

Studies from the Northern New Jersey Traumatic Brain Injury System
Center for Traumatic Brain Injury Research at Kessler Foundation

Hispanics with TBI

Does place of birth and residence impact a productive lifestyle for people with ancestry in Spanish-speaking countries? We made some interesting discoveries.



Researchers at Kessler Foundation, in collaboration with other Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model System centers across the country, wanted to know if the place where a **Hispanic** individual with TBI was born or lives impacts their ability to work, attend school, or do volunteer activities. Their study offers some important insights for individuals, their families, and care providers.

BACKGROUND

This study sought to find out whether there were any differences in **productivity** after a TBI among Hispanics born in the United States and those who were born elsewhere. The term **nativity** refers to one's place of birth.

A total of 706 individuals with TBI who identified as Hispanic participated. About half were born in the U.S.; the others were born in Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

(continued on next page)

One key takeaway:

Foreign-born Hispanics with TBI may have an easier time making connections and finding work when they live in areas with more foreign language speakers.

Study terms:

HISPANIC – person with ancestry from a country where Spanish is the primary language

PRODUCTIVITY – work, school, or volunteer activities

NATIVITY – where a person was born

RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT – where a person lives

(continued from first page)

All in the study were age 65 years or younger. Nearly 80% were male.

Each participant answered a series of questions about their involvement in work, school, or community activities. In addition, researchers used zip codes to look at the number of foreign language speakers where the people lived.

FINDINGS

At first, researchers found that those individuals born in the U.S. tended to have higher productivity after injury.

However, this was not always true, depending on where a person lives – their **residential environment** – and the number of foreign language speakers who lived in the same area.

- Hispanics born outside the U.S. who now live in areas with more foreign language speakers were almost three times more likely to be engaged in work, school or volunteer activities than those in communities with fewer foreign language speakers.

- In areas with fewer foreign language speakers, Hispanics born in the U.S. were more than 2.5 times more likely to be engaged in work, school, or volunteer activities than persons born outside the U.S.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

It is possible that foreign-born Hispanics with TBI may have an easier time making connections and finding work when they live in areas with more foreign language speakers. Researchers also noted that immigrants living in areas with fewer foreign language speakers may have more language barriers or feel culturally isolated.

This suggests that foreign-born Hispanics with TBI may benefit from vocational rehabilitation programs that offer training in basic English language skills related to finding and keeping a job.

To better understand how neighborhoods affect peoples' lives after TBI, further study is needed. 📍

ABOUT THIS STUDY

Relationship Between Hispanic Nativity, Residential Environment, and Productive Activity Among Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury: A TBI Model Systems Study

Investigators:

Anthony H. Lequerica, PhD
Amanda Botticello, PhD
John O'Neill, PhD
Jean Lengenfelder, PhD
Denise Krch, PhD
Nancy D. Chiaravalloti, PhD
Angelle M. Sander, PhD
Tamara Bushnik, PhD
Jessica M. Ketchum, PhD
Flora M. Hammond, MD
Kristen Dams-O'Connor, PhD
Elizabeth Felix, PhD
Doug Johnson-Greene, PhD

Published in *The Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation*, 2019



For more on the study, scan the code or go to <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29863616/>