1. Background

- Migrant workers have figured prominently in the global HIV/AIDS pandemic from Africa to India.
- The United States has an estimated 117,000 migrant day laborers, seeking urban settings, and over one million migrant agricultural workers in rural settings (Valenzuela et al., 2006).
- Because of their diverse origin in the United States and low social status, these laborers are vulnerable to discrimination, lack of health care, lack of education, lack of decent housing, and substandard work conditions.
- AIDS is an emerging threat to Mexican migrants in California and along the California–Mexico border (Brouwer et al., 2006).
- Latinos accounted for 39% of the AIDS cases diagnosed in 2005, while they comprised 15% of the overall population in California. The percent of newly diagnosed AIDS cases who were Latino has steadily increased in the last 20 years (CDC).
- There is a dearth of HIV research about this stigmatized population.

2. Objective

To assess HIV testing practices, HIV/AIDS knowledge, and HIV/AIDS stigma among male Latino migrant workers in San Francisco and Monterey County, California, United States.

3. Methods

Overview of Methods

- Participant observation ethnography
- In-depth key informant interviews
- Quantitative survey and HIV testing and counseling of 126 Latino day laborers in San Francisco (urban) and 125 Latino migrant/ seasonal workers in the agricultural sector in Monterey County (rural) in 2004–2005 (N = 251)
- Recruitment using convenience sampling of camps, day labor pick-up sites, San Francisco Day Laborer Program, Dolores Street Neighborhood Resource Center, The San Francisco Day Laborer Program, Dolores Street Community Center, John XXIII Drop-In Center and MDC sites, and many more.

Procedures

- Informed consent
- 40-60 minute interview in private space
- Ongoing HIV testing
- Counseling
- Referral to social agencies
- Return to the interviewee and counseling 1 to 2 weeks postinterview
- Every study participant chose to conduct the interview in Spanish.

Analysis

- For this study, we limited analysis to men only that have had at least three different jobs in 12 months, none of which lasted more than 2 months
- Study population in Monterey consisted of individuals whose income depended on work in the agricultural sector, including harvesting, packing, shipping, etc.
- Study population in San Francisco consisted of individuals working in urban settings, including construction, hospitality, transportation to work.

3. Results

4. HIV Testing History

- Figure 1. Percentage Who Reported Having Ever Been Tested for HIV

5. HIV/AIDS Knowledge

- Figure 2. Percentage Who Answered 10 or More Questions Correctly in a 16-Item HIV/AIDS, True-False, Knowledge Questionnaire

- Table 3. Eight Examples of Knowledge Items and Percentage Who Answered Affirmative (Yes)

6. HIV/AIDS Stigma

- Figure 3. Number of HIV/AIDS Stigma Statements (Out of Three) That Were Answered Yes

- Table 4. Percent of Answered Positive Statements for HIV/AIDS Stigma (N = 181)

7. Limitations

- Data are self-reported and subject to reporting bias.
- Not a random sample of male Latino day laborers, so results are not generalizable.
- Cross-sectional study design means we can assess association but not causation.

8. Conclusions

- Provocative of HIV testing is low among this population.
- Many seem to have known that HIV is transmitted through unprotected sex and needle sharing, but they also think that HIV can be transmitted through a variety of other ways such as sharing food, sitting on toilet seats, and getting insect bites.
- Previous HIV testing is associated with better AIDS knowledge, pointing to the usefulness of HIV testing interventions.
- Stigma toward HIV-positive individuals is very common.

9. Recommendations

- HIV among this population needs to be destigmatized through increased education and social marketing.
- Prevention messages aimed at dispelling how HIV is not transmitted are needed.
- Effectiveness of HIV education and prevention efforts targeting this population may be increased by:
  - Conducting HIV activities through day labor work centers, sites, and drop in and medical centers;
  - Increasing population-specific community health outreach services;
  - Ensuring that prevention activities are culturally appropriate;
  - Combining HIV activism with tuberculosis testing and treatment programs;
  - Increasing coordination between multiple agencies that work with this population.

Acknowledgements

This research was generously supported by the California Department of Health Services Office of AIDS.

This study was a collaboration among many organizations and people:
- California Dept. of Health Services: Assunta Ritieni, Susan Gilbreath, Juan Ruiz
- UCSF RTI International: Alex Kral, Andrea Scott
- San Francisco State University: Jim Quesada, Nazih Gonzalez, Louis Gunman
- Chico’s School of Valle del Salto: Max Coreas, Begonia Campos, Angel Magaña, Daniel Cearley
- The author thank the study participants and the community-based organizations that made this collaboration possible, including Mission Neighborhood Resource Center, The San Francisco Day Laborer Program, Dolores Street Community Center, John XXIII Drop-In Center and MDC sites, and many more.


*Presenting author


References


* Presenting author


RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.