

Health Literacy Intersections with Mental Health and Social Determinants of Health in Fresno County

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Background

Setting: West Fresno County

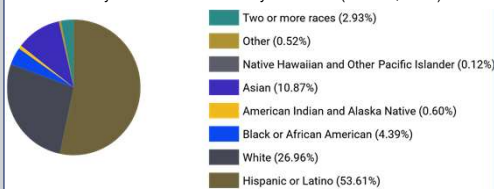
- West Fresno ranks in the highest quartile for social vulnerability in the US
- Little research on health literacy within Fresno County
- Latino communities make up the largest demographic in Fresno County
- Mental health barriers including lack of access and cultural stigma widely affect Latino populations

The Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Intervention:

- Collected baseline data from participants economic instability, mental health problems, and health literacy levels
- Used baseline data to examine how health literacy is associated with self-reported mental health, and if the social determinants of health moderated these relationships

Race of Fresno County

Breakdown by Race of Fresno County Residents (Census, 2020)



Methods

Data Collection

- Community Health Workers (CHWs) recruited participants through FQHCs, RHCs, and community outreach.
- Data collection occurred from June 2022 to May 2023
- A total of 609 survey responses were collected
- CHWs employed Motivational Interviewing techniques to elicit responses from participants

Data Analysis

- Data analysis was conducted in STATA/SE 15
- 496 responses were included in the final analysis
- Composite scores were calculated using exploratory factor analysis and reliability assessments

References

Ahmedani BK. Mental Health Stigma: Society, Individuals, and the Profession. *J Soc Work Values Ethics*. 2011 Fall;8(2):41-416. PMID: 22211117; PMCID: PMC3248273.

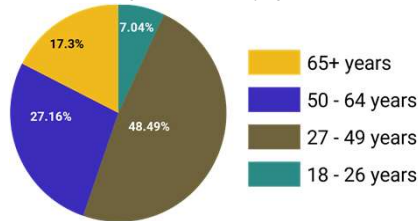
CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) | Place and Health | ATSDR. (2023, December 6). https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/interactive_map.html

Pérez-Flores NJ, Cabassa LJ. Effectiveness of Mental Health Literacy and Stigma Interventions for Latino/a Adults in the United States: A Systematic Review. *Stigma Health*. 2021 Nov;6(4):430-439. doi: 10.1037/sah0000343. Epub 2021 Oct 25. PMID: 35368243; PMCID: PMC8974450.

Demographics

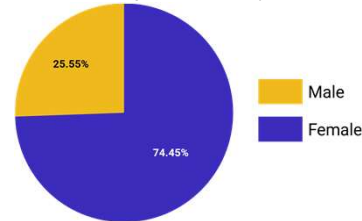
Age Groups

Breakdown of program participants by Age Group



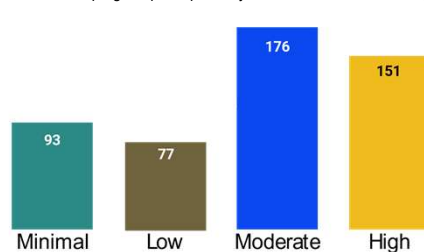
Gender

Breakdown of program participants by Gender



Economic Insecurity

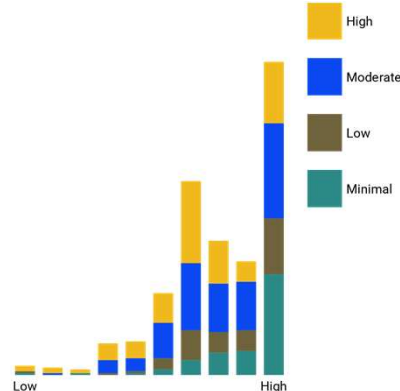
Breakdown of program participants by level of Economic Instability



Results

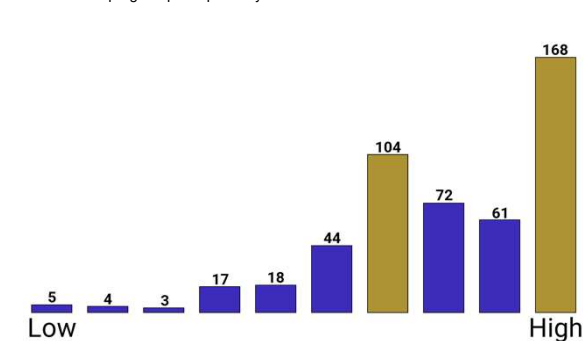
Economic Insecurity by Mental Health

Breakdown of Economic Security across levels of Mental Health



Mental Health

Breakdown of program participants by Mental Health Score



Discussion

Barriers to Mental Health in Fresno County:

- Lack of Access:
 - few local clinics with long waitlists
 - lack of reliable public transportation in rural areas
 - seeking care is time consuming
- Health literacy barriers
- Mistrust

Additional Barriers for Latino populations:

- Cultural stigma and shame
 - many do not understand what mental health services entail
 - hesitation to disclose mental health related struggles on surveys
- Being discouraged due to lack of services
- High trauma rates in undocumented communities, but no insurance to seek care
- Language barriers contribute to health literacy and access challenges

Effectiveness of AHL:

- Reached a large population (n=293) of low income Latinos that showed low health literacy rates at baseline
- CHW's attempted to overcome systemic barriers by providing transportation referrals, meeting clients at their homes, connecting them with nearby resources but these efforts alone cannot fully overcome barriers in SDOH categories and challenges in mental health

Results and Barriers

- Participants with lower levels of positive mental health were made up primarily of those with higher economic insecurity
 - This indicates that economic insecurity may be a barrier to accessing needed mental health services
- Due to the barriers mentioned above there was limited follow-up with participants after data was collected

Next Steps and Recommendations

Next Steps:

- Continue to disperse findings via abstracts and manuscripts
- Continue analysis on data collected

Recommendations:

- Additional research that examines the relationship between mental health, health literacy and SDOH
- Future health literacy initiatives must examine how other SDOH may create barriers to their intervention and within their targeted populations
- Policy changes to increase transportation infrastructure

Acknowledgements

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