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MIXED METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF IMMIGRANT MEXICAN YOUTH



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Most studies seek to understand the complexities of youth migration solely using quantitative methodological approaches that primarily focus on the unique costs of migration, from an adult male perspective. Less is known about the migration experience of youth, especially young girls. This study sought to understand the unique migration experiences among 14-17 year old girls of Mexican-origin in the United States, its impact on their mental and reproductive health, as well as their access to health care. A mixed methodological approach was used, guided by a multistage migration framework with a Mexican origin sample of convenience (N=58), representative of both the sending and receiving communities of Mexico and the United States. While quantitative instruments were used to measure mental health defined as depression as measured by the Centre for Epidemiologic Depression Scale, and pregnancy status, they were not able to fully capture their migration, mental and reproductive health experiences, or access to health care. However, qualitative focus groups yielded broader understanding of feelings of depression and the experience of the adolescent girls with pregnancy and their access to health care. Findings supported the need for mixed methodologies approaches to fully capture the experiences of migrating girls. Findings also identified gaps in traditional depression scales that do not account for migration and are not properly capturing the effect of culture on the behaviours, mental and reproductive health beliefs of immigrant and first generation Mexican origin adolescent girls in the U.S.

Keywords:

Mixed Methods, adolescent girls, depression & pregnancy

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