

Perceptions of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

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Background

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a complex endocrine disorder that affects 6 to 12% (~5 million) of people of childbearing age. There is no test that diagnoses PCOS, and there is no treatment or cure for the condition, only "management" of symptoms. The condition also causes severe adverse health effects that cause reduced qualityof-life (QoL).

Objective

To determine the public's general awareness and knowledge of Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), how symptoms are perceived to affect quality-of-life (OoL).

Methods

This mixed-methods cross-sectional study included (N=452) participants sourced from online communities. The study was completed April 2022 in the U.S. Exposure is the public's awareness/knowledge of PCOS and outcome is the perception of QoL for those with PCOS.

Results

- 24% of participants reported their perceived approximation of PCOS prevalence in the population of those with female reproductive organs within the correct [5%-20%] range.
- 50% believed health status was "average", while responses for "poor" and "terrible" combined equated to ~45% of remaining responses.
- ~91% of participants agreed that having PCOS affected one's ability to perform daily tasks.
- Those who endorsed the belief that PCOS impedes on daily task completion were more likely to rate health status as worse.
- Those who did not believe symptoms would decrease after diagnosis were more unlikely to seek care for PCOS.

Demographics and Data Analysis

Terrible

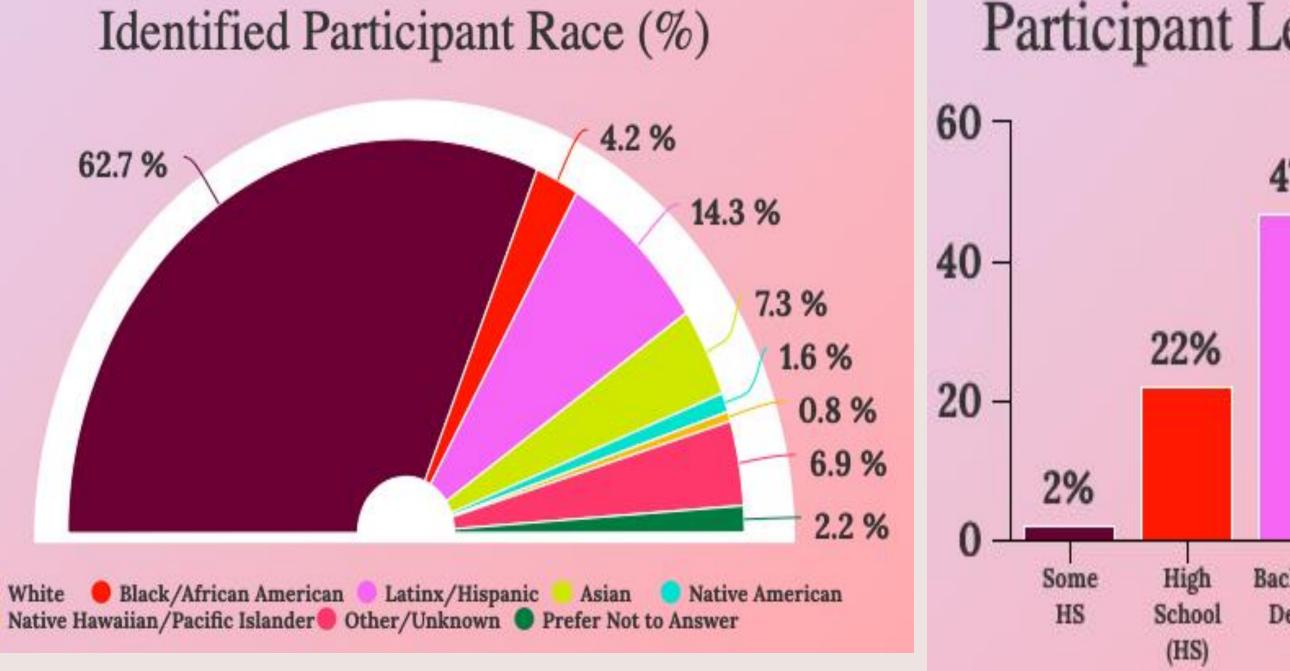
Somewhat Unlikely

Neither Likely nor Unlikely

Somewhat Likely

Extremely Unlikely

Extremely Likely



Perceived Health Status (N=425)

