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Bryan Benitez  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center*

Bryan Lugo Maldonado  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center*

Angel M. Lehn  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center*

Shirley F. Delair  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center*

Quan P. Ly  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center*

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# Understanding Barriers in Breast Cancer Screening in Hispanics

Bryan Benitez<sup>1</sup>, Bryan Lugo<sup>1</sup>, Angel Lehn<sup>1</sup>, Shirley Delair<sup>2</sup> MD, PhD, Quan Ly<sup>1</sup>, MD  
 Department of Surgery<sup>1</sup>, Department of Pediatrics<sup>2</sup>, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, NE 68198.

## Background

Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in the US, with 310,000 new cases annually. However, it is also one of the most preventable cancers through regular mammogram screenings. Despite this, it is the fourth deadliest cancer, causing 42,000 deaths each year. Understanding the high mortality rates requires identifying the barriers that hinder mammogram accessibility. Certain groups, such as Hispanics, face significant barriers like language, impacting their screening rates. This project aimed to identify the specific barriers to screening for Hispanics and investigate why breast cancer screening rates have been declining among Hispanics in Nebraska.

## Objective

The objective of this study was to identify barriers to breast cancer screening in the Hispanic populations.

## Methods

### Participant Population

- We collaborated with OneWorld, a community health center primarily serving the Hispanic population. We developed a questionnaire to identify barriers. This questionnaire was professionally translated into Spanish.
- With approval from UNMC IRB and OneWorld leadership, the clinic identified over 1,000 patients who had screening mammograms ordered. Bilingual undergraduate students trained in equity and sensitivity by Dr. Delair contacted patients from OneWorld offices.

### Barriers Assessed

- Fear of results
- Lack of follow-up
- Financial Difficulties
- Transportation Difficulties
- Health Difficulties
- Other
- Treatment during mammogram

Table 1. Demographic Data of Patients who Responded to Survey (N=212)

| Categories             | Completed Mammogram | Incompleted Mammogram | Total % |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| <b>Age</b>             |                     |                       |         |
| <40                    |                     | 0                     | 8       |
| 40-65                  | 97                  | 75                    | 82.3    |
| 65<                    | 29                  | 0                     | 13.9    |
| <b>Race</b>            |                     |                       |         |
| Hispanic               | 113                 | 73                    | 87.7    |
| White(Non-hispanic)    | 11                  | 9                     | 9.4     |
| Black                  | 3                   | 1                     | 1.9     |
| <b>Education Level</b> |                     |                       |         |
| Less than HS           | 63                  | 44                    | 50.7    |
| High School            | 43                  | 29                    | 34.1    |
| Bachelors              | 12                  | 4                     | 7.6     |
| Associates             | 6                   | 6                     | 5.7     |
| <b>Insurance</b>       |                     |                       |         |
| EWM                    |                     | 3                     | 2       |
| Private                | 28                  | 15                    | 20.5    |
| Hope                   | 16                  | 11                    | 12.9    |
| In house               | 5                   | 10                    | 7.1     |
| Medicaid               | 18                  | 11                    | 13.8    |
| Medicare               | 16                  | 1                     | 8.1     |
| Self-Pay               | 41                  | 33                    | 35.2    |

