Surveying the Black American Population*

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on the challenges and scientific opportunities involved in conducting household sample surveys of the American black population. The history and ongoing research within the Program for Research on Black Americans (PRBA), and other research projects within the Survey Research Center (SRC) and Institute for Social Research more broadly, provide a local context for discussing a set of principles needed for an appropriate empirical, social science approach to the design and implementation of sample surveys among black Americans (Clark, 1964; Du Bois, 1899; Drake & Cayton, 1947; Fraser, 1932; Schuman & Hatchett, 1974; Stanfield II & Dennis, 1993). The PRBA has sought to develop a programmatic embodiment of the philosophical and conceptual foundations of these principles. Thus, we primarily review selected research and findings associated with work at the ISR, and especially work conducted within the PRBA. Findings from other studies conducted within ISR and across the country are noted in the context of discussing substantive findings in the areas selected for review.

Consistent with the important theoretical and substantive contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois (1899), E.F. Franklin (1932) and Drake & Cayton (1947), to name a few, in the history and growth of interdisciplinary social sciences focused on the study of black Americans, three major themes or principles have been consistently emphasized: 1) research strategies which proceed from real life needs rather than from theoretical imperatives; 2) collaborative relationships with black communities; and, 3) new research competencies and roles that will facilitate the

advancement of collective black interests (Akbar, 1985; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Boykin, Franklin & Yates, 1980; Du Bois, 1899; Fraser, 1932; Gordon, 1973; Heller et al., 1984; Jackson, 1985; Jones, 1980; Myers, 1985; Smith, 1993; Stanfield II & Dennis, 1993).

Three major assumptions contributed to the development of the Program for Research on Black Americans: 1) a long history of inadequately conceptualized, conducted, and interpreted research on blacks; 2) much of what is unique to black Americans has been subjugated to deficit and "culture of poverty" theorizing; and, 3) the lack of empirically-trained social scientists sensitive to these issues is an impediment to the development of high quality research on black Americans (Stanfield, 1993). Studies of black American adults have typically been restricted to limited and special populations. National and regional data on blacks have usually been gathered in the course of surveys of the general population, a procedure that potentially introduces serious biases in the representation of the full range and diversity of the black population because it is distributed geographically very differently than the general United States population (Caldwell, Jackson, Tucker, & Bowman, 1999). An "over-sampling" approach to national surveys has also meant that concepts, measures, and methods developed in the study of the largely white, general population often have been employed in the study of black Americans without appropriate modification. There has been little theoretical or empirical concern with the appropriateness of this relatively, simple comparative approach (Jackson, 1991; Neighbors, 1985). For the most part, national and regional studies have not been informed by an awareness and appreciation for the unique cultural experiences of black Americans and thus, concepts, measures, and research procedures that reflect this uniqueness have not been developed or employed (Jackson, Chatters

& Neighbors, 1982; Caldwell, et al, 1999).

Partly, because of the small and often non-representative samples of blacks, most national surveys have not gone beyond superficial analyses of gross black-white comparisons (Jackson, 1991). This cursory treatment has served to perpetuate an overly simplified scientific and policy view of the black experience (Jackson, 2000; Jones, 1983; Stanfield II, 1993). Thus, scientific deficiencies dictated the need for data from large, well-designed national probability sample surveys that address, in a culturally sensitive manner, major areas of the life experiences of black Americans (Caldwell, et al, 1999; Jackson, 1991; Jackson, Tucker & Gurin, 1987; Jackson, et al, 1982).

A number of historically important events, including a critical mass of graduate students of color, and a receptive environment, culminated in 1975 in the formation of the Program for Research on Black Americans (PRBA) at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The purpose of this organized effort was to provide a scholarly, interdisciplinary, basic social science research group that was sensitive to cultural and systemic factors in the social, psychological, economic and political behaviors of black Americans. The sample survey was selected as the basic empirical research vehicle. This was not due to its scientific preeminence over other empirical research methods but rather to: (1) its capability of generating large quantities of representative data (Schuman & Kalton, 1985); (2) its potential link to public policy formulation; and, (3) its affinity to the experiences and backgrounds of the program founders at the Institute for Social Research (Jackson, 1991; Jackson, Tucker & Bowman, 1982; Caldwell, et al, 1999).

