



# The Effect of Parental Involvement on Marijuana and Alcohol Use Among Hispanic Adolescents

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## ABSTRACT

While substance use among Hispanics has been studied in past research, less is known about consumption among adolescents belonging to this population. Specifically, a gap exists in the literature reviewing the effects of parental involvement on marijuana and alcohol use among Hispanic adolescents. Rooted in an ecodevelopmental framework, the objective of the present study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement factors that contribute to alcohol and marijuana use among Hispanic adolescents. This secondary data analysis examined cross-sectional data from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Results of this study revealed that quality of parental relationships decrease the frequency of alcohol use among Hispanic adolescents. In contrast, lower levels of parental monitoring were related to increasing number of days of marijuana use in the past 12 months. These findings contribute to the existing literature by highlighting factors that help decrease the rapidly growing rates of alcohol and marijuana use among Hispanic adolescents. Findings of research involving substance use among adolescents are relevant and key to the field of social work, as a greater understanding of this public health issue can encourage for the development of more effective prevention and treatment programs that meet the unique needs of this underserved population.

## INTRODUCTION

### Significance of Study

- Being one of the youngest, largest, and fastest-growing subgroups of our nation, Hispanic adolescents have shown increasing rates of licit and illicit substance use (SAMHSA, 2011).

### Purpose of Research

- Examine the relationship between parental involvement factors and alcohol and marijuana use among Hispanic adolescents.
- Contribute to existing knowledge base on substance use to improve mental health services and chemical dependency treatments offered to this population.

### Research Question

- What is the effect of parental involvement on marijuana and alcohol use among Hispanic adolescents?
- Specifically, how does parental monitoring, parental approval, and quality of parental relationships impact frequency of marijuana and alcohol usage in the past year?

### Hypothesis

- Higher levels of parental monitoring, parental approval, and quality of parental relationships decrease the frequency of marijuana and alcohol use.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- Parental monitoring, parent-adolescent relationship quality, and parent drug use are linked to the initiation of marijuana use, binge drinking, and alcohol consumption in adolescent populations (Rusby et al., 2018).
- When trying to prevent and reduce unlawful drug use in Hispanics instead of focusing on specific risky behaviors greater efforts should be made on fortifying the youth's family as this may be more effective (Prado et al., 2007).
- There is a gap in current research due to lack of diversity among studies as oftentimes data was collected from states where the Hispanic population is predominantly Mexican.

## METHODS

### Research Design and Data Collection Methods

- The current study is a secondary analysis of the data from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).
- The NSDUH is a cross-sectional study where participants were only interviewed once. This periodical survey gathers nationally representative information about the prevalence of substance use among U.S. household members who are 12 years of age or older.
- The collection of data took place in 2014 via a combination of computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI).

### Sample and Sampling Method

- The current study is a subsample of the original study's sample.
- All individuals over the age of 18 were removed, only participants between the ages of 12 to 17 were considered.
- In terms of race and ethnicity, the current sample is only considering the answers of participants who identified as Hispanic.
- The sample size of the current study is (n=2790).

### Statistical Analysis

- To examine the difference in the total number of days of marijuana and alcohol use between respondents with parental approval and those without, Mann-Whitney *U* tests were used.
- Spearman's Rho analyses were conducted to examine the correlation between the remaining test variables.

### Measures

#### Independent Variables

- **Parental Approval:** measured by participants' responses to two questions, "How would your parents feel about you trying marijuana/hashish?" and "How would your parents feel about you drinking alcohol daily?"
- **Quality of Relationship:** Measured by two questions, "How often did your parents let you know you had done a good job in the past 12 months?" and "Do your parents tell you they're proud of something you'd done?"
- **Parental Monitoring:** Measured ordinally by inquiring participants to share an answer to the question "How often did your parents limit your time out with friends in the past 12 months?"

#### Dependent Variables

- **Alcohol and Marijuana Use:** Use among participants was assessed using two questions that asked, "What is the total number of days you used alcohol in the past 12 months?" and "What is the total number of days you used marijuana in the past 12 months?"

