

Critically Analyzing Race in Research

Start with YOURSELF!

For each, ask: "How do I know what I know?" ¹

What is your earliest memory of when you became aware of the colour of your skin?

What is your racial identity? What is the historical landscape of your racial identity and heritage?

- What racialized or cultural experiences have shaped your research decisions, practices, approaches, epistemologies, and agendas?

Think about the relationship between the researchers, participants, and community:

- What reflexivity did the researchers disclose about their racial identities and relationship to participants and/or the community they researched?
- Were racialized or Indigenous people consulted or included in the research team?

Think about how the data was collected AND why:

Why was race included?

- Did the researchers justify its inclusion?
- Were any other data on social determinants of health collected?

What is the validity of the metric?

How was race defined? How was race measured? Did the study **actually measure race**?

- Self-defined/defined by the researchers
- What categories were used to classify race? Were they appropriate for the study population? Did the researchers justify the categories used?

Think about how the study findings are presented and reported:

- Did the publication follow local/applicable guidelines for the reporting of race in research? (e.g.: JAMA², CIHI³, CMAJ⁴)

What assumptions or conclusions were made about race?

- How were the results interpreted? (e.g. from a race naturalist, race nihilist, or race constructivist approach)
- If there were racial differences in the study findings, did the paper consider the impact of racism?

Think about how this study could influence racialized communities:

Generalizability of results:

- Were there any differences between the racial make-up of the study population and the population you serve? Can these findings be generalized? What could be the impact of generalizing these findings to all racialized populations?

Applicability to your own practice:

- How could this impact the care you provide to your racialized patients?
- What assumptions do you make about your patient when you apply this evidence?

Shifting from a Self → System view: what are the institutional + structural implications of the study?

- How could these results impact the health of racialized communities?

References:

1. Milner HR. **Race, Culture, and Researcher Positionality: Working Through Dangers Seen, Unseen, and Unforeseen.** *Educational Researcher.* 2007;36(7):388-400.
2. Flanagan A, Frey T, Christiansen SL, AMA Manual of Style Committee. **Updated Guidance on the Reporting of Race and Ethnicity in Medical and Science Journals.** *JAMA.* 2021;326(7):621-627.
3. Canadian Institute for Health Information. **Guidance on the Use of Standards for Race-Based and Indigenous Identity Data Collection and Health Reporting in Canada.** *CIHI;* 2022.
4. Stanbrook MB, Salami B. **CMAJ's new guidance on the reporting of race and ethnicity in research articles.** *CMAJ.* 2023;195(6):E236-E238.