

# Predictors of Attitudes Towards Mental Health Treatment in Latino Men

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## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- Although 20% of Latino men meet the criteria for a DSM-V disorder at any given time (SAMHSA, 2019), less than one in four of Latino men with a diagnosed disorder will seek mental health care services (SAMHSA, 2021).
- Latino men also experience higher amounts of significant distress that result in completed suicide attempts compared to Latinas at 12.1 to 2 (Office of Minority Health, 2019).
- Though factors such as stigma and machismo have been found to decrease attitudes, intentions, and utilization of mental health services (Lally et al., 2013; Lannin et al., 2015; Nuñez et al., 2016; Rastogi et al., 2012; Uebelacker et al. 2012), there has been a lack of research focusing on the relationship between these factors and mental healthcare help seeking behaviors, especially in Latino men.
- The first aim of the present study was to examine predictors of attitudes toward mental health treatment in young Latino men. The variables examined included social stigma, self-stigma, machismo, perceptions of treatment barriers, perceptions of treatment benefits, and history of previous mental health treatment.
- The second aim was to determine whether predictors of mental health treatment attitudes differed when comparing in-person treatment versus virtual mental health treatment.

## HYPOTHESES

### Specifically, we expected that:

- Higher levels of social stigma would be significantly negatively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- Higher levels of self-stigma would be significantly negatively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- Higher levels of machismo would be significantly negatively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- Higher level of perceived barriers would be significantly negatively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- Greater perceived benefits towards help-seeking would be significantly positively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- A history of mental health treatment would be significantly positively associated with attitudes towards mental health treatment.
- Attitudes towards virtual mental health treatment will be perceived as more favorable in comparison to attitudes towards in-person mental health treatment.

## METHODS

**Participants:** 158 male adults of Mexican heritage (*M* age = 22 years, *SD* age = 4.5, range = 18-44) from a university in south Texas, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). 87% of the sample were Mexican Americans born in the United States with other participants being of Cuban and South American descent.

### Measures:

- Online and Face-to-Face Counseling Attitudes Scales (Rochlen et al., 2004).
- Perceived Barriers to Help Seeking Questionnaire (Vidourek et al., 2014).
- Perceived Benefits to Help Seeking Questionnaire: (Vidourek et al., 2014).
- Stigma Scale for Receiving Psychological Help Scale (Komiya et al., 2000).
- Self-Stigma of Seeking Help scale (Vogel et al., 2006).
- Machismo Measure (Arciniega et al., 2008).

**Procedures:** Participants were recruited through SONA and data were collected through Qualtrics. After online consent, participants completed a demographic form that included a question about history of mental health treatment. Participants then completed the standardized measures and were compensated with course credit or extra credit.

## RESULTS CONTINUED

### Attitudes Toward Mental Health Treatment

	In-Person	Virtual
Social Stigma	-.36**	-.31**
Self-Stigma	-.56**	-.55**
Machismo	-.38**	-.32**
Barriers	-.35**	-.20**
Benefits	.27**	.26**
Treatment History	.31**	.29**

Note: \*\*  $p \leq .01$

## RESULTS

### Correlations between Variables

	Social Stigma	Self-Stigma	Machismo	Barriers	Benefits	Treatment History
Social Stigma	--	.41**	.38**	.43**	-.11	-.03
Self-Stigma	.41**	--	.46**	.25**	-.26**	-.23**
Machismo	.38**	.46**	--	.30**	-.07	-.11
Barriers	.43**	.25**	.30**	--	.13	.03
Benefits	-.11	-.26**	-.07	.13	--	.12
Treatment History	-.03	-.23**	-.11	.03	.12	--

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$

## SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- Latino men with higher levels of social stigma, self-stigma, and machismo were less likely to seek mental health treatment, especially in-person, and Latino men perceived that there are more barriers involved in receiving in-person treatment compared to virtual treatment.
- Self-stigma appeared to be a stronger deterrent to mental treatment than social stigma.
- Our findings suggest that access to virtual mental health treatment is a more feasible form of treatment for Latino men.
- Our findings suggest that focusing on modifiable factors by reducing levels of social stigma, self-stigma, and machismo as well as recommending virtual mental health treatment as a more feasible option could be promising in addressing and improving the mental health of Latino men.
- Additional research replicating the aims of this study in diverse populations of Latino men (e.g., differing levels of educational attainment, specific ethnic subgroup identification) is necessary to further clarify and guide efforts towards encouraging the utilization of mental health treatment and destigmatizing mental health in this understudied population.