State Policies & Race Gaps in Disability

Djine Mentor, SUMR & GEAR-UP 2023 Scholar

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Project Overview

- **Study Goal:** Explore state policy impact on racial disparities in disability
- **Data:** American Community Survey (ACS) and State Policies and Politics Database (SPPD)
- **Method:** Employ two-way fixed effects models to assess state policy effects

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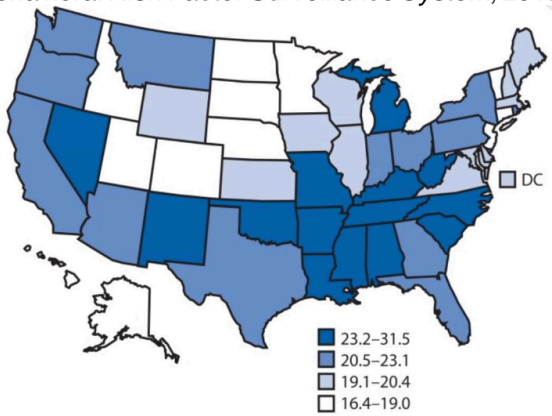
Subnational variation in disability: The role of states

Age-adjusted prevalence of any disability among adults aged ≥18 years
(Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013)



Courtney-Long, E. A., Carroll, D. D., Zhang, Q. C., Stevens, A. C., Griffin-Blake, S., Armour, B. S., & Campbell, V. A. (2015). Prevalence of disability and disability type among adults—United States, 2013. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, *64*(29), 777.

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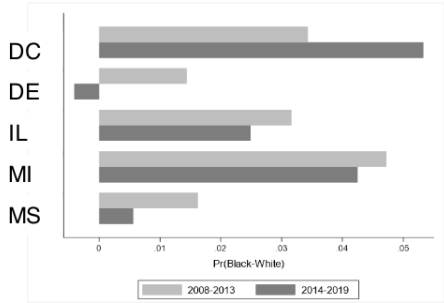
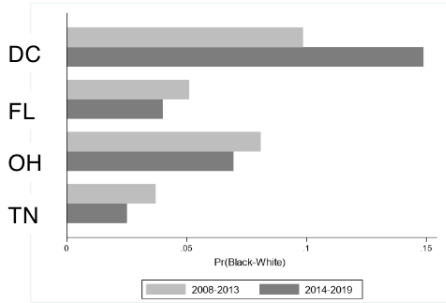
Change in Black-White disparities over time

