Factors Related to Depression Among Latina Immigrant Mothers

Dawn Browder, Kimberly Greder and Sedahlia Jasper Crase

Research Report No. 50

October 2013

ABSTRACT
As the Latino population across the United States has rapidly grown, so has the prevalence of poverty and food insecurity, both of which compromise mental health. This study interviewed 103 Latina immigrant mothers living in rural communities in four states annually over three years to identify individual and family level factors that influenced maternal depression. Findings revealed that mothers who consistently had low depression scores had a higher participation rate in the National School Lunch Program and were more food secure than mothers who consistently had high depression scores. Mothers who consistently had low depression scores more commonly reported supportive relationships with their spouses or partners and families of origin, less financial stress, and performed fewer roles than mothers who consistently had high depression scores. Implications related to screening for depressive symptoms, strengthening strained Latino immigrant couple relationships, and implementing policies to ensure livable wages and access to health care are identified in this paper.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Dawn Browden is an assistant professor of Early Childhood Education and Family and Consumer Sciences at Eastern New Mexico University. Her research and teaching focuses on early childhood educational environments, family relations, and parenting education.

Kimberly Greder is an assistant professor of Family and Consumer Sciences and Early Childhood Education at Eastern New Mexico University. Her research and teaching focuses on parent/child and family relations and parenting education.

Sedahlia Jasper Crase University Professor Emeritus, served as a professor of Human Development and Family Studies at Iowa State University and conducted research and teaching related to parenting and family relations.