Figure 1. Percentage of Ratings for the Overall Breast Cancer Screening Process

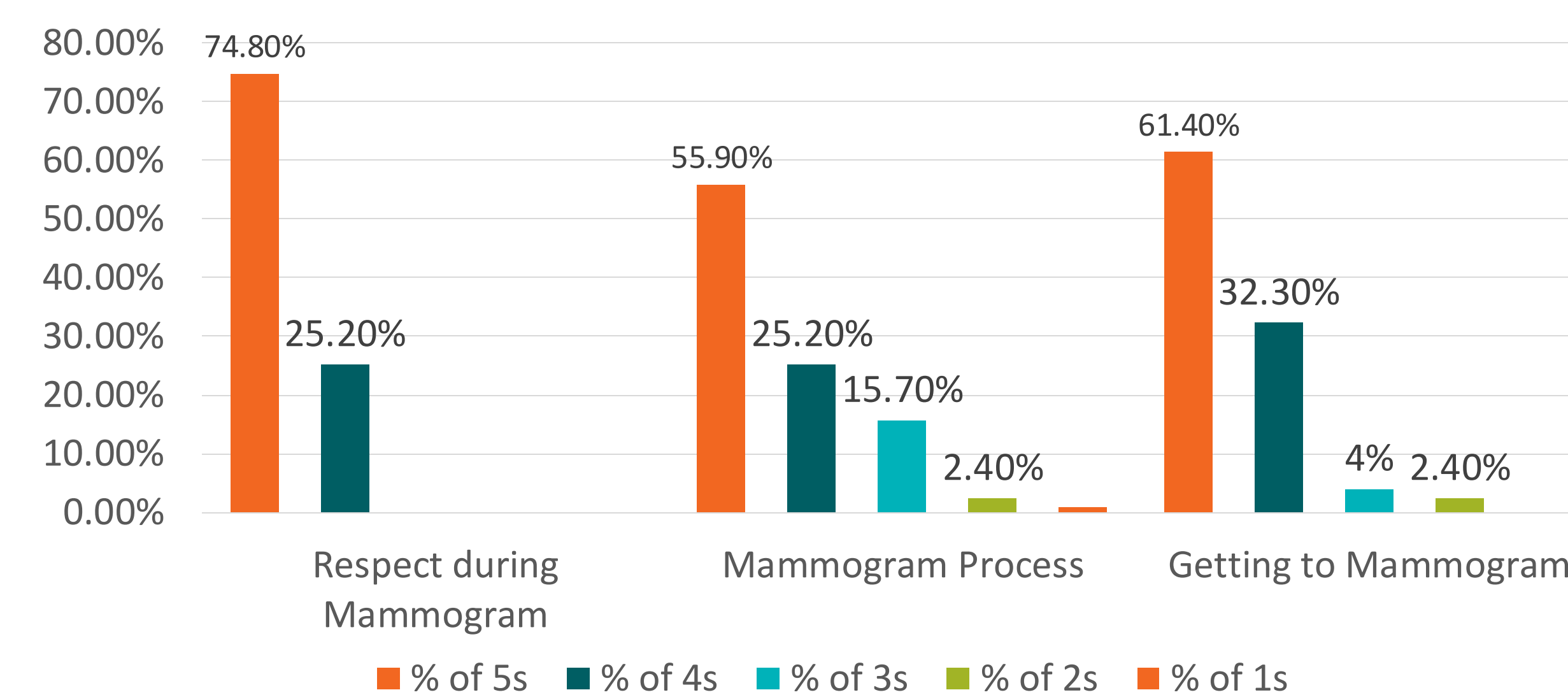
