

ABSTRACT

Introduction

Although HIV/AIDS and depression are the leading cause of disability, the prevalence of depression among people living with HIV/AIDS has also been under studied. This study examined the prevalence and the factors associated with depression among HIV/AIDS patients attending the Infectious Disease Clinic (IDC) at Butabika hospital.

Methods

Across sectional study of 103 HIV positive adults was conducted among patients attending the IDC Butabika hospital. Patients were consecutively recruited and data collected included patient socio demographics, the prevalence of depression and the associated triggering and protective factors.

Results

The results revealed the prevalence rates of depression among People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) as 50% for moderate, 48% for severe and 2% for mild depression. The triggering factors included both clinical and psychosocial namely; the WHO staging (3), pain feelings, use of Highly Active Anti-Retro Viral Therapy (HAART), side effects of Anti-retro Viral Therapy (ART), physical illness, self blame, multiple losses due to HIV, disclosure to family, positive history of mental illness and major life challenges. Protective factors included having no history of hospitalization, no pain feelings, no alcohol and substance abuse and the WHO stage 1 of HIV.

Conclusion

There was a prevalence (98%) of depression among HIV/AIDS patients and the most important protective factors were no history of hospitalization (63.11%), no history of alcohol and substance abuse (62.14%) and the triggering factors were use of HAART (95.15%), disclosure to family (82.52%). It is thus **recommended** that routine depression screening should be done among people living with HIV/AIDS and efforts to enhance protective factors and reduce triggering factors should be emphasized in interventions.