

ABSTRACT

- **Background:** The Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander population is one of the US's fastest-growing immigrant populations and data shows that it has significantly higher rates of chronic illnesses such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, and coronary artery disease when compared to other US populations. Despite its significant growth, research and initiatives to counter these health disparities in the NHPI community are very limited. Most interventions follow conventional approaches such as addressing lifestyle changes through diet and exercise. However, there are very few programs that address trauma in this population and how this may affect health outcomes. As a population that is comprised of people of color and several 1st & 2nd generation immigrants, it is important to address and treat trauma in this population to provide holistic healthcare.
- **Methods:** This study measured physical, mental, and social wellbeing in Pacific Islander individuals recruited through the community organization PIK2AR in 2022. This was done in partnership with the Wellness Bus and use of the PHQ-9 Depression screening and Pacific Identity Wellness (PIW) surveys.
- **Results:** Results were consistent with several other previous studies which show that Pacific Islander individuals were at increased risk of chronic illness including obesity and mental health illness despite having used interventions such as nutritional and lifestyle coaching.
- **Conclusion:** Results from physical and mental wellbeing indicator measurements demonstrate the significant need for additional interventions beyond nutritional and lifestyle coaching to improve wellness, such as addressing trauma, as many of these participants have participated in other types of programs.

BACKGROUND

The Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (NHPI) population is defined by individuals that are indigenous to Polynesia (Hawai'i, Tonga, Samoa, Aotearoa New Zealand), Melanesia (Fiji and Vanuatu) and Micronesia (Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Guam and Palau). It is one of the fastest-growing populations in the US. While this population has experienced significant growth, it is still drastically underrepresented in health research and experiences some of the largest gaps in health disparities as NHPI individuals have disparate rates of chronic illnesses compared to other populations. There have been several programs to encourage lifestyle modifications through diet, exercise and medical therapy to address the high prevalence of chronic illness in this community. However, there has been limited research and initiatives that address trauma in this population. As an immigrant population, it is necessary to acknowledge trauma that this community experiences and how this impacts health outcomes. This project was designed to assist Pacific Islanders in addressing trauma that they've experienced and to measure the impact that this has on health outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

