

Mitigating the Spread of Misinformation and Disinformation about COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment Initiatives among Hispanic or Latino Populations

Investigators

- Rigoberto I. Delgado, PhD, MBA - Texas Woman's University
- Rose G. Ramos, PhD - Texas Woman's University

Project Summary

Considerable evidence exists on the role misinformation and disinformation played in influencing COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy and refusal at the general population level. There is less research on how misinformation and disinformation on social media affects COVID-19 perceptions by different racial or ethnic groups, particularly Hispanic or Latino populations. This group has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in the U.S. and includes a community where health disparities and inequitable gaps in social determinants of health prevail. Since Hispanic and Latino populations relied heavily on social media to obtain information on COVID-19, it is imperative to expand research on mitigating the effect of misinformation and disinformation through these communication channels. One such strategy is to engage members of Hispanic or Latino communities and learn of their trusted sources of health information, which affect their health-seeking behavior, including vaccinations. The general objective of this proposal is to expand on earlier studies completed by the Principal Investigator and co-investigators on appropriate, culturally sensitive, strategies to disseminate accurate information on COVID-19 prevention and treatments. We expect our findings to translate into 1) improved health information equity, 2) increased awareness of what Hispanic or Latino people expect from a trusted source of health information, and 3) strengthened awareness of the FDA's health equity mission.

Populations Served: Hispanic or Latino

Goals/Aims:

- Develop a social network analysis model to estimate degree of COVID-19 misinformation and disinformation consumed by Hispanic or Latino communities.
- Conduct focus group sessions with representative Hispanic or Latino community members to validate findings from the social network analysis model.
- Complete an economic impact analysis of proposed informational strategies for Hispanic or Latino communities.

Publications/Abstracts/Posters, etc.

- Manuscript in preparation.