TuSalud

Depression, Assimilation Linked to Sleep Duration in Mexican Americans

Mexican Americans with higher levels of depression reported sleeping six hours or less on average.

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Depression and acculturation, or assimilation to a new culture, can affect sleep duration in Mexican Americans, according to a new study published in Preventive Medicine Reports.

Using data from the 2005–2018 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, researchers analyzed 4,700 Mexican American participants aged 18 to 44 years and determined how much sleep they typically had each night.

For the study, a maximum of six hours was considered short; seven or eight hours was optimal; and at least nine hours was long. Depression among individuals was assessed using a Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ). Researchers also noted the language spoken at individuals' homes and found that half of the participants spoke Spanish as their primary language.

Results showed that most participants (77.1%) had minimal levels of depression; 15.7% had mild levels; 4.8% moderate; and 2.4% reported moderately severe or severe depression. Those who had moderately severe to severe depression levels most often reported short sleep duration (43.5%), followed by optimal sleep duration (33.4%) and long sleep duration (23.1%).

It was also determined that people living in the United States for 10 or more years were significantly associated with long sleep duration when compared to those living in the United States for less than 10 years.

"This area of research remains understudied and further work should be done to elucidate the relationship between acculturation/depression and sleep among this population," the authors concluded. "Moreover, since Mexican immigrants have been shown to be at a higher risk for acculturative stress and health consequences due to acculturation, improving health practitioner knowledge on how sleep duration and quality are influenced by these psychosocial and cultural processes is vital to ameliorating sleep health disparities."

To learn more, read "Latino Children Are More Depressed Than Their Peers."

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