Measuring Discrimination in Health Disparities Research

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Disclosure

 I have no relevant financial relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services discussed in this CME activity.



Definition & Key Social Constructs

Discrimination

- Differential treatment on the basis of [insert social construct] that disadvantages a group of individuals
- 2. Treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than [insert social construct] that disadvantages the group

Social Constructs

- 1. Race/Ethnicity
- 2. Gender
- 3. Sexual Identity
- 4. Class
- 5. Religion
- 6. Age
- 7. Language
- 8. Immigrant status
- 9. All of the above

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Year	Racial Categories in the US Census 1790- 2000 (Selected Years)	
1790	Free Whites, Other Free Persons, Slaves	
1800-1810	Free Whites, Other Free Persons, except Indians not taxed; and Slaves	
1850	White, Black, Mulatto, and Indian	
1890	White, Black, Mulatto, Quadroon, Octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian	
1950	White, Negro, Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Other races spell out,	
1970	White, Negro or black, Indian (American), Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Other (print race)	
2000	White, Black, African American, or Negro; Eskimo, Aleut, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Asian Indian, Samoan, Guamanian, Other Asian Pacific Islander, Other Race	

- Education
- Employment/Income
- Criminal justice
- Housing
- Health
 - Access
 - Outcomes

Blank, S, et.al. Measuring Racial Discrimination, National Academies Press, 2004,http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isb n=0309091268

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Types & Levels of Discrimination

- Perspective
 - Objective
 - Based on criteria unrelated to subjective criteria'
 - Example: Less pay for the same work, civil rights violations, blatant acts
 - Subjective
 - Experience of being discriminated against
 - Note: subject may not be aware of the discrimination

- Intentional/Explicit
- Subtle, Unconscious, Automatic



- Institutionalized
 - Structured & systemic
- Personally Mediated
 - Individualized acts
- Internalized
 - Self-hatred





Uses of Discrimination Research in Healthcare

- Healthcare environment for workers
- Teaching/training a diverse workforce
- Quality of clinical service delivery
- Customer service/satisfaction
- Improving patient outcomes
- Understanding & improving patient adherence
- Participation in research

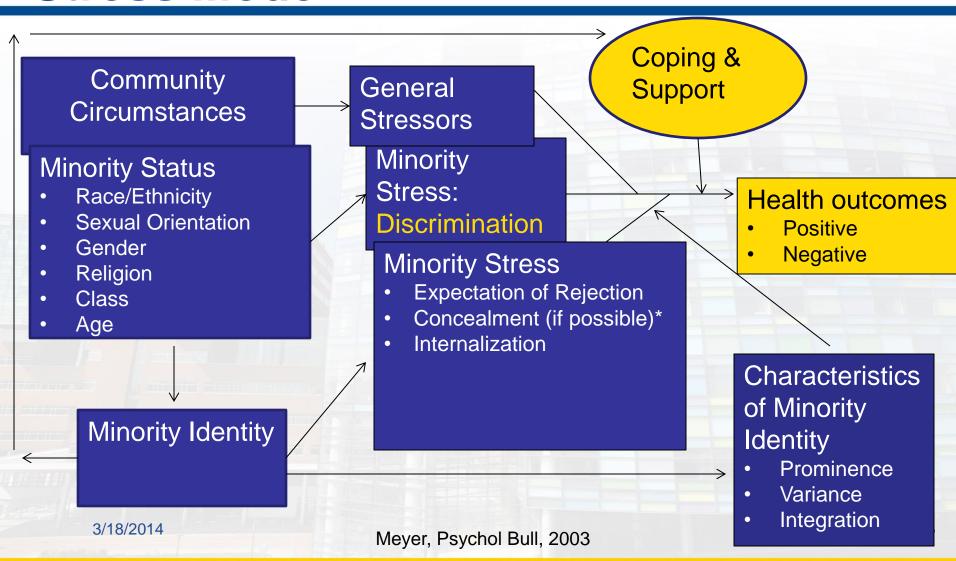


Terminology: Discrimination versus Unfair Treatment

- Discrimination is a loaded term, defined in the US by historical events
- Individuals may perceive unfair treatment based on identity in situations with power differentials
 - Cautious about the use of the term discrimination
 - Regional and cultural differences that shape the perceptions of discrimination
- Clearly defining terminology for the subject is a critical part of measure selection & survey development

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Conceptual Framework: Minority Stress Model



Design Strategies

- Qualitative research
- Laboratory Studies
 - Simulation Experiments
 - Behavioral Outcomes
 - Economic Studies
 - Implicit Association Test
 - Scenarios: Cardiology Research Studies
 - Biological Outcomes
 - Simulation → Biological stress
- Health Outcomes Research
 - Scaled Measures-→Health Outcomes
 - Subjective discrimination → Health Outcomes

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Implicit Association Test (IAT)

- Assesses attitudes
- Respondents quickly categorize stimulus words according to response keys
- Measure of choice for social scientists
 - Variety of issues can be tested (race, gender, etc.)
 - Large effect size
 - Even people who know the IAT assesses prejudice still produce an IAT effect
- IAT predicts intergroup discrimination
- Project Implicit:
 - https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html



