P1-36: Pilot Study: Could the Geriatric Depression Scale be used to assess prevalence of depression among Filipinos attending a community fiesta?

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Abstract:
Introduction: Depression is a common psychological problem among the elderly population. However, few researchers have studied depression in older Asian Americans or elderly Asian immigrants. There is also a dearth of knowledge about within-group differences among the Asian subgroups, especially Filipino migrants. The literature seems to indicate that depression is under diagnosed and under reported among minorities. The aim of this study was to assess the use of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) in a group of Filipinos (Filipino-Americans) in San Antonio, Texas. The research question was to explore if the GDS can be used to assess depression among Filipinos. Data on the prevalence of depression will help characterize this population, and allow for development of health promotion strategies.

Method(s): This pilot study used a cross-sectional descriptive design using a convenience sample of a group of Filipinos (N=35), who participated in a free health screening clinic while attending a community-organized fiesta. The well-validated Short Form GDS (15 items) was
used across the population, rather than just the elderly (>65), in an attempt to capture depression in younger individuals in this pilot study. Descriptive statistics were performed using the SPSS program. The main limitation of the study was the convenience sampling used.

**Results:** Pilot data showed that the participants had the mean age of 40-49 years old, and were mostly married (66%) females (66%). GDS rating indicated that majority of the participants were ‘not depressed’ (85.7%), while some were ‘probably depressed’ (14.3%). Interestingly, 50% of those who scored as ‘probably depressed’ were >60 years.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** The data indicated that this subset of Filipinos was not depressed. This could reflect the generally jovial nature of Filipinos. Alternatively, the convenience sampling during a festive occasion may have produced a population bias and are noted for future participant recruitments. This could also indicate the sensitivity of the GDS for the geriatric depression screen rather than across the ages. Future studies are planned to survey Filipino elders 65 years and older.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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