

Biomedical and Translational Research: Motivations, Challenges, and Perceived Rewards among Hispanics

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Letter

Two recent studies, by Hohl et al. (2014) and Cottler et al. (2013) [1,2], provide support for the need to meaningfully engage underrepresented minorities as invested parties in community-based participatory research to address inequalities in health.

Hohl et al. (2014) [1] published a study entitled “I Did It for Us and I Would Do It Again: Perspectives of Rural Latinos on Providing Biospecimens for Research”. Investigators reported results from 39 semi-structured interviews to understand the perspectives of rural Latino farmworkers and non-farmworkers living in Yakima Valley, Washington, on providing biospecimens for research.

Findings from Hohl and colleagues should be interpreted in light of a recent, larger study published by Cottler et al. (2013) [2], entitled “Community Needs, Concerns, and Perceptions About Health Research: Findings from the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Sentinel Network”. This study included nearly 6,000 people from 5 sites in the United States including 1,001 Hispanic/Latino adults. Data were collected by Community Health Workers.

Findings from the Sentinel Network in particular provide new insight into a larger and heterogeneous population of Hispanics and additional evidence in each of the three themes identified by Hohl et al. (2014) [1], including a research participant’s: (1) motivations, (2) challenges, and (3) perceived rewards. The Sentinel Network reported that Hispanics (84.5%) were more motivated to participate in research studies than Asians (79.7%), but less motivated than Whites (85.5%)

and African Americans (91.0%). Similarly, 75.5% of Hispanics reported a higher willingness to participate in research studies even if they had to give a blood sample compared to Asians (57.2%), but were less likely when compared with Whites (77.7%) and African Americans (82.6%). Related to rewards and compensation for a hypothetical study that involved 1.5 hours in duration and the collection of a blood sample, Hispanics reported a lower price point for what they considered a fair compensation rate (\$75) to be compared with African Americans (\$82); the rate was higher than Whites (\$62) and Asians (\$69).

Overall, findings from the CTSA Sentinel Network provide support and extend the efforts by Hohl et al. (2014) [1] to better understand the perceptions and perspectives of minorities’ communities to engage in biomedical, clinical, and translational research. Findings are relevant to the inclusion of underrepresented minorities in health-related research and the design of patient-centered interventions to reduce negative health outcomes that disproportionately influence racial and ethnic minorities.

References

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