As indicated earlier, the PRBA has attempted to develop and implement a programmatic embodiment of the philosophical and conceptual foundations of the principles guiding historically important research on the black population (e.g. Du Bois, 1899; Fraser, 1932; Schuman & Hatchett, 1974). There has been a long history of survey research using both probability and non-probability sampling approaches on black populations at ISR, and elsewhere (Smith, 1993). In addition to the pioneering work of Fraser (1932) and Du Bois (1899), the work in the sixties and seventies by Gurin & Katz (1966) and Gurin and Epps (1975) on black college students, Marx (1997) on black political attitudes and voting behavior, Gurin & Gurin (e.g. Gurin, Miller & Gurin, 1980) in the seventies on politicized racial identity, Schuman and Hatchett (1974) in the sixties and seventies on black racial attitudes, as well as longstanding research based upon the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (e.g. Hill, Duncan & Gurin, 1985), as well as the decennial censuses and the monthly population surveys (e.g. Farley & Allen, 1987; Farley, 1996). In addition to important secondary analyses of existing long term data sources (e.g. Schuman et al,1997), other recent research in the 90s has featured regional surveys by Bobo and his colleagues (Bobo, Johnson, Oliver, Sidaneus, & Zubrinsky, 1992) on racial attitudes, as well as a set of large surveys that address specialized interests, such as family dynamics (e.g. Orbuch, Veroff, & Hunter, 1999), and socioeconomic status and mental and physical health statuses (e.g. House, Strecher, Metzner, Robbins, 1986).

Over the past twenty-five years, members of the Program for Research on Black Americans (PRBA) at the Institute for Social Research have been engaged in the development, execution and analyses of data from several major national and regional probability surveys (see

Chart 1) which have attempted to address limitations in the existing literature (Caldwell et al, 1999; Jackson, et al., 1982). The National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) was initiated in 1977 with funding from the Center for the Study of Minority Group Mental Health of the National Institute of Mental Health and the Ford Foundation. The NSBA is a national probability household survey of 2,107 black Americans, 18 years of age and older and was conducted over a seven-month period in 1979 and 1980 (Jackson, Tucker, & Gurin, 1987). The size and representativeness of the sample permit systematic investigation of the heterogeneity of the adult black population. Substantively, this omnibus survey was concerned with major social, economic, and psychological aspects of black American life. The questionnaire instrument included items on family and friend relationships, community and neighborhood life, religion, racial identity, political attitudes and participation, informal and formal help resources, and job and employment history. The face-to-face household interviews were conducted by an all black, male and female, professional interviewing staff, trained and supervised by the PRBA and Survey Research Center (SRC), Institute for Social Research (Jackson, et al., 1987). The existence of a high quality, large sample also made follow-up studies on these same individuals possible and cost-effective. The 1979/80 to 1992 four wave panel study of the NSBA provides a unique perspective on intra-individual change over an important period of history for black Americans.

The national NSBA cross-section survey served as the "parent" study for a second investigation, conducted in 1980 and 1981 and funded by the National Institute on Aging and the Ford Foundation, The National Three-Generation Family Study (TGFS). When the respondents

in the original NSBA had living family members from two adjacent generations, one randomly

selected representative from each lineage position was also interviewed (Jackson & Hatchett,

1986). Thus, the TGFS is based upon a national probability sample of black American three-

generation lineage family members. In addition, as a part of the TGFS, a re-interview

questionnaire was administered to the original cross-section respondents who were members of

three-generation families (Jackson & Hatchett, 1986; Jackson, Jayakody & Antonucci, 1993).

The re-interview questionnaire, in conjunction with the three-generation instrument,

permitted the intensive examination of topics relevant to two major groups of the black

population, youth and the elderly. For the elderly, the additional items in the re-interview survey

included a focus on such issues as age identification, life review, attitudes toward age-based

housing discrimination, institutionalization and the role of the Federal Government, collective

action strategies of older Americans, functional disability, health programs, medical regimen

adherence, family interaction patterns, and work-related and retirement concerns. For youth,

issues relevant to educational aspirations and expectations, job experiences, cigarette, alcohol

and drug use, family relationships and leisure time use were the object of study.

Possessing parallel data on individuals in different lineage positions provides the

opportunity to test the similarities and differences in attitudes, values, and life experiences across

three generations of black American families. The literature records few three-generation lineage

family studies of any population, certainly none of the scope and national representation

encompassed by this project (Jackson & Hatchett, 1986). From a scientific point of view, the

study offers unique possibilities to explore assumptions and hypotheses in the literatures on

socialization, intergenerational mobility and a host of other issues in different areas of social science. There are also a number of social-policy and practical implications of this study. Many public policies and programs devoted to economically-disadvantaged groups are based on the assumption that the objective problems of poverty and discrimination are exacerbated by family socialization patterns that transmit attitudes, values and behaviors that are dysfunctional for achievement in this society. Thus, many of these program regulations are based on re-socializing individuals, often involving interventions aimed at, or circumventing the family. The three-generation lineage study provides an opportunity to examine the reasonableness of these basic underlying assumptions.

