Native American Mental health study

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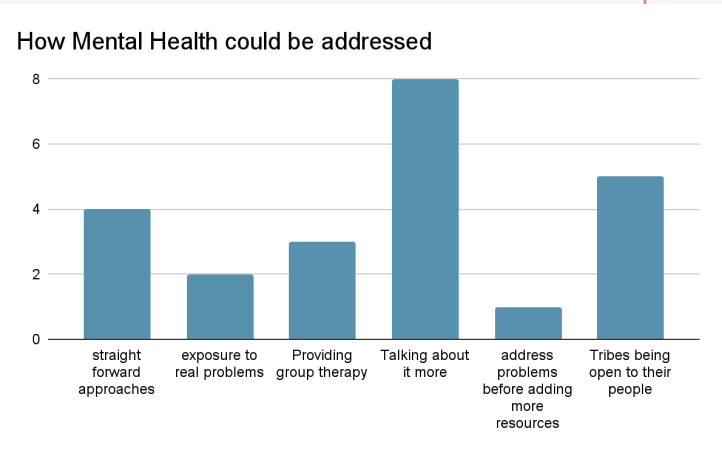
Question and Hypothesis

How has the improvement of the Mental Health care system influenced the people's thoughts of Mental health care?

I think that influence has been a positive change, but that the people I ask in this survey will have suggestions at how to address mental health properly and give new suggestions.

Data analysis and Results

In the 8 people I interviewed most said the overall rise in mental health support has been a major change but that it also felt like an increase that was happening to fast without proper support.



Methods

- Gain peoples interest in my questionaire
- Give them the questionaire and information, and explain questions they didn't understand
- Gather all of my participants answers and make simplified versions of their suggestions for improvement of mental health approaches

Conclusion

My survey data did give more results than I'd imagined but also gave answers that hadn't been suggested so openly before.

All my participant agreed that being able to talk about it more would be the most helpful and that is what I'd hoped to happen since mental health isn't addressed so openly that its taboo to mention mental health treatment.

How has the improvement of the Mental Health care system influenced the people's thoughts of Mental health care?

- The statistics of Native Americans in the topic of behavioral health skyrockets and changes every year, since 2003 my community experiences high rates of suicide, and substance abuse. In 2016-2020 there was a high rate of alcohol related death in 2019-2020 there was drug use, and finally over all the death rate increased by 39%
- In the past 30 years the approaches that were developed were in intervention through taking initiative, detoxification, prevention, treatment and aftercare, intervention and postvention, aftercare programs, and integration initiative.
- So far due to adding more interventions, programs, and treatment, and aftercare the mental health system has improved greatly for Native communities.

