Do Young Adults with Close Family Experiencing Alzheimer's Have Higher Depression Rates

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Do Young Adults with Close Family Experiencing Alzheimer’s Have Higher Depression Rates?

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Background
- By 2060: people over age 60 are expected to double (Figure 1)
- Leads to increase in diseases common for age group
- Dementia cases expected to increase from 5 to 15 million by 2050
- Family members of these patients may have decreased emotional health
- Younger family members are especially susceptible because of:
  - Immature brain
  - Increased stress
  - Potential parental support deficit

Problem and Purpose
- Problem: Prevalence of depression among young adults with demented loved ones is not well understood
- Purpose: Determine if depression rate for young adults with close family with Alzheimer’s is higher than average for age group

Methods

Participants
- Between the ages of 18 and 24
- Students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville
  - Snowball recruiting
  - Forward to at least 5 non-nursing student friends

Data Collection
- Demographic survey
- Beck Depression Inventory II
  - Internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and criterion-based validity have been established
  - 21 questions with scale of 0-3
- Alzheimer’s survey that analyzes different aspects of Alzheimer’s experience that may correlate with depression (Table 1)

Methods Cont.

Procedure
- Participants sent an email invitation
  - Describes study
  - Encourages to send to others who may be interested
  - Link to surveys

Analysis
- Mean and SD for age, gender, and depression inventory scores calculated
- Depression means and SD between groups compared
- Depression rates compared using t-test
  - alpha of .05
- Alzheimer’s variables analyzed using correlation coefficient
  - statistically significant values inserted into decision tree

Alzheimer’s Experiece Variables and Their Expected Depression Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>low</th>
<th>high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living arrangement</td>
<td>Away from family</td>
<td>With family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior relationship</td>
<td>Distant/Not close</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer stage</td>
<td>Earlier</td>
<td>Later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived parental support</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial stress</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiving responsibilities</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

For the First Time in U.S. History Older Adults Are Projected to Outnumber Children by 2034

Figure 1