

## Introduction

### Diabetes burden among the Latinx community

- Prevalence of diagnosed diabetes: 24.3% of Latinx compared to 14.9% of non-Latinx Whites.<sup>1</sup>
- Latinx are 50% more likely to die from diabetic complications compared with non-Latinx.<sup>1</sup>

### Critical health literacy as a contributing factor for diabetes management

- Critical health literacy is the ability to navigate the healthcare system and make appropriate decisions about one's health.<sup>2</sup>
- Low health literacy is frequent among the Latinx community in comparison to their counterparts<sup>3</sup> (Figure 1).
- Large discrepancies in health outcomes and education highlight a need for more effective diabetes treatment on a population-wide scale for the Latinx community.

### Study Aims

- The aim of this literature review was to examine the role of critical health literacy in diabetes outcomes of the Latinx community in the United States.

## Methods

### Scope and criteria: Systematic review

- Articles published within 15 years
- Ability to discern critical health literacy from other forms of health literacy
- Addressing specific diabetes health outcomes
- Published within the United States

### Database Utilized

- Pubmed, exclusively gray literature

### Keywords

- Critical health literacy, diabetes, Latino, California

### Organized review

- By purpose, key findings, solutions/interventions, gaps



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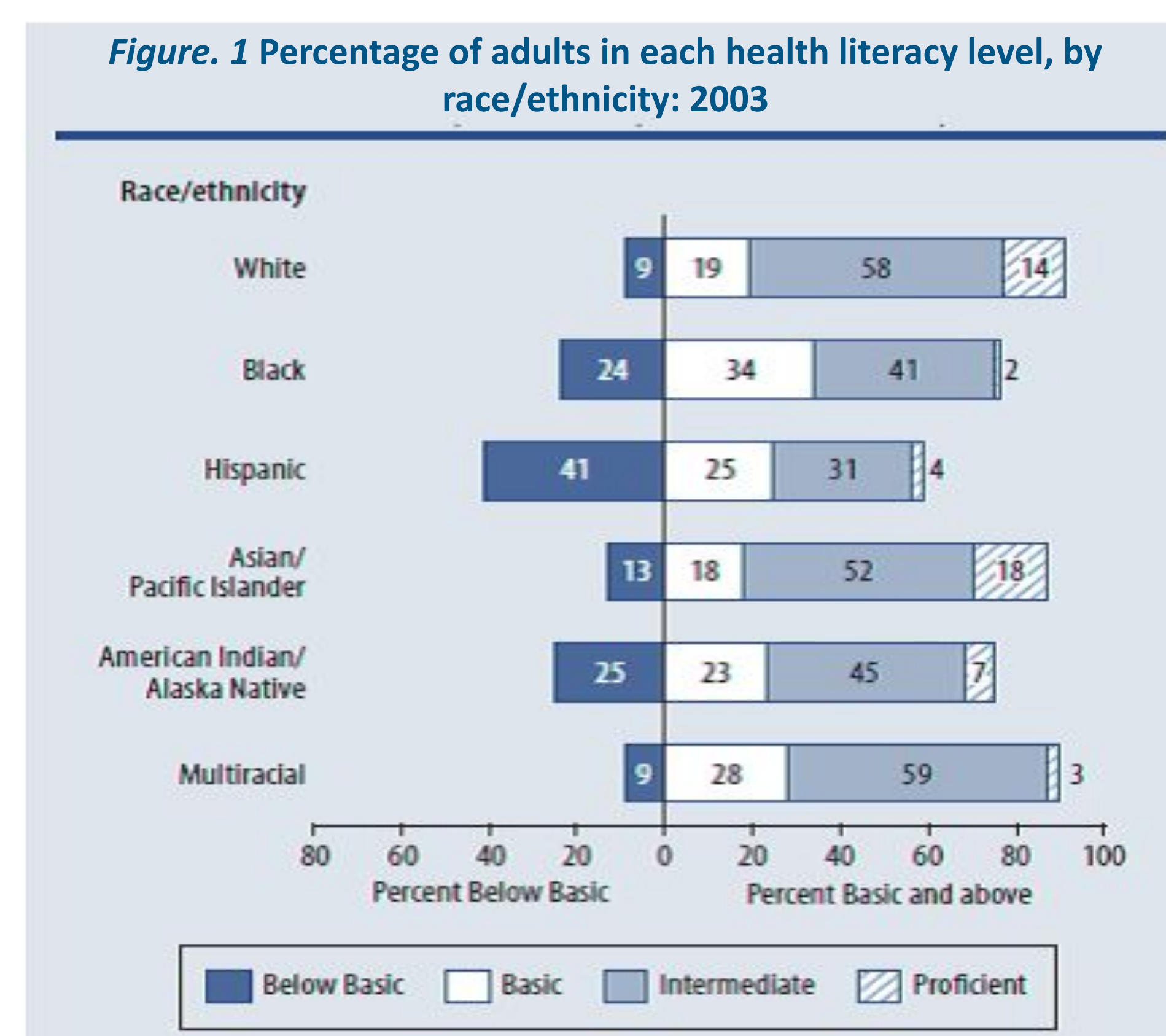
## Results

### Critical health literacy plays a vital role in diabetic Latinx patient outcomes

- Communication issues with healthcare providers** due to English-Spanish language differences are a **barrier for critical health literacy**. Patients with providers who are unable to speak their same language have **worsened glycemic control**,<sup>4</sup> **lower medication adherence**,<sup>5</sup> and **higher reports of provider discrimination**.<sup>6</sup>
- Miscommunication is a determinant** for diabetic retinopathy, as it was linked to 95% of Latinx patients being left undiagnosed during critical early stages where blindness due to diabetes was **preventable**.<sup>7</sup>

### Switching to an online health system has widened the critical health literacy gap for diabetic Latinx patients

- Higher English literacy skills are associated with higher use of online health information, but for patients who are primarily Spanish-speaking at home, there was a negative association with seeking out health information online.<sup>8</sup>
- Furthermore, **lower health literacy was linked to less use of key technology** like glucose monitors<sup>9</sup> and online patient portals.<sup>10</sup>



### Addressing language and health education barriers contributes to healthier diabetic Latinx patients

- The use of **community health workers (CHWs)** has been shown consistently to improve diabetic outcomes such as patient satisfaction and adherence through improving **technology literacy**.<sup>11</sup> CHWs provide culturally tailored and community sensitive interventions that bridge gaps in **health education**.<sup>12</sup>
- Combinations of pictorial and Spanish-translated educational resources have contributed to changing **eating habits**,<sup>13</sup> the **use of treatment tools** such as insulin pens and pumps,<sup>14</sup> and an overall lowered **risk of severe symptoms**.<sup>15</sup>
- Diabetes is reported at a significantly higher rate among permanent legal Latinx residents, but current literature **lacks research** on diabetes rates and health risk factors pertaining to recently immigrated and/or undocumented Latinx population.<sup>16</sup>

## Discussion

- Levels of low critical health literacy impact diabetes management among Latinx due to communication barriers, a technological divide, and an inability to navigate the healthcare system.

Potential  
Solutions



Culturally tailored  
interventions<sup>11,12, 13</sup>

Address language  
barriers<sup>13, 14</sup>

Address health  
education barriers<sup>9,11,12</sup>

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