

Poster

📅 Sat. Sep 27, 2025 3:00 PM - 4:10 PM JST | Sat. Sep 27, 2025 6:00 AM - 7:10 AM UTC 🏛️ Poster Session (Foyer 2)

Poster 24

[P-24-06] Acculturation and Psychological Distress Among Adolescents in the United States: A Cross-Racial Analysis Using California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)

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Keywords : Acculturation, Adolescent Mental Health, Immigrants, Racial Disparities, Language

Mental health challenges affect one in five adolescents in the U.S., yet the relationship between acculturation and mental health among immigrant youth remains underexplored. This study examines how acculturation-related factors relate to psychological distress among adolescents across racial groups in California.

We analyzed data from 4,366 adolescents aged 12–17 using CHIS data from 2019 to 2022. Participants self-identified as White, African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander/Other Single Race, or Multiracial. Psychological distress in the past year was assessed using the Kessler 6 scale. Acculturation was defined by nativity status, years lived in the U.S., and language(s) spoken at home. Survey-weighted logistic regression models were used to assess associations, adjusting for race, sex, age, and parental education.

Compared to White adolescents, African American, Asian, and Hispanic youth had lower odds of reporting psychological distress (OR = 0.36, 95% CI [0.21, 0.65], OR = 0.58 [0.44, 0.77], OR = 0.73 [0.60, 0.90]). Female adolescents were twice as likely to report distress (OR = 1.98 [1.67, 2.34]). Older age (OR = 1.14 [1.09, 1.19]) and parental higher education (OR = 1.39 [1.15, 1.68]) were also associated with increased odds of distress. Speaking one foreign language at home (OR = 0.55 [0.26, 1.19]) and living for 15+ years in the U.S. (OR = 0.72 [0.28, 1.89]) appeared protective, while speaking multiple foreign languages was associated with elevated risk (OR = 1.36 [0.90, 2.06]).

Though not at conventional levels of significance, monolingualism at home and longer U.S. residence may be protective against psychological distress, while bilingualism could reflect stress from the parent–child acculturation gap. Targeted efforts are therefore needed to address mental health challenges related to acculturation.