

Health Status Perceptions and Literacy among Low-Income Mexican-Americans in Texas- Mexico Border *Colonias*



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Faculty Disclosure



Faculty Name	Eloisa G. Taméz, RN, PhD, FAAN
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Goals and Objectives

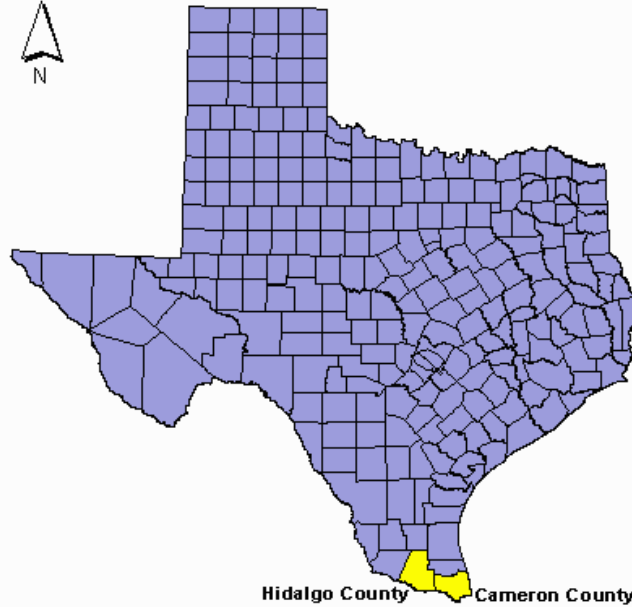


- **Session Goal**
 - H 15 Influencing Health Status of At-Risk Populations
- **Session Objectives**
 - To describe characteristics of low-income Mexican Americans residing in the South Texas-Mexico border region.
 - To identify predisposing factors comprising health status perceptions among low-income Mexican Americans residing in the South Texas-Mexico border region.
 - To describe the level of health literacy among low-income Mexican Americans residing in the South Texas-Mexico border region.

Setting



Cameron & Hidalgo Counties in Texas



0 60 120 Miles

Funding



- The study was funded by the Office of Biomedical Research and Resources at the University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg, Texas.

Purpose



- The purpose of the study was to describe health-related factors of low-income Mexican American families residing in Texas-Mexico *colonias*.

What we Know



- ▶ Perception that families residing in Texas-Mexico border communities are low income
- ▶ Perception of low education levels
- ▶ Perception of low literacy
- ▶ Majority of the families are Mexican American
- ▶ Prevalence of Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 (Burke, et al, 1999)
- ▶ Prevalence of obesity (Burke, et al, 1999)
- ▶ Energy intake of children residing in colonias is 75 % of national average and only 63% of the energy goal was met (Faraji, Taméz, Vincent, 2004)

What we Don't Know



- Sociodemographics
- Health history
- Anthropometric measures
- Health literacy
- Nutrition knowledge

Method



- Exploratory study
- Samples from four separate Texas-Mexico border *colonias*

Measures/ Predisposing Factors



- **Health history**

- Anthropometric measurements (perceived and actual)
- Body mass index (BMI)
- Activity level
- Assessment for acanthosis nigricans
- Perceived health status
- Degree of worry

- **Anthropometric measures**

- Height
- Weight
- Skinfold measurements
- **Health literacy**
- **Health beliefs**
- **Nutrition knowledge**
- **Sociodemographics**

Findings: (N=175)



- 1. Female, 72 %; 77% married; 57% birthplace Mexico**
- 2. Primary language: Spanish**
- 3. Education: 8% none; 33% elementary; 13% secondary; 30% community or university (attended)**
- 4. Unemployment: 49%**
- 5. Household income: 55% < \$10,000**
- 6. BMI: 52% obese; 35% overweight**

Findings, cont'd



- 1. Health Literacy (TOPHLAS): 85% adequate; 13.7% marginal**
- 2. Diabetes: 20% diabetic; 28% spouse diabetic; 55% diabetes in family**
- 3. Nutrition knowledge (Treviño): 63% adequate knowledge**
- 4. Health Status: 34%, moderate; 28% very**
- 5. Degree of Worry: 32% not; 30% slightly**
- 6. Physical activity: minimal to none**
- 7. Acanthosis Nigricans: negative findings *(17% Children, Tamez & Vincent, 2003)**

Outcomes



- **1. Skinfold measurements: females greater than males (p<0.0001)**
- **2. Participants reporting diabetes: greater degree of worry**
- **3. US born: English primary, higher education, employed, higher nutrition knowledge**

Outcomes



- **4. Majority perceived themselves healthy:**
 - a. majority were obese
 - b. engaged in little to no exercise activity
 - c. low nutrition knowledge
- **5. Majority: health literate**
- **6. Majority: underreported their weight
($p < 0.0001$)**

Strengths



- ▶ **Data contributes to initial description of this population**
- ▶ **Generates potential for study**

Limitations



- **Literacy instrument did not measure knowledge.**

References (selected)



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Published



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