

Health Information Media Use and Cancer Information Seeking Differences Between Spanish- and English-speaking Latinos and Non-Hispanic Whites

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Background

- Despite efforts to improve health education, health information fails to reach Latinos (IOM, 2002). Efforts to target Latinos are executed as Spanish-language programs, yet it is unclear whether Spanish-language health messages that reach only a small portion of the Latino population will redress ethnic health disparities.
- One-quarter of U.S. Latinos are Spanish-dominant, 25% are English-dominant and half are bilingual (Cartagena, 2006).
- There are conflicting effects of acculturation (using language ability as a proxy) on health outcomes: high acculturation is associated with increased access to health care and perceived health status, but also with increased risk behaviors such as smoking, drinking, and unhealthy diets (e.g., Lara et al., 2005).
- Yet little is known about health information preferences of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Latinos.

Purpose

- This study seeks to explore how U.S. Latinos vary in their health information seeking behavior as a function of acculturation (using language as a proxy), and how these sub-groups compare to Non-Hispanic Whites (NHW).

Methods

- The HINTS 2005 sample was used to analyze differences between Spanish-speaking (n=271), English-speaking Latinos (n=225) and Non-Hispanic Whites (n=4101).
- Cross-tabulation, ANOVA, and logistic regression were used to analyze the data with STATA 9 Survey Data Program. Post-stratification weights were used to adjust the sample for complex sampling and differential response rates across demographics.

Sample Characteristics by Ethnicity and Language				
	All Latino (N=496)	Spanish Respondents (N=271)	English Respondents (N=225)	White (N=4101)
Demographics				
% Female	46.8% (40.9, 52.7)	48.1% (40.2, 56.1)	44.9% (36.4, 53.4)	52.6% (50.4, 54.8)
Mean Age	37.6 (35.9, 39.3)	37.1 (34.9, 39.2)	38.3 (35.6, 41.0)	47.4 (46.6, 48.2)
% Married	67.5% (61.5, 73.4)	67.3% (59.1, 75.4)	67.8% (59.3, 76.3)	66.7% (64.5, 68.9)
Mean Household Income	\$41,947 (37,250, 46,643)	\$28,269 (24,599, 31,940)	\$60,977 (52,057, 69,897)	\$68,136 (65,759, 70,512)
Size of Household	4.13 (3.90, 4.35)	4.44 (4.24, 4.85)	3.51 (3.26, 3.76)	2.96 (2.89, 3.03)
Highest Level of Education (in Years)	10.6 (10.1, 11.1)	9.2 (8.5, 9.8)	12.7 (12.4, 13.1)	13.5 (13.4, 13.6)
Health Care & Health Status				
# Doctor Visits in 12 mos	2.3 (2.0, 2.6)	1.8 (1.5, 2.2)	2.9 (2.5, 3.4)	4.0 (3.9, 4.2)
% with Health Insurance	54.9% (48.9, 60.9)	36.8% (29.4, 44.1)	81.9% (75.1, 88.7)	89.0% (87.5, 90.5)
Perceived Health Status (5-point scale; 5=Very Good)	2.85 (2.71, 2.99)	2.71 (2.51, 2.93)	3.05 (2.87, 3.23)	3.35 (3.31, 3.39)
Internet Access				
% Ever Use Internet	36.2% (30.4, 42.1)	20.4% (12.9, 27.8)	59.5% (50.8, 61.2)	68.4% (66.4, 70.3)

Note: Weighted sample used for this analysis.

Results

General Media Use

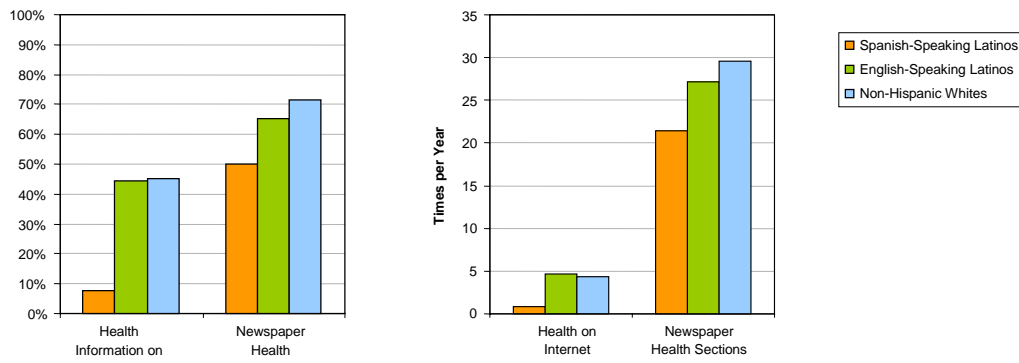
- A substantial and significant pattern of differential media use emerged among Spanish-speaking Latinos compared with English-speaking Latinos and NHW, after controlling for complex sampling and differential response rates.
- English-speaking Latinos were heavier users of television, radio, the Internet, and newspapers. (+288, +236, +337 weekly minutes of TV, radio and the Internet; +1.2 days of weekly newspaper reading) compared with Spanish speakers. NHW are also heavier users of television and newspapers (+145 TV minutes, +2.2 days of newspaper reading) compared with Spanish speakers.
- Only twenty percent of Spanish-speaking Latinos report ever using the Internet, compared with sixty percent of English-speaking Latinos and sixty-eight percent of NHW.

