Measuring the Multiracial Population for Health Research

Meghan Woo, ScD, ScM
Abt Associates
Background


- Measurement of multiracial status fraught with methodological challenges
  - Conceptualized as a one-dimensional construct
  - Inconsistently defined across studies
  - Fluidity of multiracial status ignored

- Paper aimed to describe multidimensional conceptualization of MR status, identify challenges to measurement, and provide recommendations
The Multidimensionality of Multiracial Status

Adapted from Goldstein and Morning, 2000
# The Dimensions of Multiracial Status: Definition, Measurement, and Links to Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Links to Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Ancestry</td>
<td>- Differing racial ancestries in a person’s genealogic history</td>
<td>- Parents’ race</td>
<td>- Genetic variation in gene frequency</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Genetic testing</td>
<td>- Epigenetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Identified</td>
<td>- Self-expressed race</td>
<td>- Self-reported racial identification</td>
<td>- Psychological factors related to racial identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socially Assigned</td>
<td>- Race assigned by 3rd party observers</td>
<td>- Perceptions of socially assigned race</td>
<td>- Social consequences of race (e.g. discrimination)</td>
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<td>- 3rd party report</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations

1) Choose multiracial measures based on the purpose of the study
2) Examine areas where dimensions do/don’t overlap
3) Develop new racial measures that capture multidimensionality
4) Acknowledge that data are only valid for specific time periods/contexts/populations
5) Re-classify Latino/Hispanic origin as a racial category
6) Conduct longitudinal studies on multiracial status
Thank you!