

Development Doesn't Stop at 18: Developmental Differences Between Young and Less Young Adults

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Background

- Lack of recognition of developmental needs of YOUNG adults among state adult MH administrators and services
- Young adults report a lack of appropriate/appealing services in adult MH

Study Questions

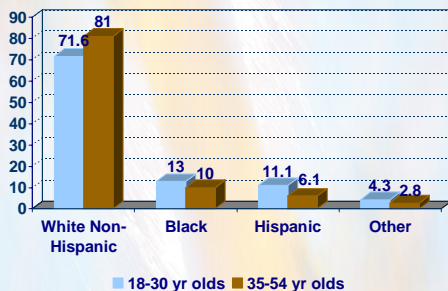
1. Is there evidence that younger adults function differently from older adults among those with psychiatric disorders ?
2. Do those differences reflect developmental change with "maturation" at a particular age?

Methods

This Analysis

- 1110 subjects with a current psychiatric diagnosis, ages 18-54
- Areas of functioning;
 - In School
 - Not Working
 - Income Below Poverty Level
 - Daily Contact with Friends
 - Not Married

Race Difference in Age Groups



χ^2 (df=3)=62.7, p<.001

Statistical Methods

Question 1 18-30 year olds (younger) & 35-54 year olds (older) compared with Chi-square

Question 2 Stepwise Multiple Regression (age, gender, and race) and Quangles and Pettits

Preliminary findings (unadjusted variance)

Quangles?

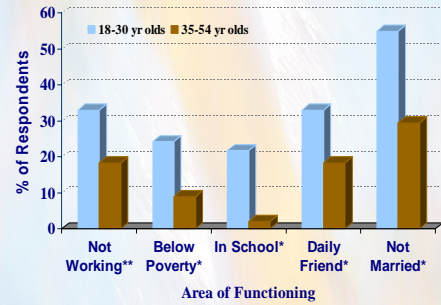
- Visual method to detect a single shift in mean level of a sequence of observations (e.g. rates over an age range).
- The observed rates for each age produce a sequence of rates over the age range, with a minimum and maximum rate value.
- Rates (e.g. in school) are transformed into an angle Θ , by the formula:

$$\Theta = \pi/2 + (\pi * (\Delta(t,k) - \min) / (\max - \min))$$

- A unit vector is then constructed, with co-ordinates $(\cos(\Theta), \sin(\Theta))$, for each rate and these vectors are summed and plotted.

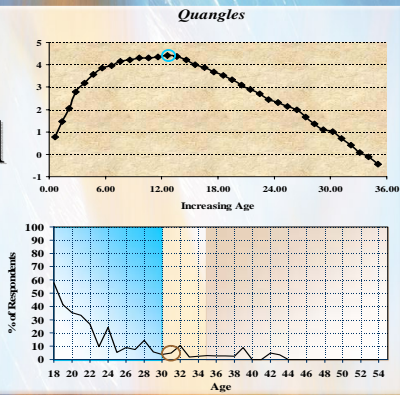
Kotz, Samuel, and Norman L. Johnson, eds: Encyclopedia of Statistical Sciences. New York: J. Wiley, 1981

Question 1: Functioning by Age Group



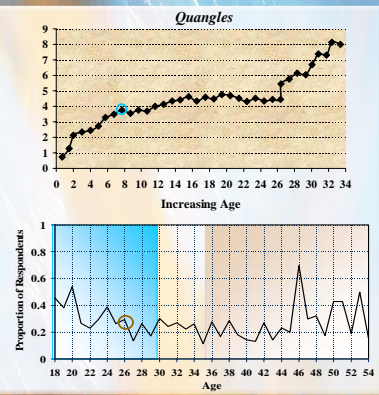
* χ^2 (df=1)=31.4-105.4, p<.001 ** χ^2 (df=1)=5.5, p<.02

In School



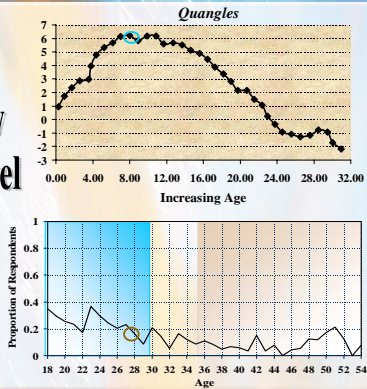
Multiple Regression: Age in model (Adjusted R²=.128, F(1,1276)=188.3, p<.001)

Not Working



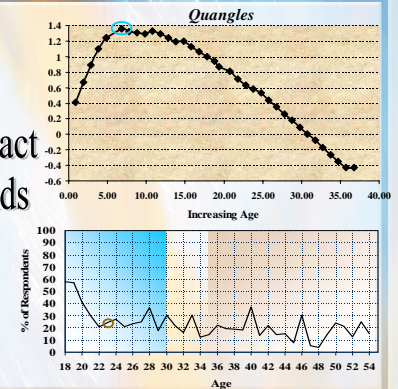
Multiple Regression: Sex, Race, & Age in model (Adjusted R²=.026, F(3,1276)=12.2, p<.001)

At or Below Poverty Level



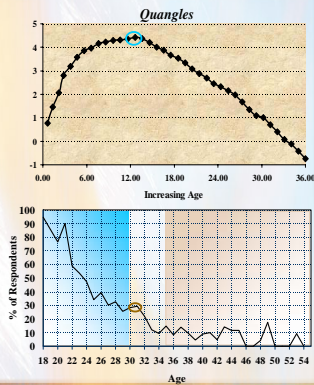
Multiple Regression: Sex, Race, & Age in model (Adjusted R²=.056, F(3,1275)=25.3, p<.001)

Daily Contact with Friends



Multiple Regression: Age in model (Adjusted R²=.033, F(1,1276)=45.0, p<.001)

Not Married



Conclusions

- Important developmental changes in functioning occur between younger and older adulthood.
- Rapid changes end between ages 23-31, with less variability among those over age 35.

Implications

- Adult mental health services would benefit from a developmental perspective
- Specialized services or approaches for young adults are needed

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive and Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan provided these data.