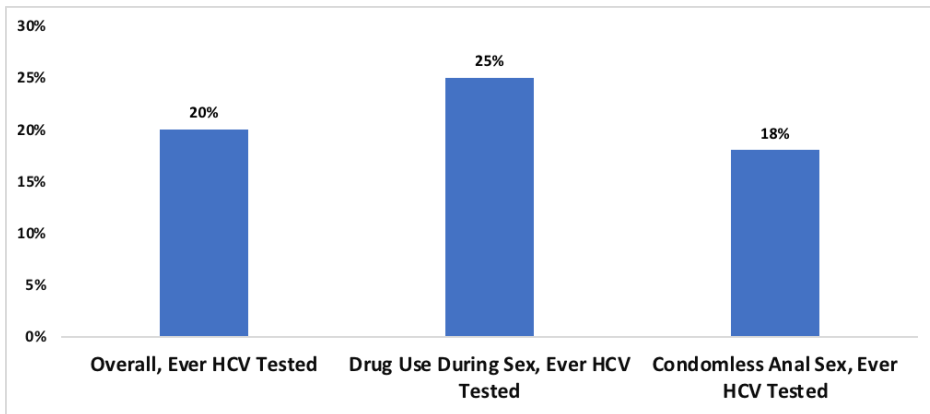
Structural Characteristics	Total (n=4150) %
"Out" to anyone about sex with or attraction to men	59.9
Disclosed having sex with men to a doctor	22.4
Easy access to free testing	37.3
Aware of a comfortable testing site	47.1
Perceived HIV stigma ^b (M,SD)	2.5 (0.81)

^bPerceived stigma on a scale of 1-5.

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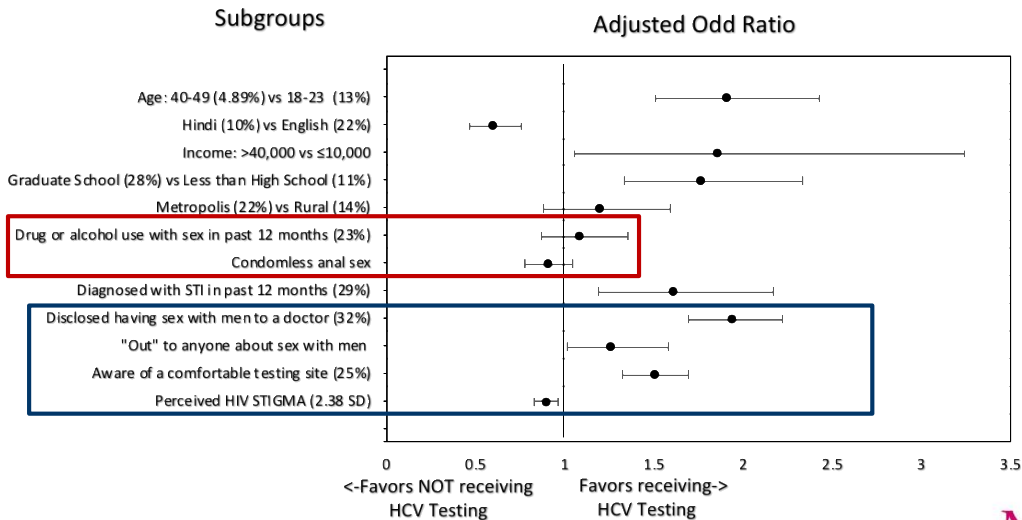


HCV Testing Rates



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Characteristics Associated with HCV Testing



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Conclusions

- In a large diverse sample of Indian MSM, the majority had never been tested for HCV, including those practicing condomless anal sex and chemsex.
- Interventions that reduce stigma and increase structural support are needed to increase testing among a high-risk group of Indian MSM.

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