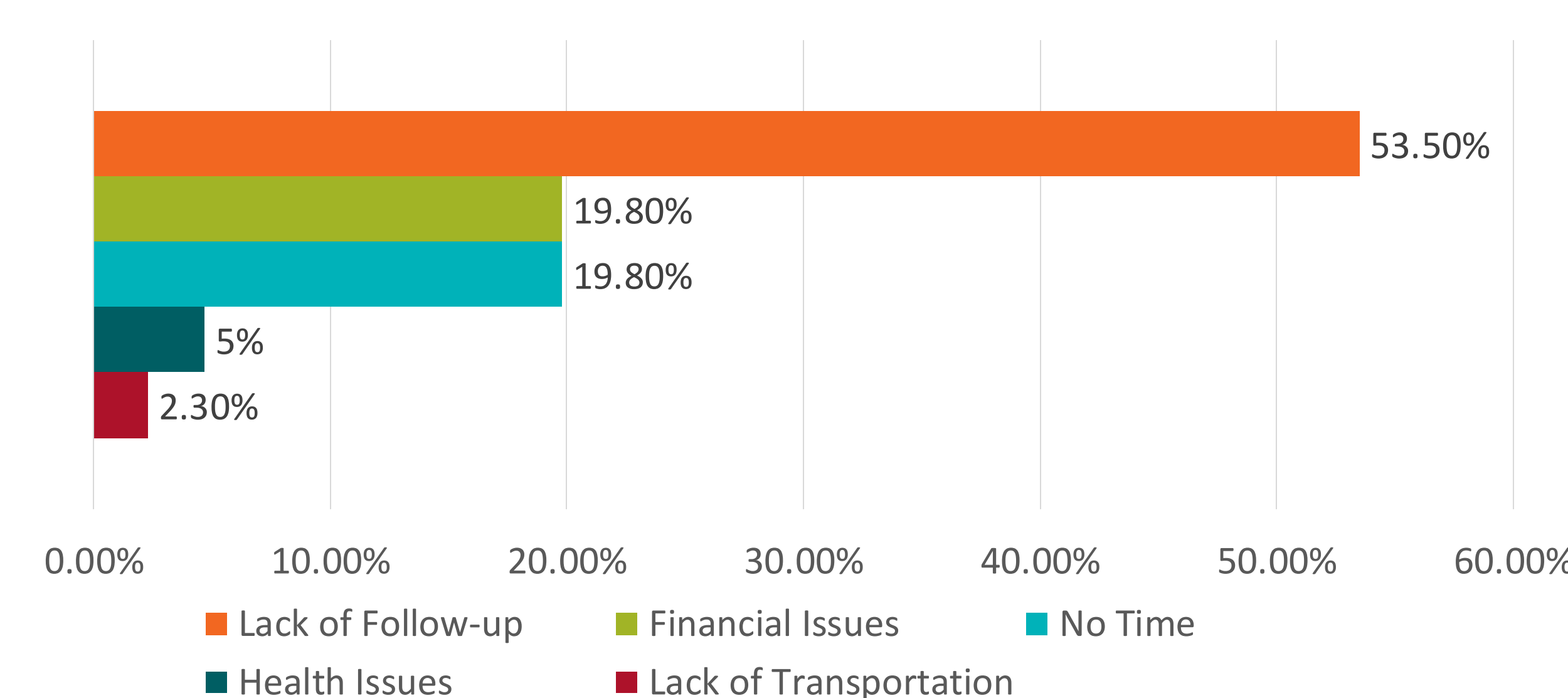
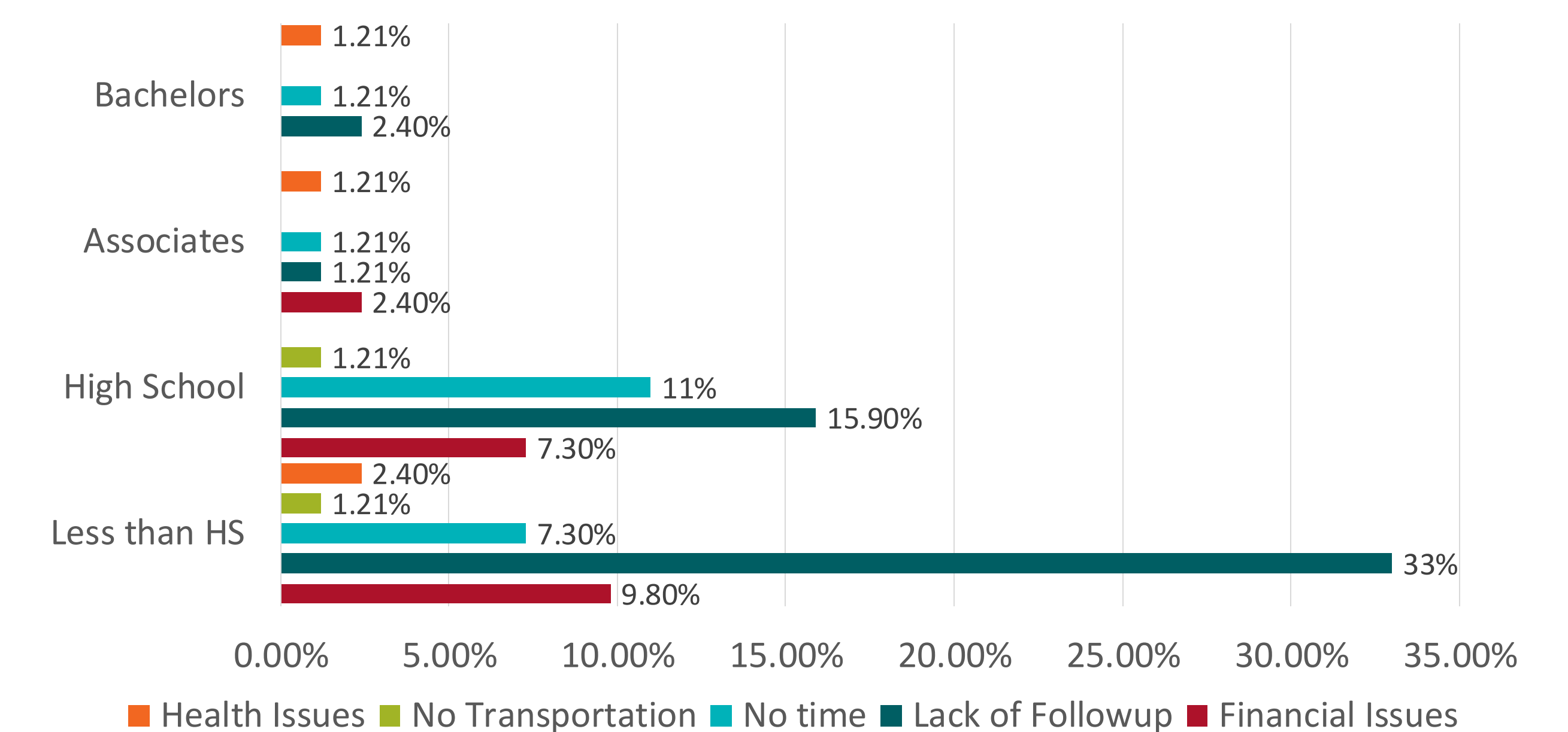