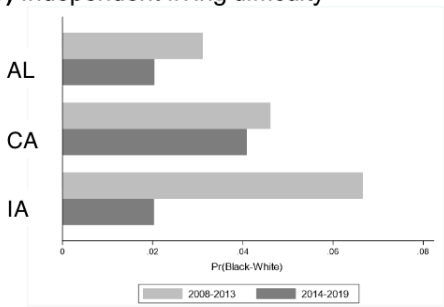
A) Cognitive difficulty



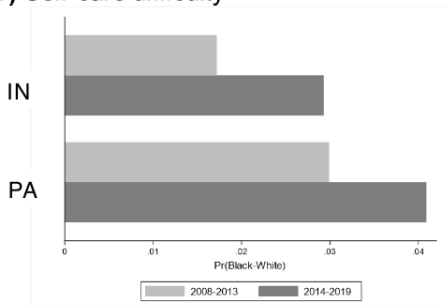
B) Ambulatory difficulty



C) Independent living difficulty



D) Self-care difficulty



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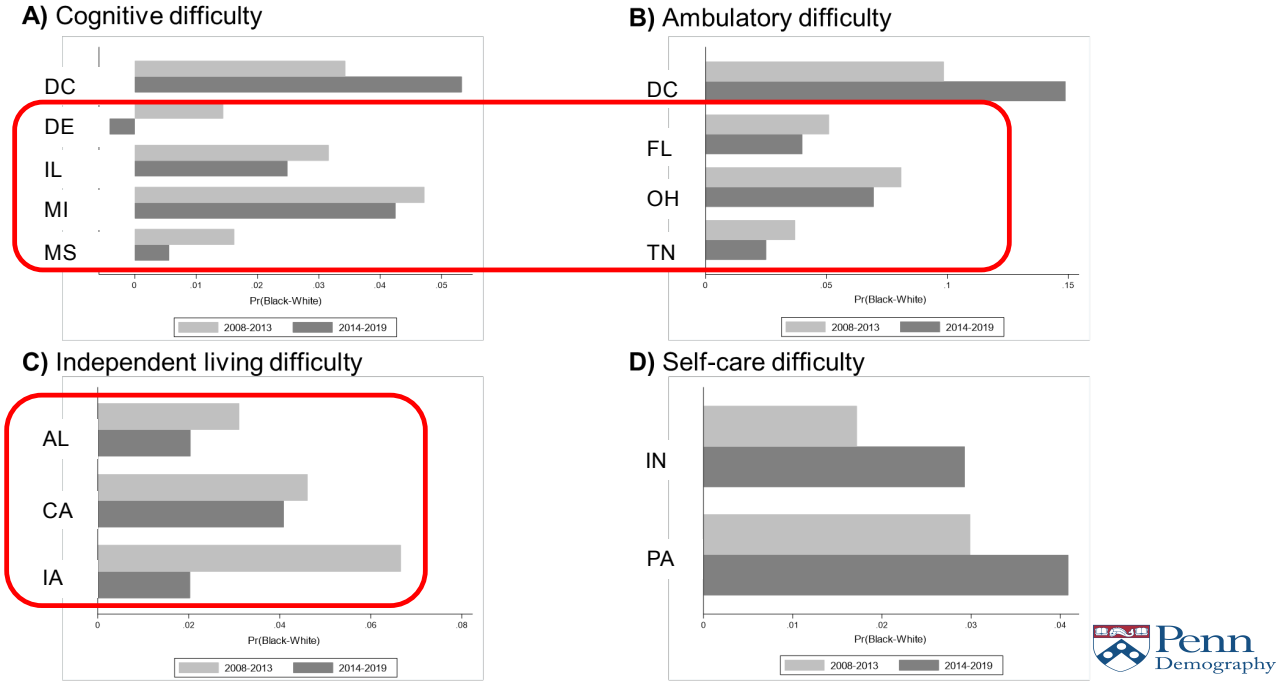
Change in Black-White disparities over time



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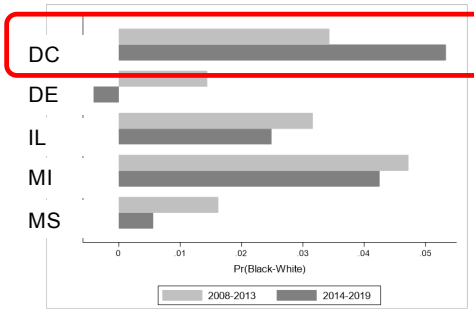
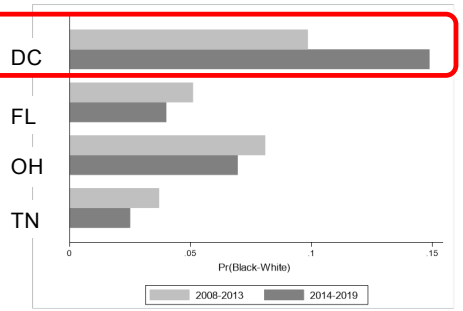
Change in Black-White disparities over time

A) Cognitive difficulty



B) Ambulatory difficulty



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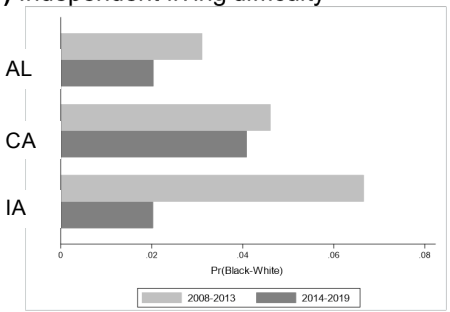

