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Healthy Bodegas: Bringing the Community Together to Eat Healthier

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BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Colorectal cancer (CRC) incidence has remained stable in the United States (U.S.) the past 30 years.
- Despite this trend, there has been a significant increase in CRC incidence among the millennial generation.^{1,2}
- The association between the Western diet and CRC, and racial and gender disparities in CRC is well-established.¹
- Public health and community efforts are needed to address barriers to healthy nutrition in this population.
- One identified barrier is food access in lower-income communities, sometimes called “food deserts”.
- Local stores, or “bodegas”, have potential to increase access to healthy affordable foods and contribute to risk reduction for the development of chronic diseases such as CRC.³

PURPOSE

Assess the effectiveness of the Healthy Bodega Initiative (HBI), designed to increase availability and promotion of healthy foods; engage community participation by mobilizing community-based organizations (CBOs) and local store owners to participate in the initiative; and, facilitate positive dietary changes.

METHODS AND ANALYSIS

- Guided by the Conceptual Logic Model of community-based participatory research, this study will:
 - evaluate the intervention through in-store observations and pre- and post-intervention surveys of participating store owners
 - conduct surveys with customers and store owners at a subset of stores, including open-ended questions

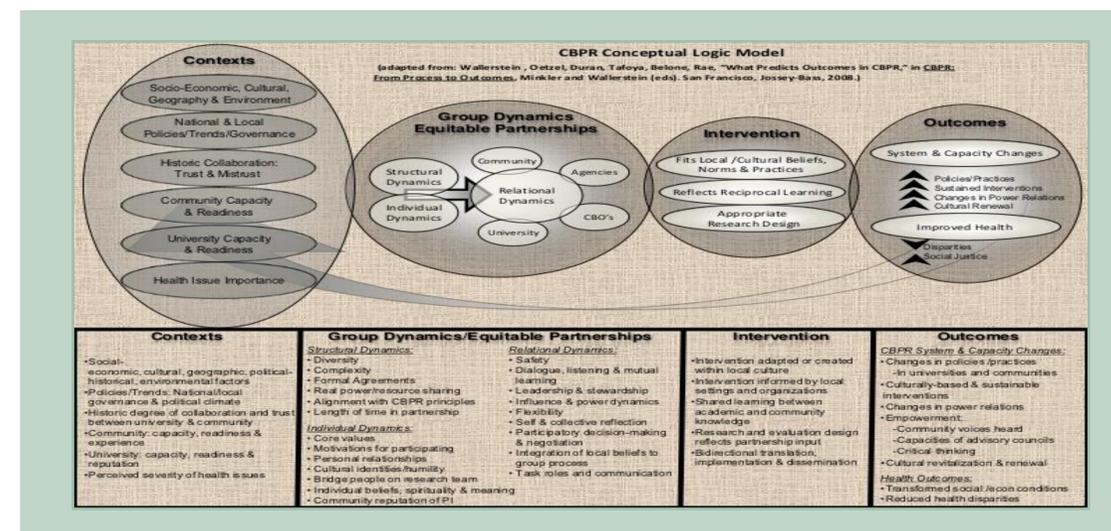


Figure 2. The Conceptual Logic Model of Community-Based Participatory Research

- Intervention includes:
 - relocating healthy foods to the front of the store and where they are easily seen
 - putting water bottles at eye level and sugar-sweetened beverages at the bottom of display case
 - clearly displaying culturally-tailored HBI advertising materials on storefront and throughout store
- Analysis involves:
 - descriptive statistics of survey and observational data using Stata15
 - Poisson regression analysis comparing number of healthy vs. unhealthy foods sold using store receipts, using Stata15
 - theme-analysis of answers to open-ended questions using Nvivo12

RESULTS

- This study is in planning phases; no findings are available.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

- Prospective longitudinal research with long-term follow-up should be conducted to explore the social determinants affecting:
 - low-income populations
 - changes that result after improved access to healthy foods
 - long-term health outcomes

Table 1. Barriers to Implementation and Retention of Participants

	Barriers	Potential Solutions
Implementation	Cost of produce to store owners	Financial resources, including a grant for the study
	Access to farmers for produce	Needs to be assessed on a case-basis. Produce distributors may need to be utilized if farm resources are not available
	Community buy-in	Human resources, including community leaders partnering with study team on the ground
Retention	Social cohesion of target population	Excellent management and clear, non-conflicting rules made with community
	Consumer demand exceeding store owner's or farmer's capabilities	Supplement with produce from distributors; enable increasing shelving space
	Lack of community empowerment or attitude of non-acceptance	CBOs and community leadership will play an integral role in implementation and follow-up
	Lack of resources within bodegas for store owners (e.g., space, shelving)	Level-based rewards system used as a facilitator for shop owners

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Figure 1. Intervention examples from New York City's Healthy Bodega Initiative