

# **Cognitive Testing of Health-Related QoL Questions**

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**With English- and Spanish-speaking Adolescents**

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# The Issue

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- A widely used HRQoL battery of 9 questions has been cognitively tested for use with adults (Beatty 2004)
- The battery is used with other populations including teenagers, and speakers of other languages, without the same rigorous testing.

# Questions to Answer

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- CDC wished to learn if there are indications that adolescents, either in English or Spanish, have patterns of interpretation or response for these questions that vary from those of adults, warranting further research.
  
- Questions to answer in the study include:
  - Do these items act as comparable stimuli for teenagers and adults?
  - Are they comparable or equivalent items in translation?
  - How do adolescents interpret the concept of HRQOL?
  - Do the questions tap into that concept for this population?

# Respondents

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- 24 interviews conducted in Chicago
- Spanish-speaking respondents were primarily monolingual immigrants from Mexico
- English-speaking respondents were monolingual English speakers of varied race/ethnicity
- Ages 12 – 17
- 12 male and 12 female
- Recruited through schools, after school programs, churches, and word-of-mouth

# Battery of 9 Questions

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1. Would you say that in general your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?
2. Now thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days was your physical health not good?
3. Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good?
4. During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor physical or mental health keep you from doing your usual activities, such as self-care, work, school, or recreation?

# Battery of 9 Questions (cont.)

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5. During the past 30 days, for about how many days did PAIN make it hard for you to do your usual activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?
6. During the past 30 days, for about how many days have you felt SAD, BLUE, or DEPRESSED?
7. During the past 30 days, for about how many days have you felt WORRIED, TENSE, or ANXIOUS?
8. During the past 30 days, for about how many days have you felt you did NOT get ENOUGH REST or SLEEP?
9. During the past 30 days, for about how many days have you felt VERY HEALTHY AND FULL OF ENERGY?

# Approach

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- ❑ The question was asked as the first in the battery of 9 questions.
- ❑ Retrospective probing was done after each 2 to 4 related questions.
- ❑ Typical probes included:
  - You said in general your health is xxxx. What made you say that?
  - What would someone with (INSERT RESPONSE CATEGORY) health be like?
  - Why did you answer xxxx and not (ADJACENT AND BETTER HEALTH STATUS)?

# Data to Present Today: Q1

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- Would you say that in general your health is...
  - excellent,
  - very good,
  - good,
  - fair,
  - or poor?
  
- ¿Dirías que en general tu salud es...
  - excelente,
  - muy buena,
  - buena,
  - regular
  - o mala?

# Q1 Quotes

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(Eng., age 12, female)

- I: And how did you come up with 'very good'? R: Because I don't get tired, I don't feel like I eat a lot all the time, I play sports, I like to play outside, I like to run, I feel active."

(Eng., age 12, male)

- I: How come it's good? Tell me about what that means. R: Because I play sports, and I tend to eat fruits and vegetables.

(Eng., age 13, female)

R: very good I: So can you tell me what were you thinking, and how you came up with that answer? R: I was thinking like what I usually do like that involves exercise, and like how many times I like feel lazy and stuff. So I came up with that, because like some days, I just feel like sitting on the couch, but others, I'm like really active.

# Findings for Q1

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- In prior study with 68 Latino adults (English and Spanish speakers) we found that 10% of Rs based their answer on whether they engage or not in healthy behaviors (diet, exercise)
- Among the 12-14 year olds in this study, regardless of language, 90% of Rs did this
- Among the 15-17 year olds a few other factors were considered, including feeling well or not, injuries and illness. Nutrition and exercise were present in about half of the narratives

# Findings for Q6 (English)

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- ❑ 'Blue' was a term familiar to English-speaking adolescents in context.
- ❑ All were able to explain how they interpreted the question, and to give examples in their narrative that addressed interpretation of the three terms: sad, blue, or depressed.

# Q6 Quotes

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(Eng, female, age 12)

R: Sad is when you are upset and you don't feel very good about something. And blue is when just can get out of being sad an gloomy and you are kind of upset for maybe a longer time. I: And what about depressed? R: That's when it's actually, it may be more severe that just sad and it could be maybe like an illness too.

(Eng, male, age 17)

R: Well, when I think of depression I think of the color blue. Like a deep and washed out blue. I can like picture kind of feeling that way. Interviewer: Did you think about someone physically being the color blue? R: Yeah, I did. I: How do you understand that sad, blue, depressed are different from yeah other? R: Sadness, is more like a serious kind of a depression and blue is like I feel like it's almost in the same category as sad. I usually associate them together. I think depression is an actual diagnosed kind of thing.

# Findings for Q6 (Spanish)

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- ❑ Translated terms for 'sad' (triste) and 'depressed' (deprimido) were interpreted as in English.
- ❑ Translated term for 'blue' (melancólico) was not a term some of the Rs were familiar with, particularly some of the younger. One guessed it was related to 'alcohólico'.

# Next Steps

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- Lots to analyze
- Data entered in Q-Notes
- Will use the pyramid approach to analysis (Miller 2009)

THANKS FOR LISTENING!