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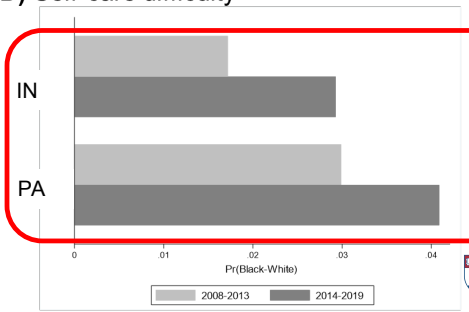

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Why might state policies pattern disability risks?

- The social and economic environments where people live and work can be disabling
- Because of racism, Black people in the U.S. have higher exposure to the many adverse social and economic conditions linked to disability
- State policies can weaken, mitigate, or exacerbate these links

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Aims

- Examine how several state-level policies shape disability risks and Black-White gaps in disability
  a. State minimum wage
  b. Medicaid expansion and Medicaid generosity
  c. SNAP benefits

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Significance

- Highlight connection between state policies and the prevalence of disabilities
- Address racial disparities by exploring how policies contribute to Black-White gaps in disabilities
- Provide insights into potential policy interventions to reduce disparities and improve population outcome

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Analyses

- We use regression analyses to assess how changes in state political contexts and changes in state polices pattern Black-White disparities in disability prevalence

- Models control for many individual-, household-, and state-level factors to rule out potential confounding

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Data & Measures

- Data:
  - **American Community Survey (ACS) (2008-2019)**
  - State Policies and Politics Database (SPPD) (2007-2019)

- Main outcome: self-reported disability
  - *Disabled* (report any of the 6 below) vs. *nondisabled*
    - Cognitive difficulty
    - Ambulatory difficulty
    - Independent living difficulty
    - Self-care difficulty
    - Vision difficulty
    - Hearing difficulty

Data & Measures, continued

- Data:
  - American Community Survey (ACS) (2008-2019)
  - **State Policies and Politics Database (SPPD) (2007-2019)**

- Measures of state policy context
  - *State political ideology*
    - *State policy liberalism score*
    - *Political party of state governor*
    - *Political party that controls state legislature*
    - *Political party with greatest share of electorate*
  - *Specific state policies*
    - *Medicaid*
    - *Minimum wage*
    - *SNAP*
    - *Unemployment insurance benefits*

Specific Policy Results

Lower Self-reported Disability	Higher Self-reported Disability	Ambiguous/ Unconvincing Results
Unemployment Benefit Generosity	Medicaid Expansion	Medicaid Generosity
		Minimum Wage

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Broad Policy Context Measure Results

Lower Self-reported Disability	Ambiguous/Unconvincing Results
Democrat Governor	Policy Liberalism Index
Liberal Elected Officials	

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My Role in the Project

- Used trusted scholarly databases to find various articles
- Created multiple comprehensive bibliographies
- Organized the articles using Zotero
- Shared insights from reviewed papers in our team meetings

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I've learned how to:

- Thoroughly examine scholarly articles
- Use Zotero effectively for organizing references
- Share findings quickly and efficiently in meetings
- Improve searches using MeSH terms
- Understand basic statistical data analysis

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Next Steps

- Keep examining how state policies shape racial disparities in disability
- Politics/ideology measures

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Acknowlegments

- Dr. Courtney Boen, PhD, MPH
- Elise Parrish, PhD Student
- ChiChi Nwadiogbu, MLA
- Joanne Levy, MBA, MCP
- SUMR/GEAR-UP 2023 Cohort

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Thank You!

Questions?

Penn LDI
Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics

Population Aging Research Center

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