

Title	Understanding the Effects of Stigma and Coping Mechanisms of People Living with HIV
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ABSTRACT	
<p>Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is one of the most epidemic, incurable and stigmatized virus at present. Since the start of the virus, there had been millions of people infected and died because of it. Aside from the risk of possible death, stigma and discrimination are two of the most dreadful experiences that people living with HIV (PLHIV) face in their communities. This led to the purpose of this study which is to understand the stigmas and their effects alongside with the coping mechanisms of PLHIV. The researchers used qualitative method with the aid of a questionnaire distributed to the informants. Research protocols and ethical considerations were done in the study's implementation. It was discovered that the informants experienced social and physical discrimination, self-stigma and fear of disclosure which made them pity their situations, inflict abuse to themselves and let abuse be inflicted to them by others. They cope up from these negative experiences by holding on to their spiritual faith, support from their family and their HIV support group. It was emphasized by the informants that the HIV support group, especially their counselors are of great help and encouragement for them to continue with life. Thus, these results call for a strengthened set of policies in educating and involving the PLHIV's families in dealing with their condition, empowering the HIV support groups institutionally and financially and even having broader information dissemination about HIV in order for these fighters to keep normalcy in their lives along with their communities.</p>	
Keywords: HIV, People Living with HIV, Stigma, Effects of Stigma, Coping Mechanisms	