A third major data collection effort related to both the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) and the Three Generation Family Study (TGFS) was completed in 1984, under a contract from the Department of Health and Human Services (Bowman, Gurin & Howard, 1984). The purpose of this contract was to investigate black youth motivation and mobility. Youth (14 to 24 years of age) in the TGFS were re-interviewed. Approximately 229 males and females were questioned by telephone regarding their educational and occupational attainments. The results of this two wave panel study suggested that structural features of business cycle unemployment, lack of job training and opportunities, and employment discrimination seemed to be causal factors in the loss of work motivation among black youth, rather than the often expressed lack of interest in seeking employment as the culprit in high black youth unemployment.

The fourth major data collection effort of the Program for Research on Black Americans

was completed in 1984. Funded by the Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie Foundations, the

National Black Election Study (NBES) was designed to assess the attitudes and behaviors of a

national sample of the black electorate during the 1984 national campaign and elections

(Jackson, Gurin & Hatchett, 1984; Gurin, Hatchett & Jackson, 1989). A random-digit-dial

telephone sample of 1,150 black adults was completed prior to the election and 866 respondents

in this sample were re-interviewed immediately following the election. The design was

comparable to the pre/post election National Election Studies (NES) and permits comparisons

between the black and general population on many items of common interest (Brown &

Wolford, 1994; Dawson, 1996; Tate, 1993). A follow-up of these respondents was completed

pre- and post-election in 1988, providing a four wave panel study of black electoral behavior

over the critical political years in the 1980s. The results of these NBES have been important and

instructive. Brown (e.g. Brown & Wolford, 1994) has shown the importance of church-based

political behavior revealing it to be a very important source of traditional political participation

for black Americans. Dawson (1996) has argued the existence of a coherent and important black

political belief and ideology system that serves an important organizing schema role in black

political behavior (Dawson, Brown & Allen, 1990).

The 1988 International Perspectives on Racism (IPR) survey in the then twelve country

Western European Economic Community (EC) arose from a concern with the need to understand

the nature of racism and its consequences in a cross-national perspective. We believe that this

can best be done scientifically by studying attitudes and behaviors toward groups of color and

low power (e.g. immigrants) in a cross-national, multiple-outgroup context. A subset of the 1988

IPR done in the four countries of Great Britain, France, The Netherlands and West Germany,

was designed to replicate items from the 1986 ISR National Election Survey (NES) designed to

study white racial attitudes. In each country respondents were randomly assigned to one of two

target groups, except in Germany where all respondents received Turks as the targeted outgroup

(France: Southeast Asians and North Africans; Britain: West Indians and South Asians; The

Netherlands: Turks and Surinamers). This provided a unique set of data that permit cross-

national and cross-cultural analyses on racism and discrimination toward multiple groups of

color within and across countries that differ in socio-historical and cultural national contexts

(Jackson, Brown & Kirby, 1998). Follow-up studies of the original 1988 IPR were conducted

across the European Community (EU) in 1997 and 2000, as well as a few monitoring items

included in Eurobarometer studies in 1992-2002.

The Future of Black Civil Rights Study (FBCR) was undertaken as part of a contract with

the Gannet Newspaper Corporation. This study formed an objective, empirical basis regarding

black adult sentiments and attitudes for a series of articles on "Who Speaks for Black

Americans." The broader dataset contains items that assess a wide array of indicators, many of

these replicating items used on earlier PRBA surveys. Analyses on these data (collected by the

Gordon Black Corporation) examine the correlates of perceived black attitudes toward multiple

institutions, reflections on the past, and expectations for the future of equal opportunity and Civil

Rights in the context of individual and group interests.

Common to these major data collections in the PRBA are a number of special

methodological features. In the national Cross-Section survey, new sampling and screening

techniques were developed in order to generate a nationally representative sample of black

American households in the continental United States. These screening procedures were shown

to be highly effective and also to be of general utility in the study of any low-density, high-

visibility groups. These methods have been used in subsequent studies. Special techniques for

the sampling of three-generation family lineage networks were developed in the TFGS. Finally,

because few national telephone studies had ever been done on blacks, new procedures in the

1984 National Black Election Study resulted in novel developments in disproportionate sampling

and the assessment of non-coverage problems (Caldwell et al, 1999). Additional methodological

innovations included the investigation of perceived race-of-interviewer effects (Hatchett, 1986).

One other notable feature of the data collection efforts of the PRBA has been the

extensive use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. We have found it extremely useful to

treat qualitative and quantitative methods as integrally related. Thus, unique features of all the

PRBA data collection efforts have been extensive pilot studies and pretesting of instruments to

ascertain cultural sensitivity and meaningfulness of the instruments for black Americans

(Caldwell et al, 1999; Chatters, 1986; Jackson, 1991; Jackson et al., 1982).

PRBA research on physical health, mental health, employment, family life, individual

and group identification and political behavior provided the first in-depth investigation of these

issues in large representative samples of the entire black population (Jackson, 1991).

