

Assessing the Mental Health of Older Hispanic/Latinx Adults: Focus on the Impact of the Hispanic Cultural Value of *Fatalismo* on Depressive Symptomatology

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Introduction: The impact of depression in older Hispanic/Latinx adults in the United States is poorly understood. The influence of the deeply embedded Hispanic/Latinx cultural value of *fatalismo*, referring to the belief that one's future is predetermined and related to feelings of helplessness, has been found to negatively impact their psychological health [1, 2]. The present study explores the association between the Hispanic/Latinx cultural value of *fatalismo* and mental health.

Objective: To contribute to the identification and understanding of psycho-social-cultural determinants of depression in the Hispanic/Latinx population.

Methods: Using data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) dataset, a longitudinal panel study of U.S. adults over the age a 50 [3], multiple logistic regressions were used to investigate the association between demographic and psycho-social-cultural characteristics and depression. Depression was measured by a modified version of the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). The question "I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems in life" assessed *fatalismo*.

Results: Results indicate that being Hispanic (OR=1.75; 95%CI 1.60-1.91), female gender (OR=1.5; 95%CI 1.43-1.64), living below the poverty level (OR=2.61; 95%CI 2.29-2.85), and feeling helpless (OR=4.27; 95%CI 3.80-4.79) were significant predictors of elevated depressive symptoms. When adjusting for race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, level of education, and age, the highest predictor of depressive symptoms was feeling helpless (OR=3.69; 95%CI 3.10-4.40).

Discussion: Consistent with previous findings, the key determinants of depressive symptoms were race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and feeling helpless.

Conclusions: These findings provide evidence for the association between Hispanic/Latinx psycho-socio-cultural factors and mental health.

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References

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