

Promoting Sexual Health Equity: A Community Engagement Model for Minor Ethnic Groups in Italy

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Background

- Minor ethnic groups in Italy face unique challenges in accessing sexual health education and services due to cultural, linguistic, and social barriers contributing to disparities in STI and HIV outcomes.
- Despite the growing recognition of these disparities, there remains a gap in research exploring effective strategies to engage minor ethnic communities in STI and HIV prevention efforts, especially in Italy.
- There is evidence that culturally sensitive and community-driven approaches are essential to effectively engage these populations. This abstract presents a community engagement model tailored to address the sexual health needs of minor ethnic groups in Italy, drawing upon principles of cultural competence, partnership building, and empowerment.

Case Presentation

The proposed community engagement model involves these key components include:

- **Community Collaboration:** collaborating with community through religious leaders and cultural mediators to facilitate trust-building and culturally appropriate outreach activity. This involves understanding cultural norms, beliefs, and practices related to sexuality and health.
- **Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR):** collaboration between researchers and community members throughout all stages of the research process. This model promotes community ownership, empowerment, and the development of interventions that are responsive to unique needs and priorities
- **Peer Education and Support:** training peer educators from within the target communities to serve as trusted sources of information, provide support, and facilitate discussions on STI and HIV prevention. Peer-led initiatives promote dialogue, reduce stigma, and increase access to sexual health resources.
- **Multilingual and Culturally Tailored Resources:** development of multilingual and culturally tailored educational materials and resources.
- **Creative Outreach Strategies:** Utilization of creative outreach strategies, such as multimedia campaigns, community events, and social media, to raise awareness and promote participation among minor ethnic groups.
- **Holistic Approach:** Adoption of a holistic approach to sexual health education, addressing not only physical health but also emotional, social, and cultural aspects of sexuality.

Conclusion

- The proposed community engagement model offers a promising approach to promote sexual health equity among minor ethnic groups in Italy. By prioritizing cultural competence, community participation, and empowerment, this model aims to reduce barriers to sexual health education and services, improve STI and HIV outcomes, and foster greater inclusivity within Italy's diverse society. Future research and implementation efforts should further explore the effectiveness and scalability of this model, with a focus on sustainability and long-term impact.

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