State Policies & Race Gaps in Disability

Djine Mentor, SUMR & GEAR-UP 2023 Scholar

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Elise Parrish, PhD student
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
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)

Change in Black-White disparities over time

A) Cognitive difficulty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2008-2013</th>
<th>2013-2019</th>
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B) Ambulatory difficulty

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C) Independent living difficulty

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D) Self-care difficulty

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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

Penn Demography
Change in Black-White disparities over time

A) Cognitive difficulty

B) Ambulatory difficulty

C) Independent living difficulty

D) Self-care difficulty
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
**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
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
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
**Data & Measures**

- **Data:**

- **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)

• **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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower Self-reported Disability</th>
<th>Higher Self-reported Disability</th>
<th>Ambiguous/ Unconvincing Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Benefit Generosity</td>
<td>Medicaid Expansion</td>
<td>Medicaid Generosity</td>
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<td>Minimum Wage</td>
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### Broad Policy Context Measure Results

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower Self-reported Disability</th>
<th>Ambiguous/Unconvincing Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Governor</td>
<td>Policy Liberalism Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal Elected Officials</td>
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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
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
Next Steps

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

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

Questions?

Penn LDI
LEONARD DAVIS INSTITUTE
of HEALTH ECONOMICS

Population Aging Research Center

Demography