

Rural-Urban Disparities in Adolescent Girl Suicidal Ideation and Behavior: The Moderating Effect of Friendship Quality

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INTRODUCTION

- Rural adolescents die at almost twice the rate as those in urban areas (Fontanella et al., 2015).
- Differences in social support (due to social isolation) may help explain this disparity (Prinstein et al., 2000; Giletta et al., 2017).
- Hypothesis 1: Adolescents from rural areas would have higher rates of suicidal ideation and behavior than their urban peers.
- Hypothesis 2: The association of rurality and suicidal ideation/behavior would be higher for girls who rated their friendships with low positive and high negative qualities.

METHODS

- Participants were 221 adolescent girls (9-15 years; M = 11.82, SD = 1.79, 47.5% non-Hispanic white)
- Data were collected through well-validated self-reported measures and a structured clinical interview.
- Data on rurality was calculated using the United States Census Bureau's designation of rural areas.
- Chi-square, t-tests, and regression analyses were conducted.

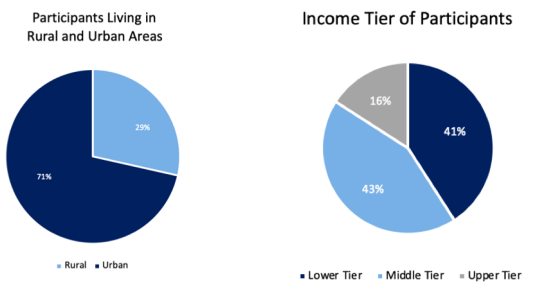
RESULTS

- Participants living in a rural area were not more likely to have a lifetime history of suicidal ideation, plans, or behavior or higher rates of suicidal ideation severity.
- Friendship quality did not moderate the association between rurality and suicidal ideation or behavior.
- Higher positive friendship quality was associated with greater suicidal ideation severity.

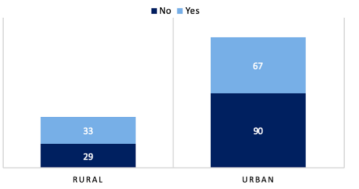
DISCUSSION

- Results suggest that lifetime histories of suicidal ideation and behavior and suicidal ideation severity may not differ between those in a rural versus urban areas in girls at higher risk for suicide.
- More research is needed to determine the driving factors in the rural-urban disparity in adolescent suicide death.

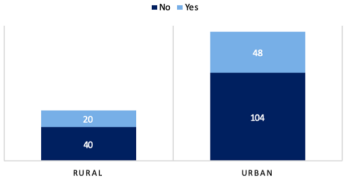
Although adolescent suicide death rates are almost twice as high in rural compared to urban areas, we found that adolescent girls in rural and urban areas reported similar rates of suicidal ideation and behavior.



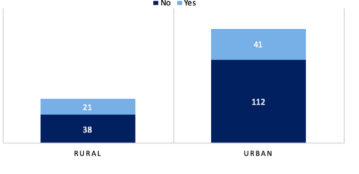
LIFETIME HISTORY OF SUICIDAL IDEATION



LIFETIME HISTORY OF SUICIDAL PLANS



LIFETIME HISTORY OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR



Correlations of Main Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	-									
2. Income Tier	.07	-								
3. Rurality	.12	-.16*	-							
4. MHPSA	-.09	-.19**	.38***	-						
5. Positive Friendship Quality	.08	-.07	.03	.03	-					
6. Negative Friendship Quality	.04	-.11	.13	.02	.07	-				
7. Depressive Symptoms	.24***	-.09	.09	.03	.07	.12	-			
8. Suicidal Ideation Severity (SIQ)	.34***	.08	.09	.01	.17*	.08	.67***	-		
9. Lifetime Suicidal Ideation	.40***	.04	.10	.06	.12	-.07	.46***	.71***	-	
10. Lifetime Suicide Plan	.33***	.02	.02	-.04	.13	.002	.46***	.65***	.71***	-
11. Lifetime Suicidal Behavior	.32***	.01	.09	-.01	.12	.01	.45***	.62***	.66***	.76***

* = p < 0.5, ** = p < 0.01, *** = p < 0.001