

Association of CAI Vulnerability and Sexual Minority Victimization Distress Among Adolescent Men Who Have Sex With Men (AMSM)

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BACKGROUND: AMSM are at increased risk of HIV¹ and prevalence of condomless anal intercourse (CAI) among this population is high (approximately 44% in one national sample).² AMSM experience sexual minority victimization (SMV), which has been associated with CAI.³ CAI is also associated with interpersonal power imbalances between male sexual partners.⁴

The aim of this study was to test the hypotheses that:
 1) Vulnerability to partner CAI influence and distress in response to SMV would be positively and significantly related to each other and reported frequency of CAI; 2) Vulnerability to partner CAI influence would significantly account for the association between distress in response to SMV and CAI frequency

METHODS

- Procedure:** Online survey, 143 cisgender male youth, 14-17 y/o, US sample, reporting at least 1 male anal sex partner and 1 experience of SMV in past 6 months, HIV seronegative or unknown. Waiver of guardian permission.
- Participants:** Mean age = 16.17 (.83); 49% Non-Hispanic White, 37.1% Hispanic/Latinx, 13.3% Other. 81.8% gay, 14.0% bisexual. Male sexual partners, $M = 3.33$ (4.23); median = 2.00.
- Measures:** **CAI Vulnerability** (6 items, $\alpha = 0.71$), e.g., "I have agreed to have anal sex even when my male or transgender female partner refuses to use a condom" (1=never, 5=always). **SMV Distress** (4 items, $\alpha = 0.73$), e.g., "In the past 6 months, have you been teased or bullied because someone thought you were LGBTQ?" (1 = it never happened, 5 = it happened and upset me quite a bit). **CAI frequency** (2 single items, reverse scored), "How frequently have [you worn a condom during anal sex with male partners/your male or transgender female partner(s) worn a condom] during anal sex in your lifetime? (1=never, 5=always).

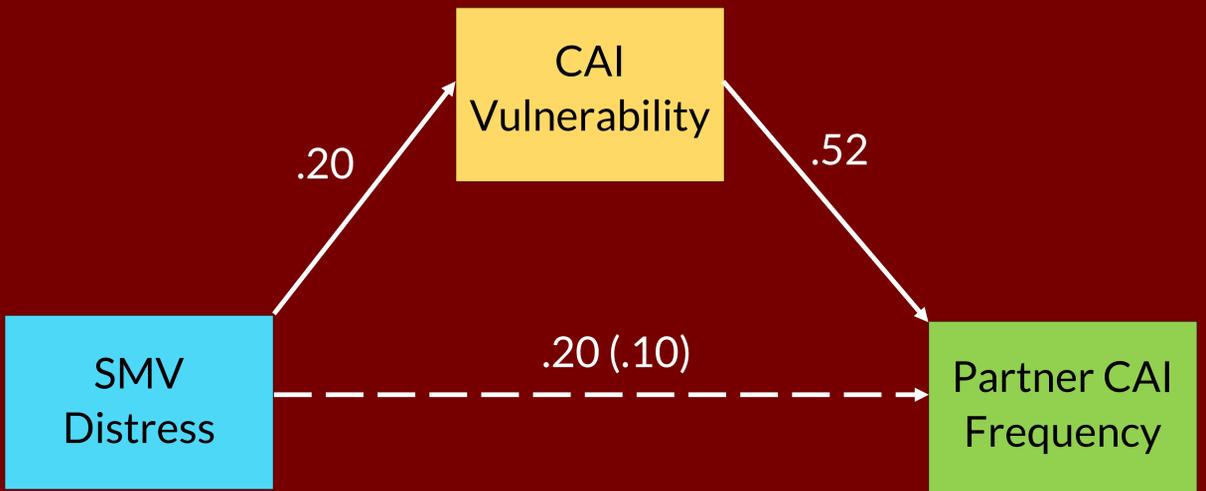
RESULTS:

- 34.3-35.7% reported they or their partner never/rarely used a condom during anal intercourse
- CAI Vulnerability** correlated with **participant CAI frequency** ($r = .53, p < .001$), **partner CAI frequency** ($r = .52, p < .001$), and **SMV distress** ($r = .20, p < .01$). **SMV distress** correlated with **partner CAI frequency** ($r = .20, p < .05$).
- CAI Vulnerability** significantly accounted for the association between **SMV Distress** and **partner CAI frequency**. Bootstrapping (10,000): significant indirect effect: 95% CI = [0.02, 0.37].

