

Radio Novelas for Community Based Health and Safety Education in the Yakima Valley



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Background:

El Proyecto Bienestar (The Well-being Project) is a community-academic-clinical partnership with:

- Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (PNASH) at the University of Washington
- Northwest Communities Education Center/Radio KDNA (Radio Cadena—*The Voice of the Farmworker*)
- Heritage University
- Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic.

This partnership aims to:

- Address health and safety issues among Yakima Valley agricultural workers.
- Assure that the proper medium is used to address these issues.



Objectives:

Using Radio KDNA's experience in writing and producing radio programming and the knowledge of those in PNASH, a series of radio novelas (or Spanish radio dramas) were created and aired. Their objectives were to:



- Address the 4 priority health and safety issues identified through community surveys: asthma/ air pollution, water pollution, pesticide exposure, and work place abuse.
- Gauge the effectiveness of the radio novelas as a tool to reach the farm worker population.

Ultimately, we hope the message is getting across to the Hispanic farm worker community and that the various health and safety issues are addressed in the proper manner.

Methods:

➢ 295 baseline surveys were conducted before novelas aired in the summer of 2009 on community members' knowledge of and experience with the priority issues.

➢ Four radio novelas were created and aired about the Chavira family and their experiences with the four priority issues.

➢ Follow Up Surveys:

- Summer 2010
- Toppenish Market Place and the Yakima Valley Farmworkers Clinic in Grandview
- Conducted with the help of ConneX students
- Take approximately 15 minutes to administer



➢ Data Analysis:

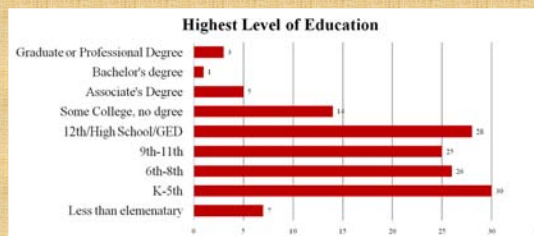
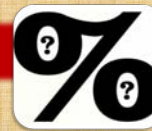
- Excel
- SPSS: Frequencies, Chi square test, T-tests



Results:

Demographics (N=139):

- Average age is 41 (range= 18-80)
- 35.3% were male and 64.7% were female
- 88.7% of participants have children
- 57.7% were born in Mexico
- 34.5% were born in Washington State
- 48.2% are employed
- 61% completed the survey in Spanish
- 69% are employed in Agriculture, either field work or packing and processing.



Results:

Of those who listened to Radio KDNA 91.9:

- 42.6% had heard of the Chavira family.
- 55.6% had not heard of the Chavira family.

Of those who heard of the Chavira Family:

- 69.6% incorrectly answered that all water cannot be made drinkable by boiling.
- 86.7% correctly answered that early pesticide exposure can cause learning problems.
- 93.2% correctly answered that it's unsafe to wash agricultural work clothes with the rest of the families clothes.
- 69.8% correctly answered that workers have the right to refuse to use dangerous equipment.

Conclusion/Discussion:

Though only 33.1% of people that were surveyed actually heard of the Chavira family, of those people, a majority correctly answered most of the questions, suggesting that the radio novelas may be an effective tool in disseminating health and safety information to the Hispanic farm worker community in the Yakima Valley.

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