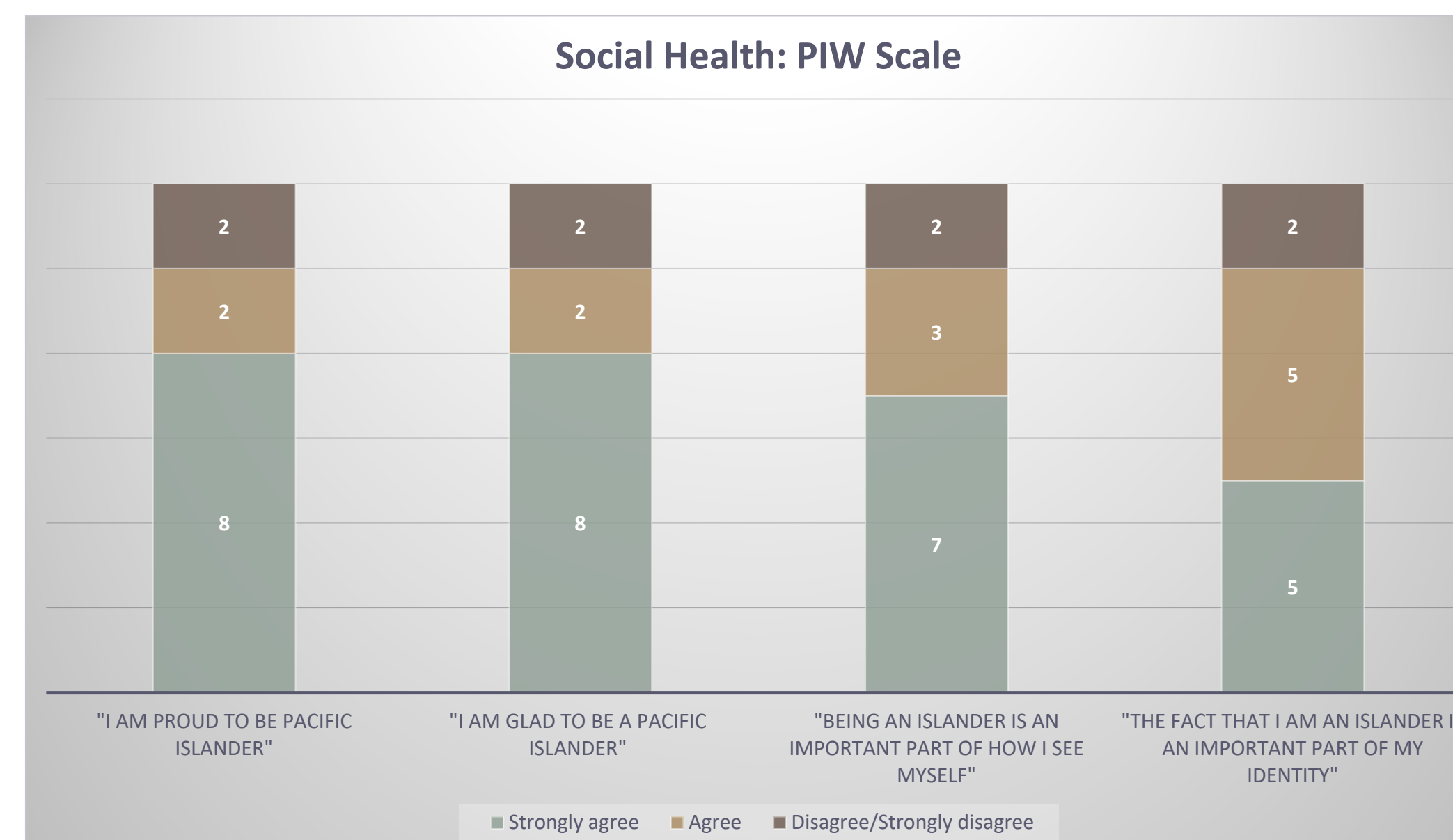
- Understand trauma and its impact on health outcomes in the NHPI population
- Obtain baseline screenings for physical, mental and social well-being in NHPI individuals
- Create a trauma-informed curriculum specifically for NHPI individuals
- Compile a list of resources for NHPI individuals to address trauma
- Measure changes in health outcomes after addressing trauma in the NHPI population