Table 1

Sample Characteristics (N=2,790)

Characteristic	f	%
Gender		
Male	1362	48.8
Female	1428	51.2
Age		
12 years old	428	15.3
13 years old	472	16.9
14 years old	475	17.0
15 years old	497	17.8
16 years old	481	17.2
17 years old	437	15.7
Education		
Fifth grade or less	146	5.2
Sixth grade	418	15.0
Seventh grade	449	16.1
Eighth grade	511	18.3
Ninth grade	485	17.4
Tenth grade	451	16.2
Eleventh grade	310	11.1
Twelfth grade	19	.7
Senior/16th grade	1	.0
Family Income		
Less than \$20,000	839	30.1
\$20,000-\$49,999	1107	39.7
\$50,000-\$74,999	364	13.0
\$75,000 or More	480	17.2

## RESULTS

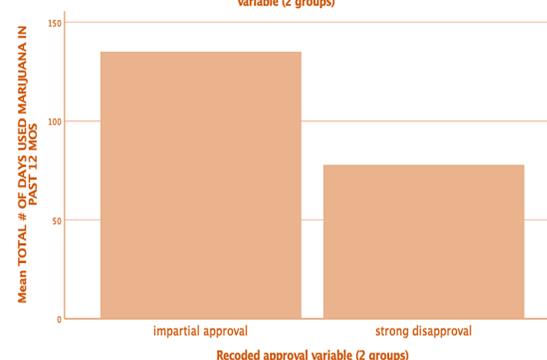
### Mann-Whitney *U* Test

- A Mann-Whitney *U* test was used to examine the difference in marijuana use of participants whose parents impartially approved marijuana and those who strongly disapproved marijuana.
- Participants whose parents strongly disapproved marijuana had significantly fewer number of days using marijuana (*Mean rank* = 161.63) than those whose parents impartially approved marijuana (*Mean rank* = 221.45; *U* = 10103, *p* < .001).
- A second Mann-Whitney *U* test was used to examine the difference in alcohol use of participants whose parents impartially approved alcohol and those who strongly disapproved alcohol.
- Participants whose parents strongly disapproved alcohol had significantly fewer number of days using alcohol (*Mean rank* = 304.00) than those whose parents impartially approved alcohol (*Mean rank* = 406.11; *U* = 21527, *p* < .001).

### Spearman's *Rho* Correlation

- A Spearman's rho correlation was calculated to examine the relationships between quality of relationship and total number of days of alcohol use in the past 12 months. The results indicated a negative and statistically significant association between quality of relationship and days of alcohol use,  $r_s(647) = -.097, p = .013$ . Higher quality of relationship was related to fewer number of days of alcohol use.
- A Spearman's rho correlation was calculated to examine the relationships between variable parental monitoring and number of days of marijuana use in past 12 months. The results indicated a positive and statistically significant association between parental monitoring and number of days of marijuana use in past 12 months,  $r_s(350) = .106, p = .047$ . Lower levels of parental monitoring were related to increasing number of days of marijuana use in the past 12 months.

Simple Bar Mean of TOTAL # OF DAYS USED MARIJUANA IN PAST 12 MOS by Recorded approval variable (2 groups)



## DISCUSSION

### Implications for Research and Practice

- Understanding the relationship between parental involvement and Hispanic adolescent alcohol and marijuana use rates can help guide mental health service providers to deliver more holistic, culturally competent, and relevant chemical dependency treatment services to this underserved population.
- Acquiring knowledge about substance use among Hispanic adolescents can aid public health officials and mental health policymakers develop more effective prevention programs that are more easily accessible to this ethnic minority.
- The findings of the current study illuminate target areas of intervention that may contribute to improving the overall wellbeing of youth who identify as Hispanic.
- The current study in congruence with past research reiterates the idea that family-based interventions are needed to help parents whose adolescents are at risk for substance use issues (Prado et al., 2012).

### Strengths and Limitations

- A strength present in the current study is that it included a large sample size that considered participants from several different ages, socio-economic statuses, and education levels.
- The current study had ratios of both males and females that were nearly equal to one another, allowing for a fair comparative analysis across genders to be achieved.
- The use of a cross-sectional study design can be a limitation as it does not allow to establish a causal relationship between the variables since it is not known if one came before the other.
- A limitation is the impact of potential bias related to the self-reported responses of the study's participants.

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