HIV/STIs among Hispanic Adolescents & Young Adults: Variations by Ethnicity, Acculturation, & Gender[1]

Sarah M. Kendig and Brittany S. McGill
University of Maryland

The sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young adults, especially the prevalence of HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), continues to be an interest to researchers, policymakers, and the public. Considered a public health concern, the negative consequences in terms of the health and well-being of the adolescents and young adults themselves as well as the social and monetary costs for society are large. Renewed attention has occurred with the recent finding that one in four adolescent girls is infected with a sexually transmitted disease in the U.S. (CDC 2008).

Recent research on HIV/STIs among adolescents and young adults has considered variations between white and black youth and occasionally includes a comparison to Hispanic youth. However, previous studies have rarely examined differences within the Hispanic population. Given the growth of and increasing diversity among Hispanics in the U.S. as well as the high risk for negative sexual and reproductive health outcomes for Hispanic youth, it is crucial to recognize differences by ethnicity and acculturation among Hispanics (Driscoll, Biggs, Brindis, & Yankah 2001; Afable-Munsuz & Brindis 2006).

Utilizing the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), this paper will examine variations in HIV/STIs among Hispanic adolescents and young adults by ethnicity, acculturation, and gender. Add Health is uniquely designed to allow for this analysis with oversamples of Puerto Rican and Cuban youth in the restricted-use dataset, various acculturation and STI measures, and detailed sexual behavior and partner histories. We will conduct analyses

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[1] This project is in the preliminary stages due to the fact that the analysis is completed with the public-use Add Health dataset rather than the restricted-use dataset. Gaining access to the latter (which we expect to receive in early October) will substantially increase our sample sizes and our ability to run models separately by ethnicity and gender. Thus, this project will undergo substantial revisions for the full paper for the PAA conference.

separately by ethnicity and gender among Hispanic adolescents and young adults and determine the role of various factors, such as sexual behavior and acculturation, in explaining ethnic differences in the likelihood of HIV/STIs.

Preliminary analyses, utilizing Wave III of the Add Health dataset when respondents are young adults, are provided in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 provides bivariate descriptive statistics of self-reported diagnosis of a STI/HIV in the past twelve months; experience of STI/HIV symptoms in the past twelve months; and/or the STI/HIV biomarker by various characteristics among Hispanic young adults (N=522). Table 2 provides logistic analyses of the likelihood of the three STI/HIV outcome measures by ethnicity, gender, acculturation, and sexual behavior. These tables indicate that differences may be evident by ethnicity and acculturation in STI/HIV prevalence among Hispanic young adults.

For the full paper, we will utilize the three waves of the restricted use Add Health dataset, which will allow us to perform separate analyses by ethnicity and gender given the larger sample sizes. We will also explore additional acculturation and sexual behavior variables as well as examine the role of partners' ethnicity and SES measures in explaining variation in HIV/STIs among Hispanic adolescents and young adults.

References

Afable-Munsuz, Aimee & Claire D. Brindis. 2006. Acculturation and the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Latino Youth in the United States: A Literature Review. Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 38(4), 208-219

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Driscoll, Anne K., M. Antonia Biggs, Claire D. Brindis, and Ekua Yankah. 2001. Adolescent Latino Reproductive Health: A Review of the Literature. Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 23, 255-326.

Table 1: Percent Reporting STI/HIV Indicators by Gender, Ethnicity, Acculturation, & Sexual Behavior among Hispanic Young Adults (N=522)

	Self-Reported Diagnosis of STI/HIV in Past 12 Months	STI/HIV Biomarker	Experience of STI/HIV Symptoms in Past 12 Months
Total Sample	8.36	7.37	16.30
Gender			
Male	3.90	8.36	8.36
Female	12.94	6.36	24.46
Ethnicity			
Mexican	9.02	7.38	17.26
Puerto-Rican	8.48	9.39	23.40
Central/South American	*	9.51	8.22
Other	7.60	4.55	14.95
Acculturation			
Language Spoken Most with Family:			
English	10.50	6.55	16.93
Spanish	5.91	9.50	14.02
Language Spoken Most with Close Friends:			
English	8.17	6.57	17.10
Spanish	*	10.26	9.69
Foreign-Born	4.16	8.18	11.13
U.S. Born	9.55	7.14	17.77
Sexual Behavior among Non-Virgins			
Age at First Sexual Intercourse:			
10-14 years of age	22.49	6.16	17.69
15-18 years of age	6.94	8.98	17.53
19-24 years of age	*	7.79	16.28
Number of Sexual Partners:			
One partner	4.33	4.42	12.36
2 to 5 partners	11.61	9.44	19.40
6 to 10 partners	8.45	*	20.73
11 or more partners	11.28	13.58	15.16
Condom Use at Most Recent Sex:			
Yes	5.11	5.72	14.77
No	11.84	11.12	20.14

Note: Sample sizes are unweighted and percentages are weighted.

Table 2: Logistic Regression of the Likelihood of STI/HIV by Gender, Ethnicity, Acculturation, & Sexual Behavior Among Hispanic Young Adults (N=522)

	Self-Reported Diagnosis of STI/HIV in Past 12 Months		STI/HIV Biomarker		Experience of STI/HIV Symptoms in Past 12 Months	
(Male Omitted)						
Female	2.06	***	-0.40		1.47	***
	(.55)		(.39)		(.36)	
Age	0.01		0.01		-0.02	
	(.13)		(.12)		(.10)	
Ethnicity (Mexican Omitted)						
Puerto-Rican	-0.79		-0.02		0.21	
	(.65)		(.58)		(.43)	
Central/South American	-0.69		-0.55		-2.21	**
	(.91)		(.65)		(.82)	
Other	0.35		-0.63		-0.58	
	(.54)		(.60)		(.44)	
Acculturation (English Omitted)						
Spanish Spoken Most with Family	-0.50		0.52		0.28	
	(.68)		(.47)		(.40)	
Spanish Spoken Most with Close Friends	0.24		0.34		-0.32	
	(.81)		(.66)		(.59)	
(U.S. Born Omitted)						
Foreign-Born	-0.95		0.17		-0.37	
	(.73)		(.46)		(.46)	
Sexual Behavior						
Age at First Sexual Intercourse	-0.33	**	0.15		0.08	
	(.12)		(.10)		(.07)	
Number of Sexual Partners	0.02		0.04		0.02	
	(.03)		(.02)		(.02)	
(No Condom Omitted)						
Condom Used at Most Recent Sex	-0.60		-0.91	*	-0.23	
	(.49)		(.42)		(.31)	

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Note: Regressions are weighted; standard errors in parentheses.