

Mental Health in Latinx Countries

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Introduction

- Mental Health is defined as the “state of well-being” as well as being able to cope with challenges.
- Among Latin American countries there are differences regarding the notion of mental illnesses. For example, research shows there is a growing stigma in Latin American countries such as Brazil and Jamaica about mental health, yet many people fall into psychiatric diagnosis.
- According to mental health researchers, Latin American countries and the Caribbean are said to be underrepresented in mental health research despite their high population and higher rate for mental disorders.
- The resources needed for mental health are significantly higher in other countries, something many Latinx countries lack. For example, in Figure 1, Mexico falls behind a significant amount in resources.
- Technology and health care advances everyday in large, but what about the less wealthy communities of Latin America?

Research Question

How is mental health being addressed in Latinx countries?

Methods

- Using scholarly resources such as peer reviewed articles.
- Researching the minimal amounts of mental health articles.
- The graphs were accurate reflections of studies that were conducted to gather further data.
- Throughout my research, I discovered that there was a lack of recent data.
- This lack of data can be represented with Figures 1 and 2.
- In the future, I'd hope to see more research studies to further investigate this issue today.
- Noticing at the mental health struggles throughout the pandemic.

Results and Analysis

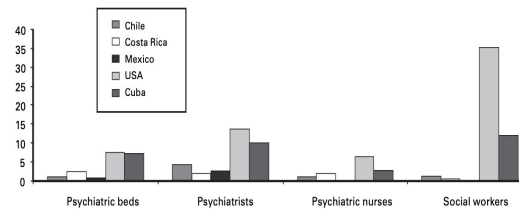
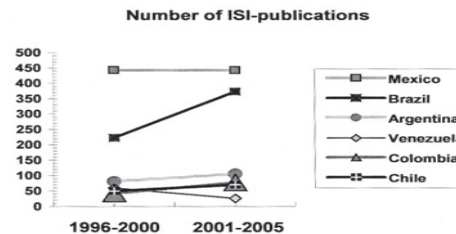


Fig. 1. Mental healthcare human resources per 100,000 inhabitants (does not include psychologists because the data are not available in Mexico) (World Health Organization, 2005).



In a 2005 study the Federal University of Sao Paulo (Figure 2), researchers compared the number of ISI mental health publications throughout some of the largest Latin American countries. Smaller countries in the Americas failed to be represented due to their low rate of mental health specialists, services and graduate courses.

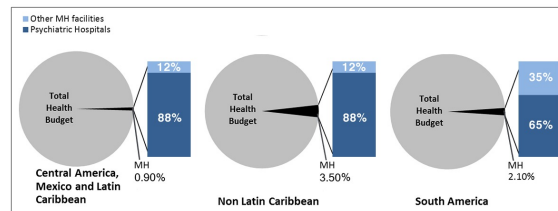


Fig 3. Budget among psychiatric hospitals throughout Latin America and the Caribbean

In a 2013 study by the World Health Organization (WHO), shown above in Figure 3, researchers found that in every region of the Americas, only small percentage of their total health budget went to mental health facilities.

Results and Analysis



Many people living in poverty are blocked from mental healthcare. For example, in Mexico, there are different mental health services available which include specialized psychological medical care and psychiatric hospitals, but they face challenges. According to a study by Cambridge University, Mexico has only 0.667 psychiatric beds for every 10,000 inhabitants (Figure 1). To get care, it may take a whole day and a substantial amount of money. Although there are big institutions, there are no local mental health institutions in rural areas. When it comes to research, Mexico lacks trained professionals and high technology.

Conclusion

Research shows a wide gap among how Latin American countries are handling the growing rate of mental illnesses. Because many of these countries are poorer, the people don't receive the adequate assistance for their mental health. Many citizens of Latin American countries and the Caribbean are failed due to budgeting, lack of resources, and few professionals. Latin American countries have systems set up for people covered by a type of social security, but there is still a tremendous gap in hospitals and other facilities including mental health. However, there is a trend to put in place more funding and the expansion of services to lower-income families.

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