



WRITING SCIENTIFIC PAPERS AND REPORTS

SOLUTIONS

1. For a scientific paper about AIDS knowledge:
 - a. Outline of introduction to study of AIDS knowledge by language in the United States
 - i. (Paragraph on why AIDS is of concern) Topic sentence: “AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is a leading cause of death in the United States.”
 - ii. (Paragraph on why it is important to assess AIDS knowledge) Introductory sentences: “In the absence of a vaccine against AIDS, prevention must rely on individual behavior to avoid spread of the disease. It is unlikely that appropriate behavioral change will occur without knowledge about AIDS and how it is transmitted; hence, it is important to assess levels of AIDS knowledge in the general population.”
 - iii. (Paragraph on why language is an important possible mechanism related to AIDS knowledge) Topic sentence: “Language can affect AIDS knowledge either through linguistic barriers or cultural differences.”
 - b. Kinds of numeric information to incorporate and suggested quantitative comparisons for an introduction to the AIDS knowledge paper

For paragraph i, incorporate statistics on levels and trends in AIDS prevalence and mortality in the United States for the period under study, using percentage change to quantify trends over time in AIDS prevalence and mortality rates, and rank as a cause of death to indicate overall importance. If data are more than 5 years old, consider adding current statistics on these outcomes.

For paragraph ii, incorporate evidence on how knowledge about AIDS or other similar diseases such as STDs translates into changes in preventive behaviors.

For paragraph iii, incorporate statistics on how AIDS prevalence and mortality vary by language ethnic group, with supplementary evidence by race or socioeconomic status if statistics by language are not available. Use ratios or percentage difference to contrast rates across groups. Include information on the number of persons, percentage share, and trends in number and share of major language groups in the United States around the time of the study period (and more recently if statistics are dated).
3. “An analysis of survey data from the late 1990s in New Jersey showed that respondents were more likely to understand the ways AIDS can be transmitted than ways AIDS cannot be transmitted (table 6.2). On average, English speakers answered 91.7% of the “likely” transmission questions

correctly, compared to an average of 59.8% of “unlikely” questions correctly. Similar patterns were observed among Spanish speakers.

“Although more than 88% of respondents from each of the three language groups answered the question about transmission via sexual intercourse correctly, for the other three questions about likely transmission modes, incorrect answers were more common among Spanish speakers, especially those who completed the questionnaire in Spanish. For example, only two-thirds of that group knew that the AIDS virus is very likely to be spread via shared IV drug needles, compared to 92% of English speakers and 91% of Spanish respondents who completed the questionnaire in English.

“Responses to questions about transmission via casual contact were more troubling (bottom panel of table 6.2), with fewer than two-thirds of respondents knowing the correct answers to those questions. Most striking was the widespread misconception about transmission from a medical provider: only one-third knew that such spread is unlikely. Differences across language groups were sizeable and statistically significant for all but the medical provider question.”

5. Title: “Differences in AIDS Knowledge among Spanish and English Speakers in New Jersey by Ability to Speak English”

Abstract:

Objectives: Previous studies have shown that Hispanic persons know less about AIDS than non-Hispanics in the United States, but few studies have examined the role of language.

Methods: We use data from a 1998 population-based sample survey of New Jersey adults to compare levels of AIDS knowledge among English and Spanish speakers, taking into account ability to speak English.

Results: Spanish-speakers, especially those who filled out the questionnaire in Spanish, know less than English speakers about AIDS transmission. Respondents of all language groups were more likely to understand ways that AIDS is likely to be transmitted than ways in which transmission is unlikely.

Conclusions: Differences between Hispanics who speak primarily English and those who speak primarily Spanish underscore the idea that linguistic and cultural barriers vary within a cultural group and should be taken into account in the design of AIDS education programs.

Keywords: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome; Ethnic Groups; Hispanic Americans; Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices; Language.