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Article Abstract

Reference:

Schwingel, A., Gálvez, P., Linares, D., & Sebastião, E. (2016). Using a mixed-methods RE-AIM framework to evaluate community health programs for older Latinas. *Journal of Aging and Health*. doi:10.1177/0898264316641075

I. Summary:

Through a mixed methods approach, the authors used the RE-AIM framework, which focuses on the program’s reach, efficacy, adoption, implementation, and maintenance, to evaluate a promotora-led community-based health intervention program intended to help older Latinas improve physical activity, nutrition, and stress management.

II. Main Points:

1. There is an increased vulnerability to chronic diseases among older Latinas because of certain physical, psychological and social factors. Promotora-led community-based health intervention programs have potential to prevent and control chronic diseases among older Latinas and have received increased attention. *Abuelas en Acción* (AEA) or *Grandmothers in Action* is one of these programs and aims at addressing physical activity, nutri­tion, and stress management for Latinas aged 50 years and older.

2. RE-AIM is an evaluation framework that seeks to understand comprehensive factors influencing a program at both individual and organizational levels by evaluating the program’s reach, efficacy, adoption, implementation, and maintenance. AEA was evaluated through a mixed methods approach guided by the RE-AIM framework. Quantitative and qualitative data from participants, promotoras, and community organization leaders were collected and analyzed to achieve data complementarity and to evaluate the efficacy, adoption, implementation, and maintenance of AEA.

3. The RE-AIM framework provided a comprehensive evaluation of AEA’s strengths and areas for improvement. Despite the limitations, AEA proved to be effective at improving participants’ physical activity, eating behaviors, and stress management and motivating promotoras and community organization leaders. The mixed methods approach also revealed the significance of accommodating the complex cul­tural factors for programs implemented in real-world settings.

III. Analysis:

* What are the results and/or conclusions?

By evaluating efficacy, adoption, implementation, and maintenance, AEA proved to be effective at improving participants’ physical activity, eating behaviors, and stress management and motivating promotoras and community organization leaders although some limitations existed. It is important for programs in real-world settings to accommodate the complex cul­tural factors.

* Do you believe that the authors provided a persuasive argument? Why or why not?

The lack of a nonintervention control group and the small sample size in this study limited the statistical power of data when generalizing the outcomes to the broader Latino population. A larger sample size needs to be chosen and further studies need to be conducted to draw a generalized conclusion. However, this study provided a good example of using RE-AIM framework to evaluate a health intervention program with a mixed methods approach.

* How does this article relate to the topics and themes addressed this week in classwork?

This week’s topic is about the RE-AIM evaluation framework and analyzing program effects. This article exactly discussed about using a mixed methods approach guided by the RE-AIM framework to make a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of AEA program.

* Did you like this article (or not)? Briefly, discuss its strengths and weaknesses.

I liked this article. This article provided a good model of using RE-AIM framework to evaluate a health intervention program. Quantitative data were systematically analyzed and qualitative data were selectively quoted to help understand different dimensions of AEA. Furthermore, researchers well accommodated the complex cul­tural factors in their program. However, there were also some weaknesses. The program did not well address the difficulty in managing the weekly phone calls and finding a permanent meeting space. In addition, the evaluation of AEA did not check for fidelity or assess the cost of the program and RE-AIM’s reach component was not assessed directly.

* What does the article add to your knowledge of aging and/or program evaluation?

Promotora-led community-based health intervention programs have potential to improve older adults’ quality of life. Then, RE-AIM is an effective evaluation framework which provides a comprehensive understanding of factors influencing a program at both individual and organizational levels. And, it is important for programs in real-world settings to accommodate the complex cul­tural factors.

* Please state your evaluation of the article or Chapter and indicate what you think is its most salient contribution to your development as a program evaluator?

This article provided me with a good example of using RE-AIM framework to evaluate a health intervention program. Combined with a mixed methods approach, RE-AIM can make a comprehensive evaluation of the program at individual and organizational levels.