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Psychiatric Medications: Does Education Affect Medication Prescriptions?

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Background: There is lack of research on racial challenges among underrepresented adolescents regarding prescription drug use for mental illnesses. **Purpose:** This study addressed the following question: In adolescent minorities, how does education about racial disparity and culture affect the stigma and number of prescriptions written for psychiatric medications? This evidence-based practice project aimed to identify if racial awareness directly impacts the amount of psychiatric medication prescribed for adolescent minorities. **Methods:** Literature reviews analyzed qualitative and quantitative data to provide correlating information on racial disparities and psychotropic medications. This study examined the following possible factors for decreased prescribed drugs within minority adolescents: population size, percentage of people who receive psychiatric prescriptions, cultural perspective, stigma, and social status. **Results:** Evidence has found that prescription psychiatric medications are highest amongst Caucasian adults; while Black, Hispanic, and Asian men were reported less likely to receive psychotropic drugs. Numerous studies highlighted the need to address factors affecting antipsychotic prescribing behaviors, interactions between the providers, and how financial sustainability affects such efforts. Racial disparities regarding psychotropic prescriptions have been found to decrease through proper education. **Conclusion:** More research is still needed to investigate exactly how race and culture affect prescriptions and provider interactions.

Key words: adolescents, psychotropics, racial disparities, mental illness, prescriptions