



Language, Location & Life After Brain Injury in Hispanic Communities

Real-Life Science Audio Summary Transcript

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ANNOUNCER: 00:04

Welcome to Real-Life Science, the podcast where research meets real-world impact. Today's episode, "Language, Location & Life After Brain Injury in Hispanic Communities", dives into groundbreaking findings from Kessler Foundation and its national collaborators. What role does nativity play in recovery after traumatic brain injury? And how does the language spoken in your neighborhood influence your ability to work, study, or volunteer? Stay with us as we explore how place and culture shape the journey of healing and reintegration.

BRIAN: 00:41

Researchers at Kessler Foundation, in collaboration with other Traumatic Brain Injury 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.

BRIAN: 01:02

Let me explain what this study looked at and why it matters

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.

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.

BRIAN: 01:49

Let's take a look at the key takeaways from the study



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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.

BRIAN: 02:33

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.

To learn more about this study, links are in the program notes.

ANNOUNCER: 03:16

Thanks for listening to Real-Life Science. This episode, Language, Location & Life After Brain Injury in Hispanic Communities, shed light on how community and culture influence recovery after TBI. If



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you found this conversation helpful, share it with someone navigating life after brain injury.

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