

What are the Types of Mental Health Treatment Modalities used among non-Hispanic and Hispanic Transitional Age Youth for Depression?

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ABSTRACT

Mental health disorders are prevalent among transitional age youth, ages 16 to 25 years old. About 20% of youth suffer from mental health illnesses and need access to mental health services. Transitional age youth's mental health needs are typically unmet as they do not seek assistance to address their mental health symptoms or diagnosis. The current study is a secondary data analysis gathered from The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health), 1994-2008. The study used a cross-sectional measurement point, specifically Wave III, as the age of the participants corresponded with ages 18 to 26 years old. The study identified 543 non-Hispanic and Hispanic transitional age youth who reported depression. The results of this study concluded that there was no statistical significance between mental health treatment modalities and ethnicity among transitional age youth. Transitional age youth have vital perceptions about mental health treatment and services. Transitional age youth are unresponsive to mental health treatments and services. Future research could improve tools to measure their experiences and continuity of care. In addition, it bridges gaps for youth-centered treatment options.

INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

- Among transitional age youth, mental health conditions are prominent, and their mental health needs often go unmet because they do not seek or obtain services.
- In comparison to other ethnicities, Hispanics have the lowest utilization for treatment of depression.
- Hispanics face barriers to mental health treatment which include:
 - Stigmas
 - Financial burden for seeking treatment
 - Distrust of mental health professionals
 - The concept that anti-depressants are addictive, which deters them from engaging in services, or decreases the likelihood of obtaining a prescription than non-Hispanics

Purpose

This study examines the utilization of mental health treatment modalities that address depression among non-Hispanic and Hispanic transitional age youth.

Research Question

What types of mental health treatment modalities are used among non-Hispanic and Hispanic transitional age youth for depression?

Hypotheses

Hispanic transitional age youth are more likely to use alternative mental health treatment modalities for depression than non-Hispanic transitional age youth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- In the United States, the Hispanic population is growing rapidly, and it is one of the most prevalent ethnic minority groups that confront many risk factors concerning mental health treatment.
- Approximately 77% of Hispanic youth experience at least one traumatic episode, and about 30% experience four or more episodes
- About 60 to 80% of transitional age youth are not in treatment and are less likely to access mental health services.
- Ethnic minority groups confront many risk factors concerning mental health treatment, including:
 - Greater risk for depression and anxiety disorders
 - Access to mental health care
 - Cultural views of the health care system
 - Racial bias associated with mental health services

METHODS

Research Design & Data Collection

- The current study is a secondary analysis of the data from The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health), 1994-2018.
- A cross-sectional study design specifically with one measurement point in Wave III was used to gather data through an in-home questionnaire, which included:
 - Targeting respondents between the ages of 18 to 26 years old
 - Focus related questions about family background, mental health illness, and treatment

Sample & Sampling Method

- The longitudinal study represented a national stratified random sample of adolescents in the United States.
- The initial sample used was from Wave III, which included about 15,000 respondents
- The original study sample included approximately 4,875 non-Hispanic and Hispanic respondents
- This study consisted of 543 transitional age youth diagnosed with depression

Measures

The current study measured variables that identified if the participants were non-Hispanic or Hispanic, and the types of treatment modalities used by the target population, transitional age youth.

- Ethnicity (Independent Variable)
 - Participants were surveyed and questioned about their family origins, and ethnicity
 - Based on their response, the participants were identified as non-Hispanic or Hispanic
- Treatment Modalities (Dependent Variable)
 - Participants were surveyed and questioned about the types of treatment modalities utilized to address their depression:
 - Vitamin Therapy
 - Massage Therapy
 - Energy Healing
 - Psychological or Emotional Counseling
 - Prescription Medication

RESULTS

- Age range of participants: 18 to 26 years old
 - Mean age of 21.8 years old (SD = 1.8).
- 543 participants reported a diagnosis of depression

Chi-Square Analysis

- The results of the chi-square test showed that there were no significant relationships between ethnicity and the alternative treatment modalities.
- Based on this sample, Hispanic and non-Hispanic transitional age youth seemed equally likely not to participate in alternative treatment modalities to address their depression. However, between the two groups:
 - Hispanics (45.7%) were more likely to attend psycho/counseling than non-Hispanics (34.7%)
 - Non-Hispanics (87.1%) were least likely to participate in alternative health massages than Hispanics (42%)
 - Hispanics (8.7%) had a slightly higher likelihood to participate in alternative vitamin therapy than non-Hispanics (8.3%)

Table 3

Alternative Treatment Modalities among Transitional Age Youth by Ethnicity (N = 543)

Ethnicity: Are you of Hispanic origin?	psycho/counseling		alternative health massage		alternative health vitamin therapy	
	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)
No	65.3	34.7	87.1	12.9	97.1	8.3
Yes	54.3	45.7	42	4	91.3	8.7

DISCUSSION

Strength & Limitations

- A strength of this study includes a sample size that captured non-Hispanic and Hispanic transitional age youth with depression.
- The sample size also had limits as these factors may perhaps limit the generalizability of the results. Additionally, there is limited research on alternative treatment methods utilized by transitional age youth.

Implications & Future Research

- Part of the study was consistent with other research, including patterns associated with ethnic disparities and mental health services and treatment, specifically psychotropic medication. However, there is limited research on alternative treatment modalities that address depression among transitional age youth.
- There is a need for future research to explore the types of treatment modalities used among transitional age youth as this population is not seeking or utilizing mental health services.
- Further exploration of how contributing factors, including societal and attitudes about mental health, may impact and contribute to the low treatment utilization rates among transitional age youth.

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