

Conclusions:

The results suggest construct validity and reliability of the 14-item stigma scale measuring three aspects related to COVID-19 infection in Tunisia.

Key messages:

- The 14-item stigma scale is a good psychometric tool to be used in assessing COVID-19 related stigma in Tunisia.
- Monitoring COVID-19 stigma with a valid and reliable would guide its prevention actions.

Validation of the 12-item HIV-stigma scale adapted for use among Tunisian COVID-19 patients

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Background:

Although, there is a rapidly accumulating body of studies on the various aspects of COVID-19, little interest was given to develop valid specific scales measuring COVID-19-related stigma. The current study aims to test validity and reliability of a modified version of the 12-item HIV Stigma Scale, adapted for adults with COVID-19 infection living in the region of Sousse (Tunisia).

Methods:

A cross sectional study was conducted among patients with COVID-19 infection between November and December 2020. The 12-item HIV stigma scale was translated in Arabic and then adapted to the Tunisian context. A preliminary version with twenty items covering the four dimensions of COVID-19 stigma was tested (Personalised stigma, disclosure concerns, concerns with public attitudes and negative self-image). The psychometric evaluation included internal consistency as well as principal component analysis (PCA).

Results:

Responses of 346 COVID-19 patients were obtained. Among participants, 60.4% were women with a median age of 40 years (interquartile range, 30 to 54.5 years). Evidence for internal validity was supported by a PCA, suggesting a three factor solution with fourteen items. The 14-item scale demonstrated good internal consistency. The global Cronbach's α was 0.91, with values of 0.94, 0.93 and 0.98 for social stigma, negative self-image and disclosure concerns respectively.