

ABSTRACT

In the United States, one in five Americans will experience a mental health illness each year (Centers for Disease Control (CDC) 2021). Included in this group are Latinos, who make up about 18% of the population in the US. It is essential to recognize that Latinos are one of the fastest-growing groups in the US. Their underutilization of mental health services becomes problematic because their mental health issues can contribute to the lack of discipline in the home. Therefore, this secondary study (dataset) aims to examine the effects of Latino parental mental health on the punishment of their children. The hypothesis is that Latino parents with mental health symptoms will have more of a reactive disciplinary approach towards children. Research shows that Latinos face many challenges, such as the stress of acculturation and, at times, socioeconomic difficulties that can result in depression. This study provides more in-depth insight into the need to research Latino mental health and discipline styles since the current research is limited. 2977 Latino families were surveyed in this study, and the findings offered insight into how their mental health does not significantly affect their discipline style.

INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

It is essential to learn how to attend to the Latino population and their individual mental health needs as they adapt to the United States culture because the numbers of Latinos who need mental health is increasing.

Purpose of the Research

The goal of this study is to help motivate and, in the future, create individualized mental health care plans suited specifically for Latino parents. Understanding how mental health influences discipline may better inform mental health service providers to respond more appropriately by assisting the Latino population on the importance of seeking treatment.

Research Questions

- How can parents be influenced to seek mental health services?
- What are the mental factors that are needed to create a positive parenting style?
- How do you get a parent to understand their mental health state?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that Latino parents with mental health symptoms will have more of a punitive disciplinary approach on children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Research shows that acculturation and low socioeconomic status can increase stress in Latinos and significantly impact their mental health.
- Latinos are more vulnerable to depression due to poor socioeconomic status (Barrera & Longoria, 2018; Borre & Kliewer, 2014).
- Research states that depression in parents can create hostile environments that can build negative parenting. Depression has been found to affect the family as a whole. Barlette (2017) and Yale Medicine (2019) state that depression can disrupt a parent's ability to work, parent and participate in the community. (Barlette, 2017 Yale Medicine, 2019).
- Latino parenting can be seen as different from other cultures because there is a belief that the child will not learn without physical punishment in Hispanic homes (Valdivieso-Mora, 2016). How parents in Latino homes control a child is in the form of power (Authoritarian) (Mahrer et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2012).

METHODS

Research design

- The current study is a secondary analysis of data from surveys of The Early Head Start Research and Evaluation (EHSRE) study, 1996-2010 (U.S)
- The Data for the study was collected using self-enumerated questionnaires, personal interviews, and direct observations. There were multiple points of data collection throughout the study (EHSRE, 2010). Study samples were collected at ages 14, 24, and 36 months as well as 5 years and The EHSRE study used child assessments, parent behavior reports. Additionally, there were observations of parent-child interactions, and self-reports of their own behaviors (EHSRE, 2010).

Sample

- A group of low-income families across the United States were chosen for this study
- Participants were chosen from a list of applicants for the Early Head Start Program.
- 2977 of families were surveyed. The mean age of the participants was 22.68 years.

Characteristic	n	%
Age in years	M = 23.91	SD = 6.18
Employment status		
Employed	150	22.3
In School/training	99	14.7
Neither employed nor in school/training	425	63.1
Living arrangement		
Lives with husband	256	37.0
Lives w/other adults	265	38.3
Lives alone w/children	171	24.7
Language		
Not English	511	74.4
English	176	25.6
Education level completed		
Completed less than 12 years of schooling	481	72.1
Completed 12 years of school or a GED	104	15.6
Completed more than 12 years of schooling	82	12.3
Poverty Status		
Income not 100% of poverty higher	618	89.3
Income is 100% of poverty or higher	74	10.7

MEASURES

Discipline

To determine the level of discipline severity five categories were used as a form of measure.

Participants were provided common scenarios where a child misbehaves, and they were asked what approach they would have.

	Prevent/distract, talk, time out or remove	Warn/remind	Threaten the child with punishment	Shout at the child	Use physical punishment	Total
count	61	8	15	1	6	91
At risk for depression	67.0%	8.8%	16.5	1.1%	6.6%	100%
count	68	2	18	1	7	96
Not at risk for depression	70.8	2.1%	18.8%	1.0%	7.3%	100%

Depression

The measuring scale for depression used a five-item questionnaire that included strongly agree and strongly disagreed (the number five being the highest form of disagreement with the question).

Based on the participants answers they were placed in 2 categories

- At Risk (67%)
- Not at risk for depression (70.8%)

RESULTS

Chi-Square Test

- A chi-square test was calculated comparing the level of discipline severity among Latino parents' depression status. Based on a chi-square test, there was no significant relationship between depression and the level of discipline severity ($\chi^2(4) = 4.20, p = 0.38$). Based on this sample, parent risk for depression is not associated with using a reactive parenting style of punishment (physical punishment) compared to other discipline levels.
- A chi-square test was calculated to determine the use of physical punishment within the last week among Latino parents with depression. Based on a chi-square test, there was no significant relationship between depression and physical punishment in the past week ($\chi^2(1) = 0.46, p = 0.50$). Based on this sample, parent risk for depression is not associated with child physical punishment in the past week.
- Among participants at risk for depression, a slightly smaller number of Latino parents (6.6%) reported using physical punishment than 7.3% of individuals who had no risk of depression.

CONCLUSION

Strengths & Limitations

- The current study's limitations include: a cross-sectional design and utilizing self-report data for discipline style.
- The current studies strengths include examining variables, such as Latino mental health which has not been extensively studied in the literature, a large sample size, and utilizing various regression models. A nonprobability sampling was used, allowing for cost-effective and fast response.

Implications & Future Research

- The results indicate the need for continued research on Latino mental health and the barriers to seeking services.

Summary of findings

- The first key finding was that although depression may create a hostile environment in some homes, Latino's mental health state does not affect their form of discipline. The study showed no significant difference between depression and using a reactive form of punishment among Latino participants.
- The second finding resulting from this study is that Latino's discipline style is different from other cultures. It is essential to offer more cultural sensitivity trainings.

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