DISCUSSION:

- The study highlights the importance of examining the influence of interpersonal relationship factors on the disproportionate level of HIV and HIV risk behaviors among AMSM.
- HIV prevention strategies designed to increase condom use among AMSM have the potential to benefit from procedures aimed at increasing interpersonal sexual assertiveness and decreasing distress associated with sexual minority victimization.

Vulnerability to partner influence over condomless anal intercourse (CAI) significantly accounts for the relationship between sexual minority victimization (SMV) distress and frequency of CAI among adolescent MSM



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Table 1 – CAI Vulnerability Scale, Item Means, and % Agreement

Scale item	M (SD)	% Agreement (N = 143)
CAI Vulnerability scale score ($\alpha = 0.71$)	1.97 (0.78)	
I have not used condoms because I was not comfortable talking about them with my male or transgender female sexual partner(s)	1.44 (1.03)	17 (11.9%)
I have agreed to have anal sex even when my male or transgender female partner refuses to use a condom	2.30 (1.51)	57 (39.9%)
I have not used condoms because I am afraid my male or transgender female partner will react violently	1.13 (0.49)	7 (4.9%)
It has been difficult for me to say no to male or transgender female sexual partners who refuse to use a condom	1.96 (1.36)	42 (29.4%)
My male or transgender female sexual partners have a strong influence on my use of condoms	2.39 (1.38)	63 (44.1%)
I take the lead in deciding whether my male or transgender female partner or I will use a condom [†]	3.43 (1.34)	71 (77.7%)

[†]Reverse scored

Table 2 – SMV Distress Scale, Item Means, and % Agreement

Scale item	SMV Distress M (SD)	Occurrence N (%)	N (%) Reporting Distress for an Occurrence ^a	M (SD) for Distress Reported for an Occurrence
SMV Distress scale ($\alpha = 0.73$)	2.30 (0.87)			
In the past 6 months, have you been teased or bullied because someone thought you were gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer?	2.76 (1.13)	127 (88.8%)	75 (59.1%)	2.98 (0.98)
In the past 6 months, have you been hit or beaten up because someone thought you were gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer?	1.21 (0.76)	13 (9.1%)	8 (61.5%)	3.31 (1.25)
In the past 6 months, have you been treated rudely or unfairly because someone thought you were gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer?	2.61 (1.40)	97 (67.8%)	75 (77.3%)	3.37 (1.04)
In the past 6 months, has someone called you bad names because they thought you were gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer?	2.62 (1.28)	112 (78.3%)	67 (60.0%)	3.07 (1.07)

^a Participants who provided a rating of 3 or above where 3 = it happened and upset me a little, 4 = it happened and upset me moderately, 5 = it happened and upset me quite a bit).

Table 3 – Regression Analyses

Model	B	B*	p	95% CI	
				LL	UL
1. SMV Distress -> Partner CAI frequency	.35	.20	.03	.04	.66
2. SMV Distress -> CAI Vulnerability	.18	.20	.02	.03	.33
3. CAI Vulnerability -> Partner CAI frequency	1.06	.52	<.001	.78	1.36
4. Complete model					
CAI Vulnerability -> Partner CAI frequency	1.02	.51	<.001	.72	1.33
SMV Distress -> Partner CAI frequency	.17	.10	.22	-.10	.44
Indirect effect					
SMV Distress -> CAI Vulnerability -> Partner CAI frequency	.17	.10	-	.02 ^a	.37 ^a

Note: B = unstandardized beta; B* = standardized beta; CI = confidence interval of unstandardized beta; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.

^aBootstrapped 95% confidence interval with 10,000 samples