Question/ problem and prediction

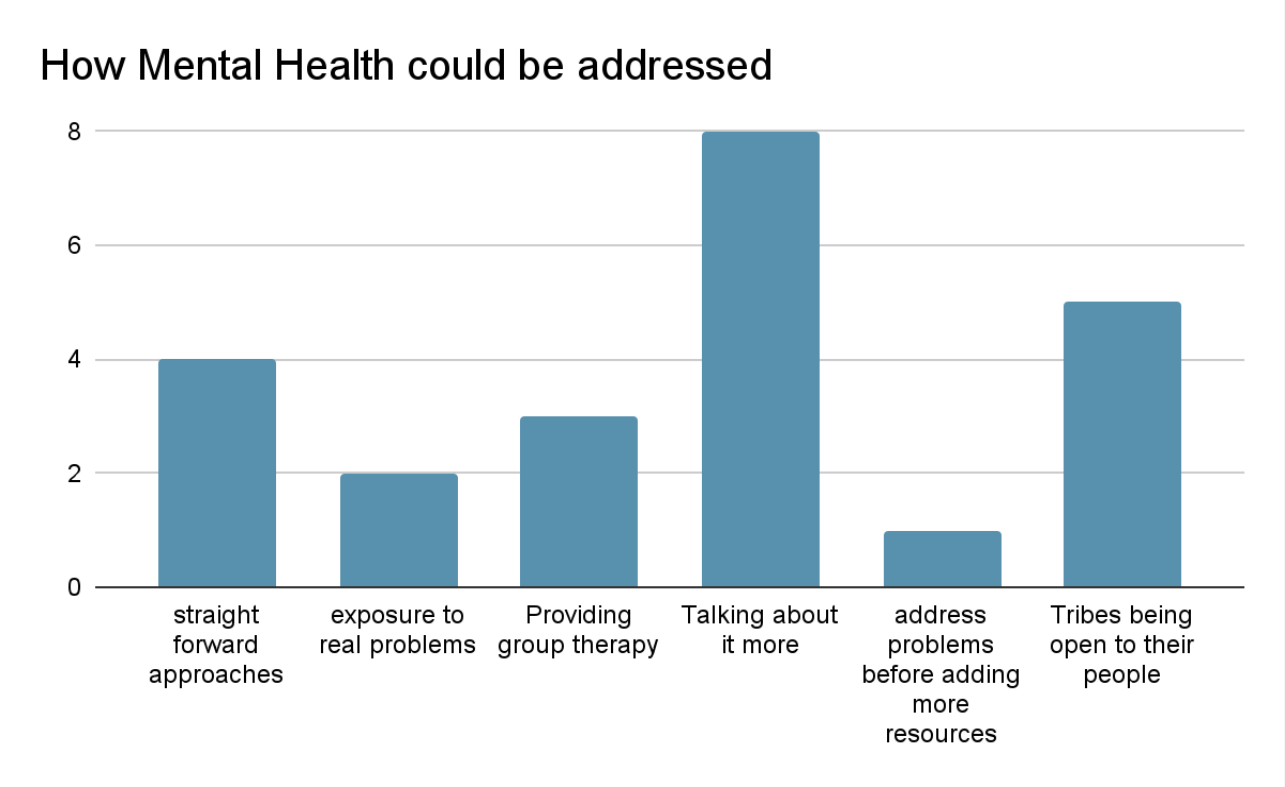
- My research question is “How has the improvement of the mental health care system influenced tribal community people's thoughts about it?”
- I predict that through my research I’ll gain possible recommendations for improvements that could be made to the mental health care system to further the better treatment of mental health issues in Native American communities
- I want to find ways to bring up the difficult topic of mental health problems without their being such a large stigma towards the topic.

Investigative methods and Procedures

- My step-by-step procedures were creating a consent form, and a questionnaire. From creating both forms, I began to ask my potential participants if they'd be interested, their feelings towards my topic of research since it is such a sensitive issue in native communities. I gauged their availability as well as helping them understand my consent form.
- My consent form had information about my topic, and a consent signing.
- In total my questionnaire had 8 questions each needed my participants to truly think about their own feelings and be able to put them into words in the forms box.
- Each person was put under an initial I know to keep their information a secret this allowed my participants to answer without worrying about their identity being revealed.
- My dependent variable in my topic was the answers my participants gave since each answer is different due to each participants own experience, and independent variable was my questions since they never changed.

Results and data visualization

- I calculated the total of what all my participants agreed on similar responses, but all agreed that talking about mental health struggles more could be effective since it would give more insight into the struggles in indigenous communities with addressing the topic of mental health



Discussion and interpretation

- In my own way I'd considered my project a success, I was able to gauge how my participants felt about the increase in mental health services in native American communities, while also gaining insight from my peers gaining their insight from those older than me and younger than me. I managed to promote mental health care to those close to me, and gaining another method of increasing awareness that doesn't usually come up.
- My research could've been stronger had I done a more advanced questionnaire. And expanded my research and go to more trustable websites, I also found more limitations than I had expected to prepare for, finding that more websites only specify more known Native American tribes, but due to this it also means these were only the reported statistics in those specific tribes. The websites didn't bring true awareness and only highlighted the good instead of including the bad.

Implications and ideas for future research

My project is not only important to me but also my community, it is a matter of opening the door to mental health awareness, my tribal members struggle with coping skills, generational truama, assault, and abuse through substances, but when they finally address their pain after never going through proper therapy, things start to change for them, people look at them differently, and they sink further into the pain they feel without opening up and getting help. I'm hoping to normalize mental health discussions without it being taboo, I want the future generation of my tribe to not have to struggle as much with their mental health.

I hope to make a more significant impact, I realize that every race has mental health struggles, and hopefully my project and others could be the opening to where other minorities can properly discuss their struggles and bring awareness to generational trauma they have as well. I'm hoping to make a big difference that may not be possible in this time, but I do hope that mine will add to the awareness.

References

- Most of my references came from talks in my community.
- Information about Mental health wellness in tribal communities came from a website I found to be accurate

- Behavioral Health | Fact Sheets
- Mental Health in American Indians/Alaska Natives | Office of Minority Health
- Social Determinants of Health Among American Indians and Alaska Natives and Tribal Communities: Comparison with Other Major Racial and Ethnic Groups in the United States, 1990–2022 - PMC