Scaled Measures of Discrimination

Scale	Measured Construct	Description
Homophobia/Racism (Diaz, 2001)	Experiences of H/R as child/adult	H-11 items R-10 items
Godfrey-Richman ISM scale (Godfrey, 2000)	Stereotypes, prejudice, & discrimination	33-items, 4 subscales 1. Racism 2. Religion 3. Sexism 4. Heterosexism
Hispanic Stress Inventory (Cervantes, 1991)	Psychosocial stress among Hispanic adults	Immigrant Version (73 items) US-Born 59 items Occupational, Parental, Marital, Immigration, Family/culture
Perceptions of Racism Scale (PRS) (Green 1995)	Perceptions of racism against AA	20 items (agree/disagree) Single dimension
Racism & Life Experiences Scale (RaLES) Harrell (1997)	Racism related stress, coping, socialization & attitudes	Race 1-Influence, 2- Domains 3- Daily life 4- Racism 5-Group impact 6- Life experience & stress 7-Brief scale.

Scale	Measured Construct	Description
Krieger Experiences of Discrimination (Krieger 1990/1996)	Self-reported experiences/response to racial discrimination	7 items Multiple settings/variety of situations
Schedule of Racist Events (Landrine 1996)	Experience of specific racist events	18 items Frequency (1 year), lifetime, degree of stress
Modern Racism Scale McConahay (1986)	Racial attitudes (based on belief discrimination no longer exists)	14 items 2 Dimensions (old fashioned, modern)
Index of Race-Related Stress (Utsey, 1996)	Occurrence/Stress associated with events of racism & discrimination	46 items (1-Cultural, 2- Institutional, 3-Individual, 4- Collective)
Race-related stress (Williams, 1997)	Experiences of lifetime & everyday discrimination	12 items 2 Subscales Lifetime (3) Everyday (9)
Racism Reaction Scale Thompson (1990)	Personally threatened, differentially treated, or singled out for differential treatment	6 items (A/D)

Qualitative Research Maternal Discrimination "It's the Skin You're in"

- 6 focus groups, 40 SES diverse AA women, 4 N. California cities
- Designed to develop improved measures for birth outcomes research
- Women reported experiencing racism:
 - Across the lifecourse (childhood events most salient & enduring)
 - Directly & Vicariously (through child)
 - Interpersonal, institutional, & internalized
 - Across life domains
 - Active & passive responses
 - Pervasive vigilance (anticipating threats self/child)
- Call for measures of racism for these issues needed w/ formal testing

Nuru-Jeter, Matern Child Health J, 2009

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Perceived Discrimination & Asian Americans

- National Latino & Asian American Study (2002-2003)
 - Nationally representative sample
 - Compared differences between men N=972)/women (N=1075)

Measures:

- Mental Health (e.g. depression, suicide)
- Physical health (Chronic headache, high BP, diabetes)
- Discrimination: Williams (1997)

Results:

- Response range 1 (never) to 6 (almost every day)
- Summed for a final scale of 9 to 54 (mean 16, SD 6.6, alpha =0.91).
- Scores were classified into three levels of perceived discrimination
- High perceived discrimination associated with negative mental & physical health outcomes
- Threshold lower for women
 - Gendered risk for disparities



Perception of Racism in Children and Youth (PRaCY)

- Two 10-item instruments
 - Younger: 7-13 y, Older: 14-18 y
- Psychometrics:
 - Internal consistency/reliability (alpha 0.78)
 - CFI 0.967, RMSEA 0.047 (younger), CFI 0.934 (older) (0.056)
- Associated with health outcomes: higher depressive symptoms/elevated anxiety in a diverse sample of minority youth



PRaCY Sample Items

- Watched closely or followed by security guards or store clerks in a store or mall (27.3/59.3)
- Got poor or slow service at a restaurant/food store (37.3/--)
- Got slow service at a store (23.3/--)
- Were treated unfairly by a police officer (--/40.2)
- Accused of something you didn't do at school 37.3/35.4
- Treated badly or unfairly by a teacher 34.7/37
- You had the feeling that someone was afraid of you (24/34.6)
- Someone called you an insulting name 40/51.2
- Someone made bad or insulting remarks to you about your race/ethnicity, or language 38.7/64.6
- Someone was rude to you 28.0/42.5
- People assume you are not smart or intelligent ---/42.5
- Have you seen parents or other family members treated unfairly or badly because
 of the color of their skin, language, accent, or because they came from a different
 country or culture? 34/40.9

Measuring Impact of Discrimination on Children





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Kiri Davis, Director, Reel Works Teen Filmmaking, permission granted educational use

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Summary

- Discrimination [Unfair Treatment] is not a new concept & the toxic stress it causes is completely preventable
- As scientists, clinicians, & public health practitioners committed to reducing child health disparities we must affirm our shared humanity & commit to ending racism [& other "isms"] *
- Measure discrimination & its impacts in large longitudinal maternal-child-adolescent health studies
- Invest in strategies [research, clinical, public health, & policy] to undo the damage that has persisted over generations

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