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PREDICTING SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG HISPANIC AND NON-HISPANIC OLDER WOMEN

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Predicting Social and Physical Quality of Life among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Older Women

Synopsis:

In the present study, we examined older women's social/relational quality of life and physical health in relation to social support as well as cultural status. Key social support and cultural status variables showed significant associations with both physical health and social quality of life outcomes. Hispanic women's cultural status was more likely to be associated with physical health outcomes, whereas non-Hispanic women's cultural status was more likely to be associated with social quality of life outcomes.

Predicting Social and Physical Quality of Life among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Older Women

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Relationships and social support have been shown to influence health outcomes. Similarly, cultural status could play a significant role in social and physical quality of life. Social quality of life is particularly neglected in the geriatric literature, yet it is a critical component of quality of life in older age (World Health Organization, 2009). In the present study, to contribute to filling the research gap in this area, we examined social support and cultural status in relation to social/relational quality of life and physical health. Our sample included 112 1st and 2nd generation community-dwelling, ethnically diverse older women. The outcome variable “physical health” was quantified via the Medical Outcomes Study 36-item Short Form Health Survey (Ware & Sherbourne, 1992), and “social quality of life” via the 22-item Older Women’s Social Quality of Life Inventory (OWSQLI; Lagana¹, Bratly, & Boutakidis, 2011). Overall, structural equation modeling (SEM) findings indicated adequate fit of our proposed model, with indices ranging from acceptable to good (e.g., $CFI=.708$, $RSMEA=.070$). Key social support and cultural status variables showed significant associations with both physical health and social quality of life outcomes. Hispanic women’s cultural status was more likely to be associated with physical health outcomes, whereas non-Hispanic women’s cultural status was more likely to be related to social quality of life outcomes. Multiple group analyses, however, indicated a differential set of significant predictors for Hispanic 1st and 2nd generation women as compared to non-Hispanic group. Several implications of our findings are discussed.