An Examination of Health-Promoting Behaviors Among Hispanic Adults Using an Activation and Empowerment Approach

Guillermo M. Wippold, PhD,1 Carolyn M. Tucker, PhD,2 Tasia M. Smith, PhD,3 Nicole Ennis, PhD,4 Shuchang Kang, MS,2 Andrea D. Guastello, MS,2 Tara A. Morrissette, MS,2 Tya M. Arthur, PhD, MPH,5 Frederic F. Desmond, PhD2

(1) Department of Psychology, University of South Carolina; (2) Department of Psychology, University of Florida; (3) Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services, University of Oregon; (4) Department of Clinical and Health Psychology, University of Florida; (5) Department of Nutrition and Health Science, Ball State University

What Is the Purpose of this Study/Review?

• The purpose of the present study was to examine the association between person-centered, modifiable variables (i.e., activation, empowerment, and self-praise) and health-promoting behaviors (i.e., healthy eating and physical activity) among a sample of predominantly overweight/obese Hispanic adults recruited from two Hispanic churches and their surrounding communities in the Bronx, New York.

What Is the Problem?

• Obesity is a national epidemic in the United States.
• Over the past 30 years, the prevalence rates of overweight and obesity have increased significantly in the United States, particularly among racial/ethnic minorities such as Hispanics.
• Hispanic adults have a higher prevalence of obesity compared with non-Hispanic White adults.
• Seventy-seven percent of Hispanic adults are considered overweight or obese, and 46.9% of Hispanic women and 37.9% of Hispanic men are considered obese.
• Weight loss interventions designed for the general population are less successful with individuals from ethnically underserved populations, such as Hispanics.
• Culturally informed, person-centered factors may influence engagement in healthy eating and physical activity.

What Are the Findings?

• Empowerment and self-praise were significant and positively associated with greater levels of engagement in healthy eating.
• Self-praise was significant and positively associated with greater levels of engagement in physical activity.

Who Should Care Most?

• Individuals interested in creating health promoting interventions among Hispanic adults.

Recommendations for Action

• Research should be conducted to identify strategies to increase empowerment and self-praise among Hispanic adults.
• Identifying these strategies will likely increase Hispanic adults’ engagement in healthy eating and physical activity.