

# Comparing the mental health between African Americans and Whites in 2019 (before COVID-19) and 2020 (during COVID-19) using NSDUMH in the United States

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## BACKGROUND

- “COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide”
- African Americans are experiencing trauma and mental health issues for many different reasons during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- These include: Anxiety from not being able to follow stay-at home recommendations to protect themselves from COVID-19 due to their job situation. Separation from friends and family, especially those who are sick or in the hospital. Grief over the loss of friends and family members. Emotional stress of close living situations and finding care for children out of school. Financial stress of health care costs, job loss, and more. Ongoing difficulties accessing health care services.
- This increase in the prevalence of mental health problems
- Coincided with severe disruptions to mental health services, leaving huge gaps in care for those who need it most.
- For much of the pandemic, services for mental, neurological and substance use conditions were the most disrupted among all essential health services

## RATIONALE

- The U.S. Department of Labor reports that only 18% African Americans have jobs that allow telework, compared with 26% and 32% for Whites and Asian Americans, respectively.
- African Americans are more likely than White people to live in cities and in close quarters, where COVID-19 spreads more easily.
- In addition, African Americans are twice as likely as Whites to have no insurance. They may worry about the cost of care and avoid seeking health care when sick. These socio-economic pressures and health risks can put African Americans at greater risk for trauma, grief, and other mental health issues.

## Proposed Methods

- Study Design: Secondary data analysis from the National Survey on Drug Use and Mental Health (NSDUMH)
- Study Sample/ Subjects: African American and White 2019 and 2020
- Recruitment (if applicable): NSDUMH 2019 and 2020
- Main Measures:
  - Major Depressive Episodes (MDE)
  - Drug use
  - Taking meds prescribe for mood

## RESULTS

- Quantitative Methods
- Independent variables: The primary independent variable of interest is race. All the indicator (race, gender, insurance, sex)
- Dependent variables: Mental health. Major Depressive Episodes (MDE)
- Covariables: The primary independent variable of interest is race. All the indicator (race, gender, insurance, sex.)
- The data analysis will be conducted using univariate analysis describing the study population. Bivariant analysis will be performed using chi-square. Since our dependent variable will be dichotomous we will be using several logistic regressions.



## CONCLUSIONS/ Discussion

- Strengthen mental health and psychosocial support services as part of strengthening preparedness, response and resilience to COVID-19 and future public health emergencies.
- Also adopt the updated Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for the future.



## IMPLICATIONS/LESSONS LEARNED

- Strengthen mental health and psychosocial support services as part of strengthening preparedness, response and resilience to COVID-19 and future public health emergencies.
- Also adopt the updated Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for the future.

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