Health-Specific Media Use

- Differences by language preference persist in health-specific media use.

Health Information Sources

Percentage of respondents ever used and yearly frequency of use, by language and ethnicity



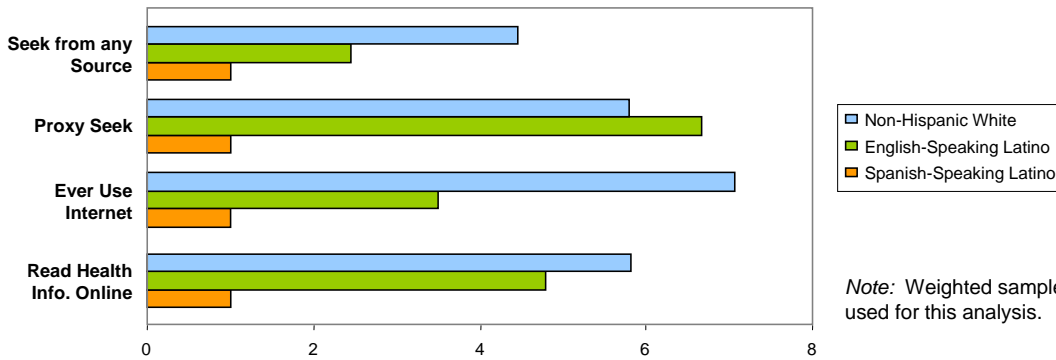
Note: Weighted sample used for this analysis.

Cancer Information Seeking

- After controlling for age, gender, education, and income, ethnicity and language were important predictors of health information seeking.
- Spanish-speaking Latinos report different sources for cancer information seeking compared with English-speaking Latinos and NHW.

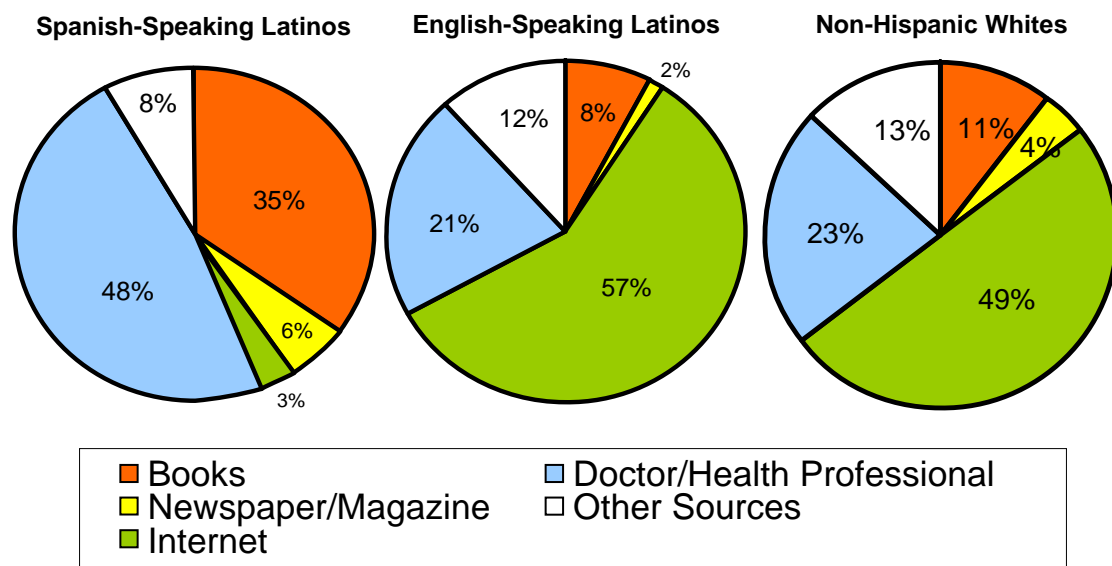
Acculturation, Ethnicity & Health Information

Odds ratios of cancer information seeking and internet use by language and ethnicity, controlling for age, gender, education & income.



Note: Weighted sample used for this analysis.

Proportion Reporting Source as First for Cancer Information Seeking, by Language and Ethnicity



Note: Weighted sample used for this analysis.

Conclusions

- Spanish-dominant Latinos vary substantially from English-dominant Latinos and NHW in their use of media, and are less likely to seek health information from any source compared with English-dominant Latinos or NHW.
- These findings have implications for cancer communications designed to reach Latinos.



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