

Resilience in Latinx Migrant Farmworkers

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Introduction

- There are an estimated 2.5-3 million migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the United States and 76% identify as Latino, Latinx or Hispanic. (Farmworker Justice, 2014)
- Latinx migrant farmworkers face many challenges (e.g., discrimination, marginalization, social isolation, poverty, dangerous working conditions, inadequate housing, limited access to healthcare, and a shortened life expectancy).

The life expectancy of migrant and seasonal farmworkers is only 49 years

*Life expectancy of the general US population – 79.8 years (Chaney et al., 2011; Hiott et al., 2008; Hovey & Magaña, 2003)

- Farmworkers are susceptible to both physical and psychological health problems (e.g., chronic illnesses such as diabetes and depression).
- Farmworkers face barriers to healthcare including, language barriers, undocumented status, poor pay, discrimination, house insecurity, lack of access to insurance and lack of transportation
- Latinx migrant farmworkers have been disproportionately affected by the current pandemics (COVID-19, wildfires and social injustice)
- Despite the multiple challenges they experience, Latinx migrant farmworkers demonstrate resilience and coping factors to manage their difficulties (Kossek & Burke, 2014)

Social support, community involvement, hope, religion, and spirituality are associated with greater quality of life and improved mental and physical health outcomes

(Dueweke, 2015; Hovey & Magaña, 2003)

- However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the relationship between resilience factors, mental health, and quality of life in this population.
- The **purpose of this study** is to explore the direct relationship between resiliency, quality of life, and mental health in Latino migrant farmworkers.

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Methods

- **This study attempt to address answer the following research questions:**
 - What is the relationship between resilience, health-related quality of life, and mental health in Latino migrant workers?
 - What resilience factors correlate to the mental and emotional health (i.e., depression, anxiety, and stress) of Latinx migrant farmworkers?
- The researchers are collecting data through measures in English and Spanish including the Migrant Farmworker Stress Inventory and Brief Resilience Scale to collect data about resilience, physical health symptoms, stress, depression, and anxiety.
- **Measures include:**
 - Migrant Farmworker Stress Inventory (Hovey, 2000): a scale specifically designed to assess stressors relevant to the work of migrant farmworkers (39-item self-report inventory)
 - Brief Resilience Scale, Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7, Patient Health Questionnaire-9, Patient Health Questionnaire-15
 - Additional questions regarding impact of COVID-19, wildfires, overall quality of life and demographic/cultural factors
- The original plan was to conduct qualitative research in person. However, due to the limitations of the pandemic and wildfires, the researchers made the difficult decision to change the format to an online survey.
- Researchers are collaborating with local community-based organizations that support migrant farmworkers to distribute the survey and collect data

Results & Data Analysis

- The study is currently ongoing, the researchers are recruiting participants and have collected survey data only a few number of participants. The researchers hope to collect data from 62 participants to reach statistical power.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, opportunities to recruit participants in person have been extremely limited. In addition, many migrant farmworkers have limited access to computers and the internet.
- Support from community based organizations to help with recruitment of participants have been limited, as currently most of their efforts are focused on helping Latinxs deal with the current pandemic.
- The researchers expect to collect data that supports the hypothesis that higher resilience will be correlated with lower stress, depression, and anxiety and higher quality of life.

Discussion

- Migrant farmworkers present greater and unique challenges in regards to mental health concerns, access, and utilization.
- Despite these challenges, migrant farmworkers are incredibly resilient. They are hardworking, family- and community-oriented and strive to make a better life for themselves and others.

This will be the first study to address the direct relationship between resilience, chronic illness, and depression in Latino migrant farmworkers.

- The results of this study may be used to inform medical and mental health services, specifically researchers and practitioners working with the immigrant, migrant and seasonal farmworker community.

Limitations

- Much of the current research being conducted with the migrant farmworker population is focused on COVID-19 itself, with less of a focus on resilience and other strengths-based topics.
- The use of a survey limits the depth of information the researchers are able to collect from participants
- Additionally, the literature indicates that caution must be used when using standard psychological assessment measures with Latina/os because such measures are typically not developed using Latina/os and Spanish speaking individuals (Benuto, 2013).

Recommendations for researchers and providers

- Understanding of migrant farmworker mental health and resiliency factors awaits further exploration, in order to develop appropriate supports and interventions.
- It is possible that outreach efforts focused on education and minimizing stressors inherent in migrant farmworker lifestyle will be useful in supporting migrant farmworkers' mental health.
- Additional research on resilience is needed, while considering additional challenges of COVID
- Recommendations for health professionals and clinicians working with migrant farmworkers
 - Demonstrate flexibility
 - Listen to and address barriers to care
 - Work from a trauma-informed perspective
 - Support community outreach efforts
 - Recognize and enhance the resiliency of this community

References:

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