Support Group Program for Transnational Parents: A Grant Proposal

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Introduction

- Approx. 54 million people in the U.S. are of Latino descent (Census Bureau, 2013). Homeland Security estimated about 11.4 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. in 2012 (Baker & Rytina, 2013).
- Latin American families are immigrating to the U.S. in hopes to financially provide for their families back home. (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2007; Nicholson, 2006)
- Parent immigrating to the U.S. face the hard task of leaving their children in their country of origin in the care of a close relative. (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Nicholson, 2006)
- Immigrant parents experience emotional hardship such as depression, guilt, lack of parent-child bonding due to the parent-child separation and stress. (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001, Miranda et al., 2005, Nicholson, 2006)
Social Work Relevance

- Addresses the needs of individuals who are vulnerable and oppressed, and to advocate and empower for social change and social justice on behalf of these individuals regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, or immigration status (NASW, 2008)
- Advocacy for policy change emphasizes the expansion of health coverage for undocumented immigrants, for example SB 1005 Health for All Act, introduced by Senator Richard Lara (R. Lara, 2014).
- Latino immigrants encounter barriers and stigma challenges the accessibility and utilization of mental health services (DHHS, 2001; Guarnaccia, & Martinez, 2002)
- Barriers to treatment exist for Latinos to access mental health services are categorized in three distinctive dimensions: (1) system-level barriers, (2) community-centered barriers, and (3) person-centered barriers (Guarnaccia & Martinez, 2002)
Cross-Cultural Relevance

- International migration to the United States has been a long time phenomenon which has separated families.
- *Transnational families*: international division by international borders of individual families who maintain significant emotional and economic ties in multiple geographical locations, a residing country and the country of origin. The international separation entails parents leaving their children behind in their country of origin to work abroad (Bohr, 2010; Dreby, 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997).
- Understanding cultural competency as an important component for the delivery of services among mental health professionals to the Latino immigrant population (NAMI, 2007).
- The lack of Latino mental health professionals contributed to the barriers of mental health care among Latinos. The Center for Mental Health Services indicated that for every 100,000 Latinos in the U.S., there were 29 Latino mental health professionals (DHHS, 2001).
Methods

- Interview was conducted with the executive director of host agency to assess the needs of the Latino community.
- Supportive intervention in a group setting will utilize cognitive behavioral approach for target population (González-Prendes et al., 2011; Hovey et al., 2014).
- Include cultural values important to the Latino community as clinically recommended for culturally competent treatment of Latinos; *respeto*, *familismo*, *personalismo*, *machismo*, *marianismo* (Andrés-Hyman et al., 2006).
- Participants will be recruited from the Pico-Union neighborhood in LA. Pico-Union neighborhood is considered the “first stop” for recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America (Orellana et al., 2001).
Methods

- The criteria used to select the grant included the mission of funding source, interest in funding projects centered in addressing the health and well-being of an underserved population, and the amount of grant funding available ranging from $50,000 to $450,000.
- The mission of the Langeloth Foundation is to promote and support the health and well-being of underserved population through healing from physical, emotional, and social adversities (Langeloth Foundation, n.d.).
- Projected budget is $57,440 which includes personnel, non-personnel expenses, and in-kind donations.
Grant Proposal

- Proposed support group program is intended to aid transnational parents increase their psychological well-being by decreasing depressive symptomology and other symptoms affecting their well-being
- Target population consists of first-generation immigrant parents, over 18 yrs old, from Mexico or any Central American country
- Program will include CBT components, group setting which promotes sense of community, integrate cultural values such as *familismo, personalismo*, and will address acculturation factors and stressors (Andrés-Hyman et al., 2006, Arbona et al., 2010 & Caplan, 2007)
• Goal of program is to improve the mental well-being of transnational Latino parents who are separated from their children, create a meaning of the separation (Falicov, 2014), and promote healthy relationships among immigrant parents and their community

• Proposed length of program is 12 months, consist of 3 support group cycles, 8 weeks each cycle

• Program evaluation: pre-test and post-test consisting of initial and exit interviews and measureable instrument, Beck Depression Inventory-II (Dozois et al., 1998). Evaluation conducted by an independent source to maintain program integrity
Lessons Learned/Implications for Social Work

- Limited research on Transnationalism, transnational parents/families, and the effects on parent-child separation due to migration
- Process of searching for funding source and applying for a grant proposal
- Barriers and stigma among Latino immigrants which limits accessibility and utilization of mental health services
- Benefits of utilizing *promotoras*, community health workers, trained women dedicated to offer community education to members of their community in which they live. *Promotoras* hold an effective and efficient role due to their familiarity and knowledge of their community and cultural issues (Hovey, Hurtado, & Seligman, 2014)
References


