A Plan to Determine How to Sustain Physical Activity Programs in Faith Based Organizations

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BACKGROUND

Hispanics/Latinos and Physical Activity
- Hispanics/Latinos are the largest minority in the United States and they are expected to triple by 2050. As the Hispanic/Latino population grows, their prevalence to cancer and other chronic diseases also increases. This is a growing population with an increasing prevalence for chronic illnesses.

Faith-Based Settings and Hispanics/Latinos
- Meeting the necessary guidelines of 150 minutes a week of moderate to vigorous physical activity has been linked to lower cancer risk. In comparison to non-Hispanic whites, Hispanics/Latinos are less likely to engage in leisure physical activity, placing them at great risk for chronic illnesses and cancer.

- Specifically Hispanic/Latino women, engage in less leisure time physical activity compared to Hispanic/Latino men. 4

Faith-Based Settings and Hispanics/Latinos
- Churches can have great influence on the health practices of the community that they serve. Practice of religion and church involvement has shown to be a great part of the Hispanic community, with 68% of Hispanics identifying as Catholic. Church setting interventions can be a good approach to promoting health, since religion and faith has shown to be an important aspect of many people in the Hispanic community. 3,4

- Fe en Acción was a study conducted in catholic churches of San Diego County, with the purpose of increasing physical activity among churchgoing women. This study used a “promotor” model which involved training individual women from the community to give them the capacity of implementing physical activity classes in churches. 3

- The study increased participants’ physical activity, and reduced their BMI at 12 months following baseline. 4

- Sustainability and Faith-Based Physical Activity Programs
- Sustainability has been defined as the capacity to maintain program services at a level that will provide ongoing prevention and treatment for a health problem after termination of major financial, managerial, and technical assistance from an external donor. 11

- Understanding factors that influence sustainability of public health programs is important to consider for a number of reasons: 1
  1. Sustainable programs can build trust between academic institutions and community organizations.
  2. Sustainable programs extend the impact of public health programs on the health practices and outcomes of the targeted community.
  3. Sustainable programs can empower communities to take ownership of a program that benefits the community.

- Specific Aims
  - Evaluate factors that influence program sustainability from the perspective of participants, church leaders, and promotoras.
  - Findings from the current study will inform an implementation study with the goal of sustaining activities following completion of the implementation study.

  - The current study is innovative in that there is no published research reporting on program sustainability in faith based settings promoting physical activity.

METHODS

Procedures:
- Descriptive Data Collection
  - Data collection will take approximately 3 months to complete

Figure 1. Step-by-step design for data collection (completed data).

- Conduct literature review of physical activity program that evaluated their sustainability.
- Select the 9 domain sustainability framework as a guide to create research questions.
- Tailor questions for promotoras, participants or church leaders.
- Draft survey questions for participants.
- Draft interview questions for church leaders, to serve in a descriptive interview.
- Draft discussion questions to facilitate focus groups for promotoras.

- Design:
  - Mixed methodology: Qualitative and quantitative data.
  - Individual level research: multiple choice and free response survey for participants, interview with church leaders, focus groups with promotoras.

INSTRUMENT

- Using the framework, sample questions for interview, focus groups and surveys were developed.

Promoters:
- What costs have you incurred since the completion of the study? What costs should be considered to help sustain the program?
- Are you currently leading a physical activity group? To what extent? (e.g., days, type, etc.)
- What support do you need to continue to implement the program on your own?

Participants:
- In what way could Fe en Acción have better impacted your involvement in physical activity? Explain
- If you no longer partake in physical activity, what were some barriers that prevented you from continuing physical activity?
  a. Financial burden
  b. Lack of time
  c. Transportation constraints
  d. Other.

Church Leadership:
- What facilitated the continuation of Fe en Acción? What resources would the church need to sustain the program effectively?
- What benefits do you see as significant in partnering with an institution? Did involving the university program Fe en Acción, give the church community a sense of ownership?
- How would you describe the communication amongst the church? i.e. between church leaders and volunteers, staff, public?

REFERENCE


IMAGES

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