

Minority Research Center has awarded the following 2 proposals for our 2022-2023 RFP:

Principal Investigator:

1. Dr. Caron Lott,
Philander Smith College
900 West Daisy L. Gatson Bates Drive,
Little Rock, AR 72202

Abstract

Title: African-American college student's attitudes and behaviors about tobacco use during COVID-19.

Rationale:

Tobacco companies target African-American communities (Truth and initiative, 2020). There have been legal challenges to minimize the targeting of minority communities. Unfortunately for communities of color, COVID-19 occurred with devastating effects. African-American smoking rates are smoking much higher at 77.4% than their white counterparts at 23% (American Lung Association, 2020). In Arkansas, the overall smoking rates pre-COVID-19 had fallen to 20% (Aspire Arkansas, 2019).

Due to COVID-19, college students have higher levels of stress (Jacicovic, 2021). Additionally, this stress is causing students to exhibit behaviors and attitudes they have never experienced before. COVID-19 is making it difficult, for college students, who are finding ways to cope.

Smoking is one of the ways they cope with stress. Life has drastically changed as students try to maintain some normalcy. In another study about college students, smoking and COVID-19, smoking decreased, when COVID-19 first occurred, but the amount of smoking was the same (Sokolovsky et.al, 2021). Additionally, it stated when college students were exposed to news stories about COVID-19, smoking tended to increase.

Objective: To understand African-American student's attitudes and behaviors toward tobacco use during COVID-19. **Design:** A Qualitative narrative with a combination of virtual, and in person interviews/focus groups. **Setting:** Philander Smith College students and other African-American Pulaski County college students. **Participants:** 200 African-American traditional (ages 18-24) and non-traditional (ages 25 and up) college students. **Intervention:** Using this study to prevent, minimize and stop smoking. **Measurements:** To include central tendency, measures of variation and frequencies. **Potential Limitations:** Student's time and unwillingness to disclose personal information about the subject.

2. Principal Investigator:

Dr. Abbie Luzius, Community Development Manager
Community Clinic
614 E Emma Ave. Suite 300
Springdale, AR 72764

Abstract

Title: Assessing Attitudes, Norms, and Behavioral Control Among Minority Populations Using Tobacco Products and Their Attempts at Cessation

Rationale: Tobacco cessation programs or services within healthcare settings are successful, but this is not always true for minority/disparate communities. Tobacco cessation treatment does not always account for the cultural and subjective norms of a patient, the patient's attitudes, and their perceived control over a quitting. **Objective:** The purpose of this study is to assess the impacts of attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral control of one's ability to utilize tobacco treatment in a healthcare setting, and cessation success rates. **Design:** This study will employ the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) for multi-phased data collection. Data will be analyzed to identify overall attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control. These findings will inform a multivariate regression analysis to establish the areas that predict one's intention to quit smoking, and compare to the measured success rates as reported.

Setting: This study will take place within a Community Health Center among any of its fifteen locations across Northwest Arkansas. **Participants:** Adults, ages 18 years and older, who identify as Hispanic or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. **Intervention:** Patient's enrolled in the Tobacco Cessation Program will receive counseling from the integrated behavioral health department and a consultation/regular follow-ups with an on-staff Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), offering over-the-counter and prescription treatment options. **Measurements:** Patient attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control will be measured at three different intervals along with long-term cessation. **Potential Limitations:** Cultural stigmas around the utilization of behavioral health services could pose a limitation to this study.