Background & Methods

Background

- A 2015 Census Bureau indicated that 75,000 Latinx live in Missouri, comprising 4.3% of the state's population.
- The wait for mental health services in the Latinx community organizations in St. Louis averages from 6 to 12 months.
- Since 2015, an informal collaborative network was established between three organizations that serve the Latinx community in St. Louis, namely, the Refugio Hispanic Ministry of South City Church, LifeWise STL, and St. Louis Crisis Nursery.
- The three organizations wondered if there might be a benefit to working collaboratively with these community members/clients as well as between them, and thus began freely serving each other’s clients and with permission from specific clients approaching these relationships together as a team effort.

Purpose

- With this project, we seek to assess the benefits of this informal collaboration

Methods

- We conducted three focus groups between March and June 2020.
- The first focus group was comprised of people who receive services from only one of the three organizations, the second focus groups participants received services from two organizations, and the third focus group received services from all three organizations.
- Ten to fifteen people per group were invited to participate from a list provided by the organizations and with the consent from the participants.

Methods (cont.)

- On average 5 people per group attended each of the focus groups.
- The Six Dimensions of Wellness guided this study.
- Each person answered a survey which measured the six dimensions of wellness according to the framework (social, intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and occupational).
- This was followed by the focus group discussion which allowed them to elaborate on the responses given in the paper survey.

Results

- Quantitative findings show various levels of wellness among the participants.
- The greatest difference between the groups was in the mean score given to how much did they feel that they support their communities (5 = maximum support and 1 = minimal support), group one had a score of 2.83, group 2, 2.97, and group 3, 4.25.
- Results from our qualitative study show differences in the way each participant perceived a specific dimension of wellness and the support they receive depending on the group to which they belonged. The group receiving support from all three agencies displayed the most comprehensive benefit in all six dimensions of wellness.

Results from the individual survey (5 being the highest score)

Results from the focus group (barriers and facilitators for wellbeing by group-selected examples)

Conclusions

- Our findings are relevant to the current culture amongst St. Louis nonprofits and addresses issues of territorialism and competition by providing evidence that there is another, better, approach based on mutual respect and collaboration, from which both the clients and the agencies benefit.
- Another important contribution in this project is the unique sample of participants, a population which would often be hard to find and involved in research due to fear, political climate, social risk, lack of interpreters, and other social barriers that marginalize this community. Each organization provides different services to community members/clients using different skill sets, and each one of them brings an added value for collaboration.

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