Family of Origin and Depression in Adolescent Mothers  
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Introduction

- Research investigating the role family of origin plays with regard to psychological function has produced mixed results.
- U.S Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2013) reported the divorce rate in United States was 3.6 per 1,000 in the population in 2011.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2014) reported in 2012 35% of children under the age of 18 live in single parent households.
- Research shows females from a divorced family reported higher levels of depression, even in their later life (Huurre, Junkkari & Aro, 2006).
- Amato & Keith (1991) concluded children who had a deceased parent had lower levels of depression than those from divorced families.
- Vousoura and colleagues (2011) found divorce only had a significant impact on children who had a parent with depression.
- Purpose of the current study was to determine if adolescent teen mothers depression levels differ as a function of their parents’ marital status (married, divorced, never married, parent deceased).

Hypothesis

Adolescent mothers from a divorced family origin will report higher levels of depression compared to participants from intact families.

Methods- Participants

Participants:
- 20 adolescent mothers
- Primarily African Americans (80%)
- Mean age 18.6 (SD=1.5)
- All were moderately compensated
- All were receiving services from the county Health Department Teen center which works to assist and provide info for teens

Methods- Measures

Measures:
- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression (CESD; Radcloff, 1977)
- 10 item self-report measure assessing level of depression
- Ex. “I was bothered by things that usually don’t bother me.”

Results

- An ANOVA was conducted to compare depression scores across the three groups, divorced/divorcing (n=4), never married (n=13), parents passed (n=2).
- The ANOVA and Tukey’s HSD post hoc analyses results indicate the overall F was significant, F (2, 16) = 8.26, p < .01.
- Group means indicate that girls from families of divorce (m=14.5) were significantly more depressed than girls whose parents had never married (m=7.0) or their parent had passed away (m=6.5).

Discussion

- Data support the hypothesis that adolescent females reported higher levels of depression as compared to females from married, never married or deceased parent families.
- Only one participant came from a family with married parents.
- All four of the participants from divorced families reported a score of 10 or higher, which means they can be considered clinically depressed.
- Coming from a family where parents were never married was less detrimental.
- Data came from a very unique and little studied sample.
- Data is consistent with prior research by Amato & Keith (1991) regarding depression levels of females from a divorced family or parent deceased family.