Good

PCOS's Impact on Ability

to do Daily Tasks

Perceived Health Status of Those with PCOS

Likelihood of Seeking Care vs. Perceived

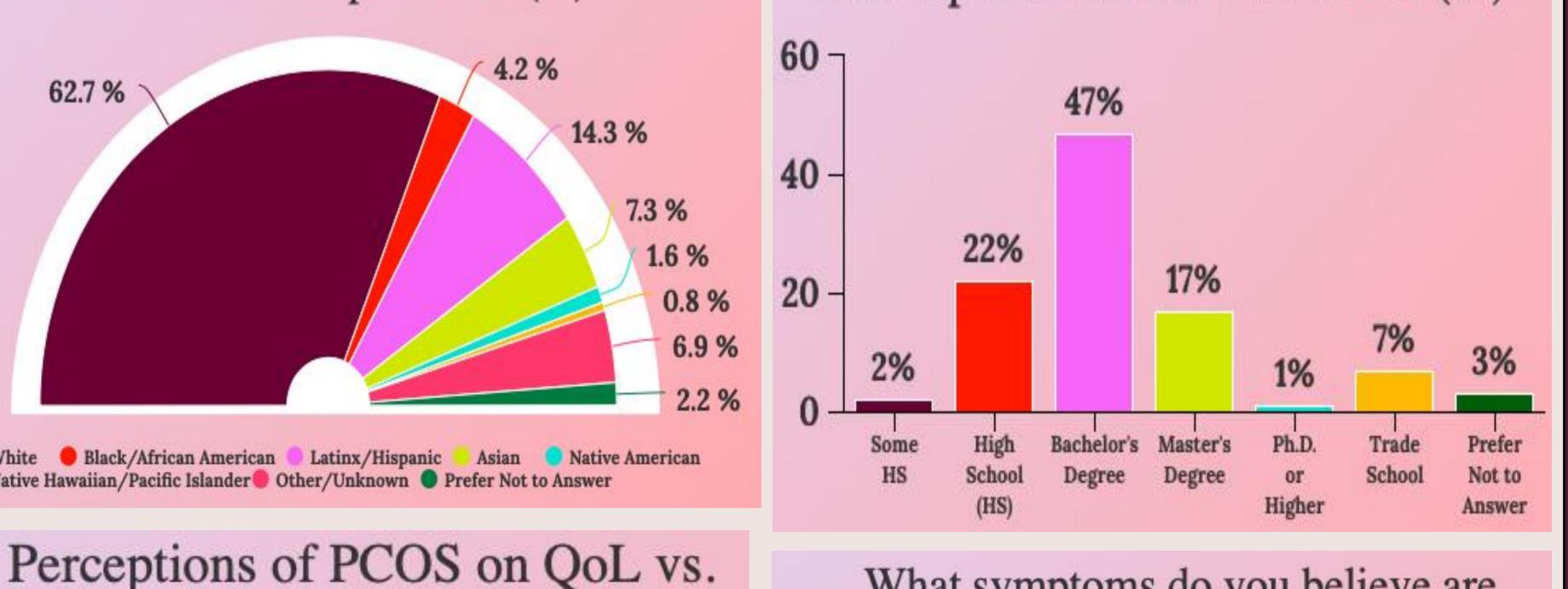
Decrease in Symptoms Post-Diagnosis

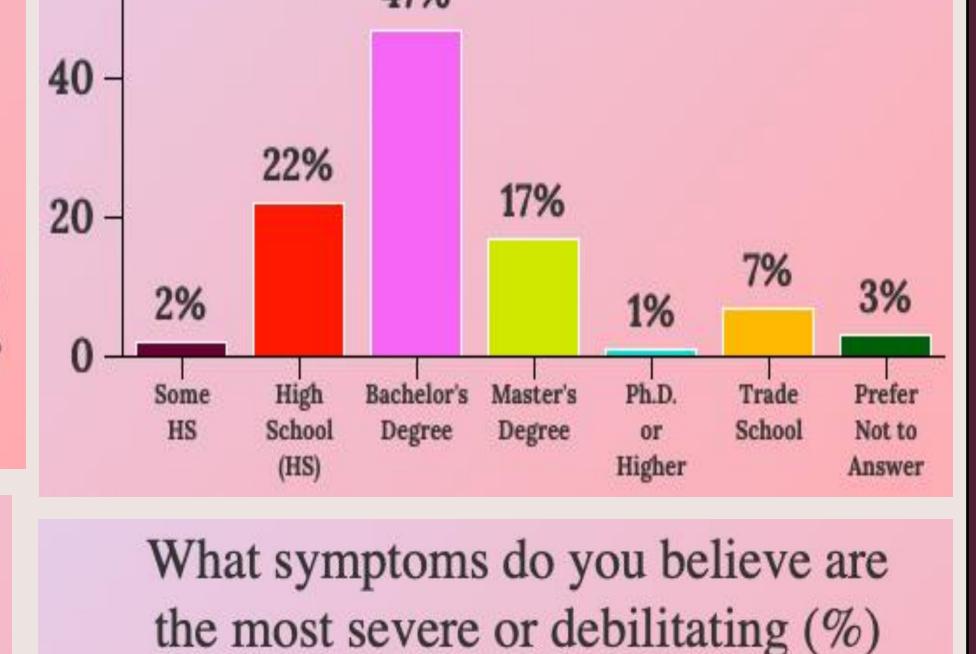
(N=408)

Likelihood of Someone with PCOS seeking

Care From a Physician

Average

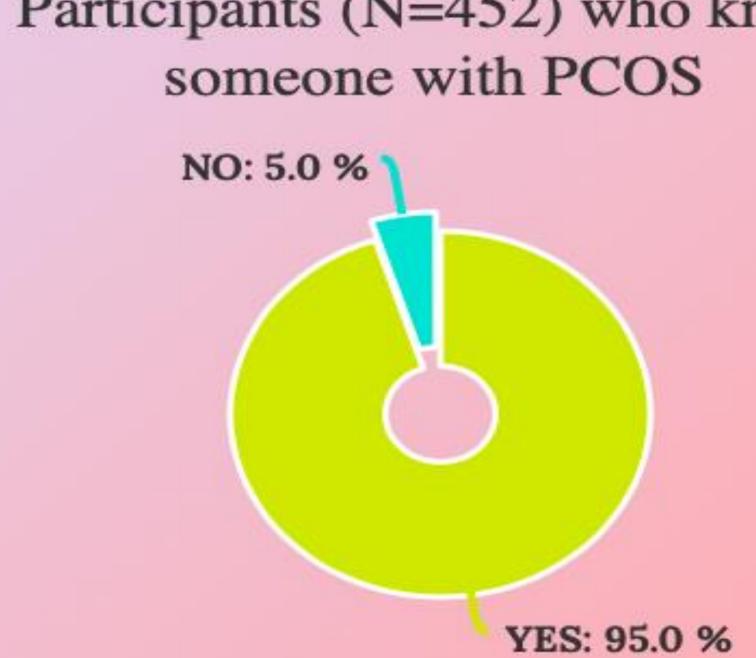












Participant Level of Education (%)

 PCOS is a commonly known condition in the female-identifying population, however accurate knowledge about prevalence is limited.

Conclusion

- QoL is perceived to be impacted by PCOS.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data indicate those with PCOS may be unlikely to seek a physician's care.
- Qualitative data indicate poor experiences with doctors when seeking care for PCOS symptoms.

Policy Implications

Our research shows PCOS does affect the QoL of this population. Increased awareness on PCOS, medical professionals that are experienced in this field, and policy reforms are necessary to improve the QoL of people with PCOS.

Acknowledgements

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