Applying a Critical Race Conceptual Frame to Health Intervention Research and Policy Studies

A Working Paper Discussion of Structural and Social Factors Affecting Black Non-Resident Fathers

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Introduction

Present an overview of Public Health Critical Race Praxis (PHCR)

Describe the use of PHCR in a working paper on the influence of racialization and structural inequality on Black Nonresident Fathers

Concluding remarks

Feedback/Questions
What is Public Health Critical Race Praxis?

“Semi–structured process for conducting research that remains attentive to issues of both racial equity and methodologic rigor.

As praxis (i.e., an iterative methodology), it combines theory, experiential knowledge, science and action to actively counter inequities.”

(Ford and Ariihinenbuwa, 2010)
Critical Race Theory Anchoring Concepts

- Race Consciousness
- Contemporary Racism
- Centering in the Margins
- Praxis
PHCR Schematic

FOCUS 1
Contemporary Patterns of Racial Relations
- Primacy
- Race as social construct
- Ordinariness
- Structural determinism

FOCUS 2
Knowledge Production
- Social construction of knowledge
- Critical approaches
- Voice

FOCUS 3
Conceptualization & Measurement
- Race as social construct
- Intersectionality

FOCUS 4
Action
- Critical approaches
- Disciplinary self-critique
- Intersectionality
- Voice
Focus 1: Contemporary Patterns of Racial Relations

Affiliated Principles

- Primacy of racialization
- Race as social construct
- Ordinariness
- Structural determinism
Focus 2: Knowledge Production

Affiliated Principles

- Social construction of knowledge
- Critical approaches
- Voice
Focus 3: Conceptualization & Measurement

Affiliated Principles

- Race as social construct
- Intersectionality
Focus 4: Action

Affiliated Principles

- Disciplinary self-critique
- Intersectionality
- Voice
Background

- Father involvement is important to child well-being.
- Notable demographic shifts in U.S. family:
  - 1/3 of all births are non-marital in past 30 years
  - Increasing divorce rates over past two decades
    (U.S. Census, 2008; 2010)
- About 2/3 of African American and 1/3 of Latino children live with only one parent.
  (Johnson & Shelton, 2014)
- 63% of African American children under age 18 did not live with their biological father in 2012.
  - “Almost 80% of African American youth can expect to spend a significant portion of their childhood living without or apart from their father.”
Objective
Determine the association between Paternal depressive symptoms and father involvement among Black nonresident fathers.

Methods
Bivariate analyses and multivariate logistic regression analysis of survey data (n=345). Father involvement included measures of contact, closeness, monitoring, communication, and conflict.

Results
Thirty-six percent of fathers reported moderate depressive symptoms, and 11% reported severe depressive symptoms.
- Paternal depressive symptoms: less contact, less closeness, low monitoring, and high conflict. (Davis et al., 2009)
Engaging Nonresident African American Fathers in Intervention Research: What Practitioners Should Know About Parental Monitoring in Nonresident Families

Objective
To assess the relationship between engaging in parental monitoring and race–related socialization with their preadolescent sons on Black nonresident Father psychological well–being.

Methods
A quasi–experimental, nonequivalent group, pretest–posttest design used to evaluate intervention program effectiveness (n=287).

Results
Younger fathers with more education, engaged in race–related socialization, and who were less depressed monitored their sons more. Older fathers increased their race socialization behaviors most in the parenting skills intervention, while all fathers enhanced their monitoring ability (Caldwell et al., 2010; 2011).
Being There in Spirit, Fire, and Mind: Expressive Roles Among Nonresidential African American Fathers

Objective
This exploratory qualitative study examined factors contributing to expressive father role negotiation, salience, and commitment in a sample of Black nonresidential fathers (n=18).

Methods
Two focus groups were conducted (2000 – 2001) to understand factors that strengthen and diminish bonds between nonresidential Black fathers and their sons. Focus groups were recorded, transcribed and coded for analysis.

Results
Results indicate that nonresidential fathers deepened their expressive role commitment by reflecting on socioemotional voids in their paternal relationships and negotiating role strains produced as they weighed giving time versus giving money.  

(Hammond et al., 2011)
What needs further clarification about Black nonresident Fathers?

- How does racialization and structural inequality impact the health and father role performance of Black nonresident fathers?

- What are the implications of welfare reform and other public and social policies for Black nonresident fathers and their children?
A conceptual framework for studying stress related health problems in nondominant groups must account for the socio-historical patterns of structural racism that often situate Blacks in a caste-like inferior social status.

- Institutionalized and Cultural Racism (Focus 1)
- Stigmatization (Focus 2)
- Measuring the Effects of Covert Racism (Focus 3)

Mainstream theories or assessment models provide "no guidance in recognizing the often subtle and indirect incidents of racism and discrimination, and provide little guidance in assessing the specific effects of race-based encounters that produce psychological distress and perhaps traumatic injury." (Carter, 2007)
Strategies for determining trajectory and social location of future generations (Focus 1 & Focus 2)
- Avoidance: Color-Blindness
- Assimilationist/Integrationist: Model Minority
- Oppositional: Non-conformity
  - Evasive: Self-Marginalization
  - Challenging: Critical

Racialization Is Socialization (Focus 3)
- Race is a marker for knowledge production and power inequality
- If elimination of racism is the goal then de-colonization is required
"I was at the point that I withdrew. I rebelled against all the feelings and hurt and things and I made my life a living hell. I felt the best thing for me to do was start doing drugs and drinking. And it just went on from there. I can feel emotion, but I can’t show emotion."

(Hammond, et al., 2011)
Parting Thoughts...

- Critical approaches and mixed-methods amplify the voices of the voiceless.

- How does racialization impact my work?

- Are we agents for change or agents of reproduction?

- Truth hurts but so does biting your tongue...
Feedback, Questions, or Comments??