
Self-esteem, family emotional support, quality of life, and hypoglycemia in adolescents with and without a history of diabetes-related stigma

Stephanie Ortiz-Domenech¹, María de los A. Pérez-Monroig¹,
& Eduardo Cumba-Avilés¹

¹Institute for Psychological Research, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus

Abstract

Among youths with type 1 diabetes (T1D), diabetes-related stigma (DRS) is associated with severe hypoglycemia and diminished sense of well-being. To test this relationship among Latinos, we compared adolescents with ($n=35$) and without a history of DRS ($n=16$) in self-esteem/guilt problems (SE/GP), family emotional support (FES), severity of hypoglycemia (SOH), and perception of quality of life (QOL). Participants were 51 T1D adolescents (aged 12-17 years) enrolled in a depression treatment study (IRB#1112-005). Using MANOVA followed by individual ANOVAs, we compared groups based on their general stigma status and explored if similar results occurred if comparing adolescents with ($n=27$) and without a history of social stigma (SS; $n=24$), and with ($n=26$) and without internalized stigma (IS; $n=25$). The initial MANOVA was significant, $F(4, 46) = 4.15, p = .006$. Individual comparisons showed that adolescents with a history of DRS reported lower FES, higher SE/GP and SOH, and more problems with their QOL than those without such history. MANOVAs for the SS and IS comparisons were also significant. In individual ANOVAs, youths in the stigma conditions reported worst outcomes. However, significant differences in SOH occurred only per SS status. Our findings support the relationship of DRS with SOH and diminished sense of well-being. Although this relationship is essentially the same for SS and IS in the latter case, SS is more closely connected to SOH. Interventions for T1D adolescents should address both aspects of DRS to improve their health and well-being.

Acknowledgements: Funded by NIDDK (R03DK092547).