METHODS

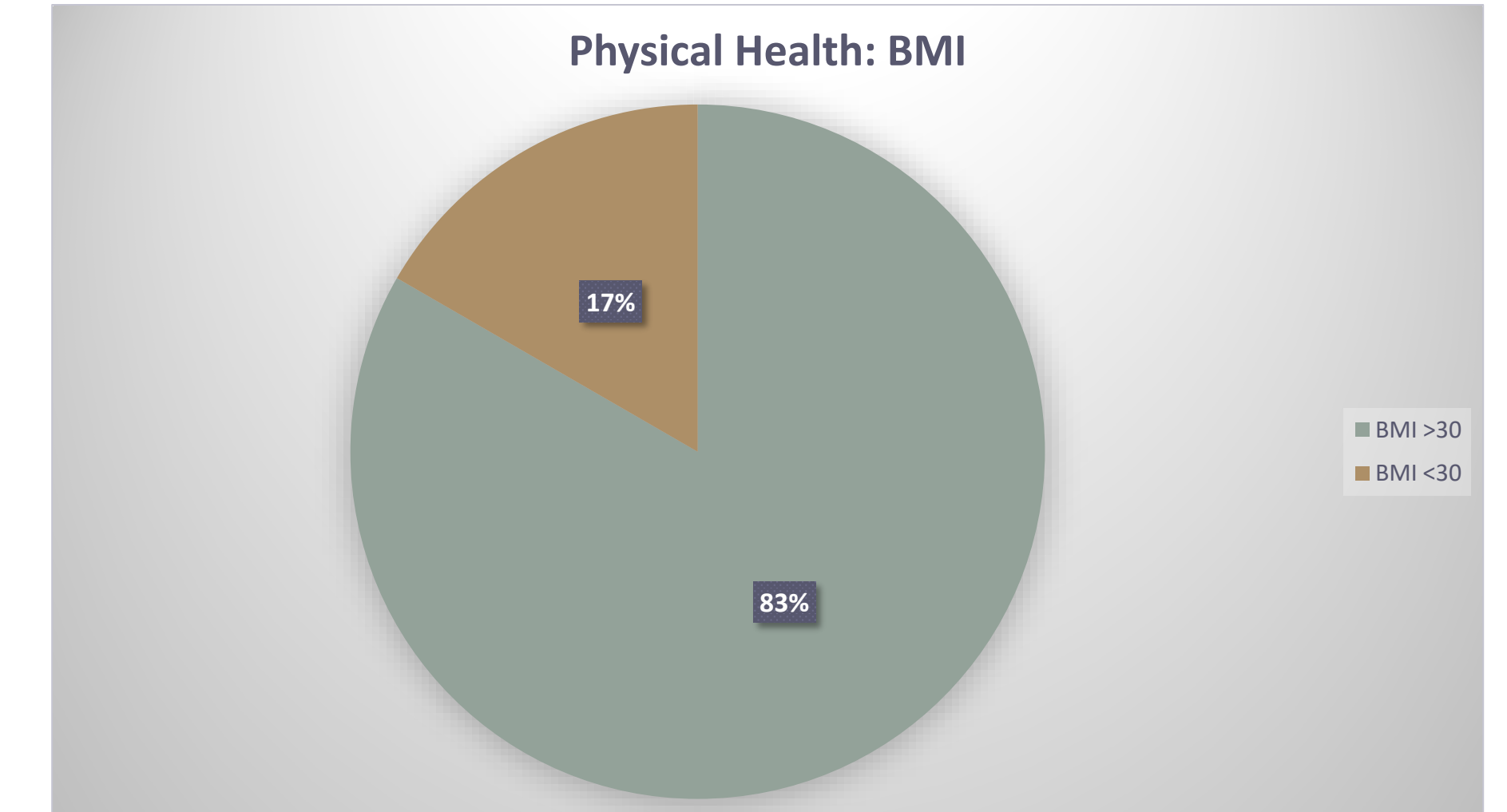
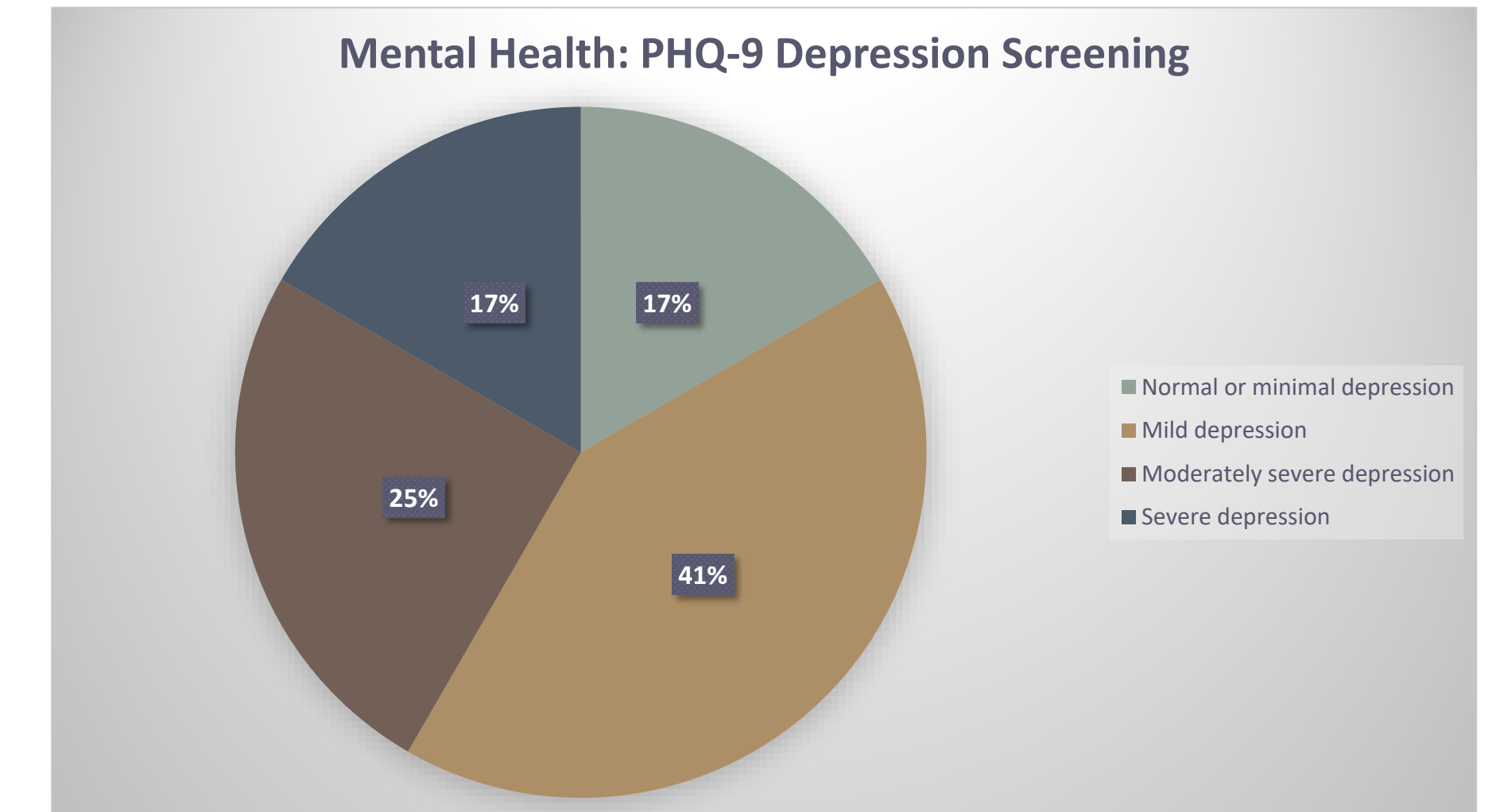
- 12 NHPI individuals participated in preliminary surveys which were distributed by email. These surveys were used to obtain a baseline for physical, mental and social wellbeing.
 - **Physical Health:** Through partnership with TWB, participants were able to complete baseline screening for physical health. Physical health indicators measured included: height, weight, BMI, waist circumference, HbA1c, fasting blood glucose, blood pressure, total cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol levels.
 - **Mental Health:** The PHQ-9 depression screening questionnaire was used to quantify a baseline measurement of mental health in participants.
 - **Social Health:** The Pacific Identity Wellness (PIW) survey was used to quantify a baseline measurement of social health in participants.

RESULTS

- **Physical Health:** As approval of the data-sharing agreement with TWB is still being finalized, physical health indicator data is still limited. However, through self-reporting, data revealed that majority of participants have a BMI >30, categorizing these participants in the "obesity" category for weight status placing them at increased risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary artery disease and chronic kidney disease.
- **Mental Health:** PHQ-9 screening questionnaire revealed that almost half the participants' mood is classified as either moderately severe or severe depression.
- **Social Health:** PIW survey revealed a theme that many participants had a strong sense of their NHPI and viewed being NHPI as a positive and important aspect of their social well-being.



RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

Results from physical and mental wellbeing indicator measurements demonstrate the significant need for additional interventions beyond nutritional and lifestyle coaching to improve wellness, such as addressing trauma, as many of these participants have participated in other types of programs.