Participants ages ranged between 28 and 84. Total participants: MIDUS II data.

Hypotheses

• Social isolation predicts mortality for every cause of death (Berkan, & Glass, 2000).
• Prior research has found that the communication network of neighborhoods correlates with an individual’s access to healthcare services (Matsagian & Witkin 2015).
• Research has found that social networks are beneficial in providing individuals with social support as well as health information and knowledge (Ackerson & Viswanath, 2009).
• Higher levels of attachment to neighbors decreases the risk of engaging in poor health behaviors (e.g., smoking, drinking, binge eating, etc.; Carpiano, 2007).
• Individuals who live in neighborhoods they believe are safe and close-knit report feeling less stressed, a sense of belongingness, and healthier compared to those who live in neighborhoods perceived to be unsafe (Altschuler, Somkin, & Adler, 2004).

Significance of the Current Study

• This study expands upon prior research by examining associations between perceived neighborhood quality (i.e., the respondent’s personal views of the quality of his/her neighborhood) and access to healthcare.
• The current study may inform intervention programs by emphasizing the importance of focusing on neighborhoods in order to increase healthcare access and utilization.

Research questions

• Are there associations between frequency of contact with neighbors and healthcare access/utilization?
• Are there associations between frequency of social interactions with neighbors and healthcare access/utilization?
• Are there associations between perceived neighborhood quality and healthcare access/utilization?

Hypotheses

• Those who have more frequent contact with their neighbors will report greater healthcare access and utilization.
• Those who report more frequent social interactions with neighbors will report greater healthcare access and utilization.
• Those who perceive their neighborhood as higher in quality will report greater healthcare access and utilization.

Data Set and Participant Information:

MIDUS II data
Total participants: (n =4,963): 48.7% male
53.3% female
Participants ages ranged between 28 and 84 years with the (M=55.43, SD = 12.448)
Education:
25.5% graduated from High School
19.3% earned a Bachelor’s Degree
10% earned a Master’s Degree
Marital Status:
Married: 70.6%
Separated/Divorced: 14.5%
Widowed: 7%
Never married: 7.7%
Race/Ethnicity:
White: 90.1%
Black/African American: 4.6%
Asian: 0.5%

Perceived Neighborhood Quality and Healthcare Access & Utilization
Veronica Musser, Speech Pathology and Audiology
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Kelly Cichy, Department of Human Development and Family Studies
Kent State University

Introduction

Background

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