

### Qualitative Evaluation of a Text-Based, Culturally-Tailored Nutrition Education Intervention for Hispanic/Latino Adults in Massachusetts, USA

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**Objectives:** This study aimed to document the perspectives of past participants of a text- and website-based ethnic-specific healthy eating program delivered in 2019–2021 for 76 ethnically-diverse Latinos in Boston, MA. Following a healthy diet may help prevent excessive burden of disease; however, current programs fail to address distinctions by ethnicity. Formative research with community partners showed that the Latino community warranted deeply tailored dietary programs. Hence, we aimed to identify key facilitators and barriers to the program implementation and uptake, with the goal of improving future iterations, across diverse populations.

**Methods:** In 2021, a trained bilingual researcher conducted semi-structured phone interviews with 29% of past participants ( $n = 22$ ). The interview guide and codebook were grounded in the RE-AIM framework. Coders employed a deductive analytic approach.

**Results:** Most participants were Spanish-speaking women over the age of 35, who graduated college and have lived in the U.S. over 20 years. Participants identified a need for ethnic-specific cultural tailoring and for recognizing similarities and differences across Latino cultures in nutrition programs. Motivations to participate included giving back to the Latino community, contributing to science, learning something new, and losing weight. Continued participation was driven by the value assigned to social interaction and discussion when learning about healthy eating strategies. Participants reported higher engagement with content delivered via text message than website, which presented barriers to access. Participants also appreciated receiving familiar content, which served as a “cue to action” for common health behaviors. Through participation, individuals reported increased autonomy and awareness of their dietary choices and physical changes.

**Conclusions:** There is a recognized need for ethnic-specific health promotion efforts among Hispanics/Latinos. To facilitate program uptake, interventions should deliver opportunities for social interaction, emphasize ease of access, and highlight opportunities for participant engagement to garner autonomy and awareness.

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