

2022

Physical Inactivity, Obesity, and the Latino Adult Population: A Literature Review

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Recommended Citation

Gunzelman, Steven, "Physical Inactivity, Obesity, and the Latino Adult Population: A Literature Review" (2022). *College of Health Sciences Posters*. 12.

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Introduction

- Within the United States, minority individuals face many health disparities that lead to lower qualities of life and an increase in the prevalence of various health conditions.
- The Latino population is the largest minority group in the United States
- Latinos are more vulnerable to many diseases and health conditions because of low socioeconomic statuses, lack of access to healthcare, language barriers, and cultural differences.
- Obesity is a large public health issue in the Latino population with 44.8% of Latino males over the age of 20 being obese, and 46.8% of Latina women 20 years or older living with obesity.
- It is recommended that adults engage in 150 minutes of moderate-vigorous physical activities each week to increase positive health outcomes.
- 49.5% of the Latino American adult population over the age of 18 did not meet the federal activity guidelines in 2018.
- 31.7% of Virginian Latino adults report that they do not engage in physical activities.

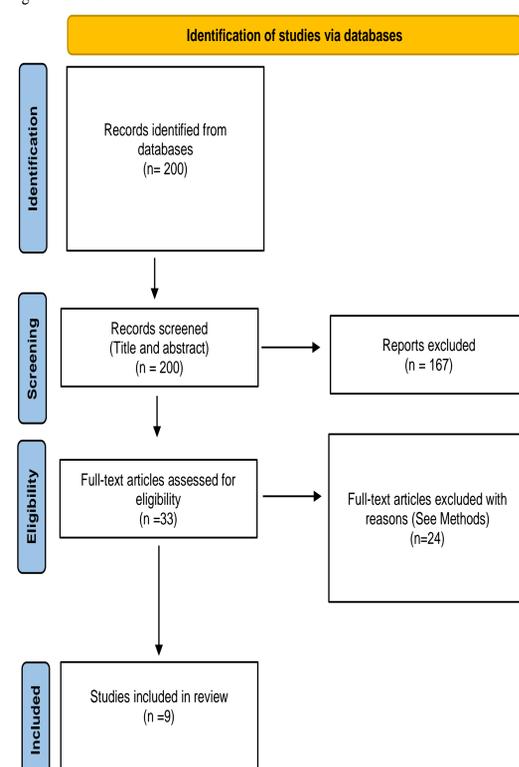
Purpose

- The social ecological model can be applied to the issue of physical inactivity in the Latino population to get a better understanding of the various factors that affect this health behavior.
- The individual, interpersonal, and community level each offer different factors that impact the health behaviors within the population.
- The relationship between physical inactivity and obesity within the Latino American population can be analyzed by using the social ecological model which can lead to the development of physical activity interventions and programs that increase health outcomes for this vulnerable population.

Methods

- The following databases were reviewed to find eligible physical activity articles to review: CINAHL Plus, PubMed, and APA PsycINFO.
- The search terms “Hispanic/Latino adult,” “physical inactivity,” and “obesity” were used in each database to find potential articles to review.
- A total of 200 articles from the three databases were returned.
- To be included in this literature review a journal article must have been based in the United States, focused on the Latino/Hispanic population, and study a level of the social ecological model.
- A total of 9 articles met the inclusion criteria and were included in this literature review.

Figure 1: PRISMA Flowchart



Results

- The reviewed articles showed that the individual, interpersonal, and community level offer various barriers and facilitators which impact physical activity (PA) behaviors of Latino adults in the United States.

Individual Level:

- Older Latino adults and women show higher rates of physical inactivity
- Physical activity levels decrease as stress levels increase
- Latinos with low levels of education and high rates of acculturation report lower levels of physical activity
- Digital health interventions have been shown to be effective at increasing individual PA behaviors

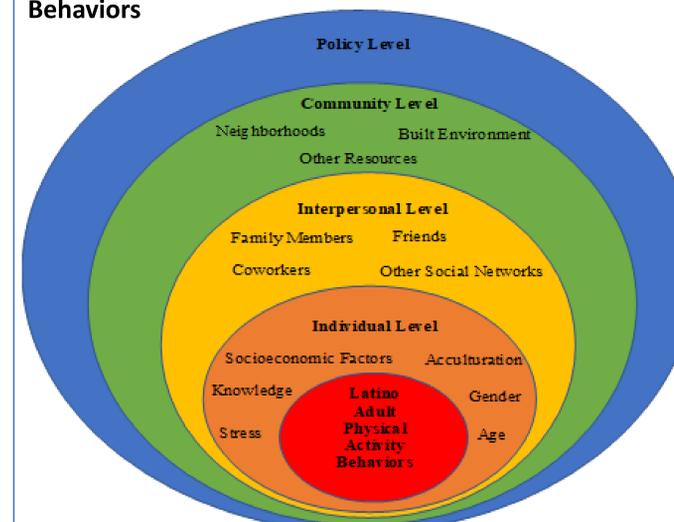
Interpersonal Level:

- Latino adults are more likely to be physically active if their child, a friend, or a coworker engages in physical activities
- A Latino’s social network has a high impact on physical activity behaviors
- Latino family members have the largest influence on individual health behaviors

Community Level:

- Neighborhood walkability is directly related to a Latino’s overweight or obesity status
- The surrounding built environment offers different features that can engage Latino adults to participate in daily physical activities

Social Ecological Model for Latino Physical Activity Behaviors



Discussion

- The social ecological model is an effective framework to use to analyze a health problem and the different factors that influence an individual’s behaviors.
- It is recommended that future PA programs that are offered to Latino adults include different features for each level of the social ecological model to increase the effectiveness of the program.

Conclusion

- Together the individual, interpersonal, and community levels of the social ecological model can improve physical activity behaviors of Latino adults and work to reduce obesity rates to lead to a healthier population

Recommendations

Future program recommendations include:

- A digital health component that targets the individual level and offers individualized information to participants
- An interpersonal aspect that incorporates social networks and social support (example: neighborhood walking groups)
- A community component that works to improve neighborhood walkability and offers information to participants on safe areas to engage in physical activities

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, January 21). Adult physical inactivity prevalence maps by race/ethnicity.
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