Figure 2. Percentage of Barriers Cited for Not Completing Mammogram



## Results cont.

Figure 3. Most Prevalent Barriers Cited According to Educational Level



## Discussion

- The most critical barrier we found was that 53% could not complete their mammogram due to a lack of follow-up/information
- Other barriers were lack of available time and financial issues, which comprised 40% of the cited barriers to screening.
- Alongside that, an interesting compound variable is the role educational level plays in creating barriers; in this case high school or less made up 89.12% of patients who faced a barrier that prevented mammogram screening
- However, the overwhelming majority that did complete mammograms cited positive experiences during their procedures and didn't cite many barriers to care

## Conclusion/Further Directions

- There are clear barriers to breast cancer screening in Hispanics, particularly education, and lack of sufficient follow-up and financial issues that all play into each other to make it difficult for Hispanics to get their recommended mammograms.
- Further directions include reaching out to the patient population to understand what best prevents these barriers and trying out new programs such as mobile apps, telehealth, community education, etc...

## Acknowledgements

- Special thanks to the OneWorld staff and administration, who allowed us to call from their offices to establish trust with patients, and also taught us how to use their healthcare records and charting systems
- Special thanks to the Chairman of the Department of Surgery, Dr. David W Mercer, and the Chief of Surgical Oncology Dr. Joshua M. V. Mammen.