Scientifically, the results of these surveys are having significant influence on current theorizing

about blacks as well as the content and direction of future research. The inclusion of many

policy-relevant questions provides, for the first time, individual and group opinions and feelings

that fully represent the breadth and diversity of black people located in all walks of life across the entire United States.

In addition to the substantive impact of the projects, the novel and unique geographical-area and telephone-sampling methods provide the first opportunity to generalize survey research findings confidently to the entire adult black population, the black elderly population, and black three-generation-lineage families. To our knowledge, the latter represents the first national probability survey of three-generation-lineage families in any population group. Instrumental in the success of these surveys were four novel developments in screening techniques: (a) the Wide Area Sampling Procedure (WASP); (b) the Standard Listing and Screening Procedure (SLASP) (Jackson, et al., 1982); (c) the Multiplicity Sampling Procedure (Jackson & Hatchett, 1983; Jackson & Hatchett, 1986); and, (d) the disproportionate Random-Digit-Dial telephone sampling procedure (Inglis, Groves & Heeringa, 1987). Each makes important, methodological contributions to the general social and behavioral sciences.

Blacks are geographically distributed in two distinct ways in the U.S.: either they are highly clustered, e.g. in certain urban locations (but not all) or they are widely distributed, e.g. broad areas of the western part of the US or suburban areas. In the former situation we run the risk of over representing blacks and having unacceptable clustering and in the latter of not representing blacks who live in areas of low density. WASP was developed to screen areas of low black household density. Capitalizing on the saliency of blacks in these types of situations, the procedure provides a systematic screening of households by white informants chosen a priori in each block to be screened (Hess, 1985). This procedure proved to be highly effective in

controlling one of the most costly aspects of surveying blacks in those geographical areas where they are "rare". The procedure proved to be remarkably effective and was used in 20% of the geographical areas in the original NSBA. An evaluation of the procedure revealed that no black households were missed in screening using the WASP procedure (Jackson, 1991). SLASP was developed to address issues of over-representation of blacks in high density, highly clustered situations. This procedure provided prior controls for the potential large numbers of black households selected in any given segment. The methodological techniques used in constructing the questionnaires, designing and obtaining the samples, as well as training interviewers provide new information on survey research generally and particularly on the problems of studying racial-ethnic groups (Jackson, 1986). This work has provided the basis for drawing relatively lower cost national household samples of black Americans in subsequent studies. The existence of high quality samples also makes follow-up studies on these same individuals very cost-effective. The 1979/80 to 1992 <u>Four-wave Panel Study</u> of the NSBA provides a unique perspective on intra-individual change over an important period of history. A longitudinal panel study of three-generation families, for example, would provide unparalleled data on family and individual development across the next decade or more (Jackson & Hatchett, 1986; Antonucci & Jackson, 1989).

The content of the questionnaires, the quality of the national samples, and data collection techniques promise that these studies will stand for many years as sources of high quality data for scientists and policymakers in the broad areas of physical health, employment, family relationships, political behavior, personal adjustment and mental health. While the investment

costs were high in conducting these novel sample surveys, the results have had important

scientific and practical consequences and demonstrate the potential to influence the nature of

future social and behavioral science research on black Americans.

Conceptual Framework for PRBA Research

In general the PRBA has been focused on a broader contextual framework for

understanding the distribution of distress and disorder among ethnic and racial groups (Jackson

& Sellers, 2000; Pearlin 1989; Pearlin et al. 1981). The life-stress paradigm provides a useful

framework for considering and understanding the role of stressors in the lives of blacks and other

discriminated-against groups. In general we have focused on the manner in which structural and

sociodemographic factors influence life stressors and the roles of psychological and social

resources (e.g., mastery, self-esteem, job mentors, informal emotional and instrumental support,

religious involvement, etc.) in buffering the effects of stress on physical and psychological

health.

Historically, our work has employed a stress, coping, and social resource model to guide

data collection and analyses (Jackson, Chatters, & Neighbors, 1986). This has involved focusing

on how both diffuse and specific symptom reactions are defined by the general public (lay

diagnostic inference) and how these definitions of personal problems influence the nature of

coping and responses. Stress and adaptation are viewed as arising from discrepancies between

the demands impinging upon a person and the capacity of that person to effectively cope with

those demands (Myers 1982; Cohen, Kessler, & Gordon, 1995). High levels of discrepancies are

commonly associated with the onset of psychological distress. This orientation places equal emphasis on environmental/situational and individual factors as explanations for possible causes of psychological distress (Neighbors, Jackson, Bowman, & Gurin, 1983). The stress and adaptation model also focuses attention on one of the more positive aspects of ethnic and racial minority health -- successful problem-solving.

This conceptual framework combines aspects of the "Michigan Model" (e.g. House 1981), Karasek's Job Strain Model (1979) and African American Stress-Coping and Help-Seeking Model (Jackson, Neighbors, Taylor, Williams, 1999). Specifically, this work focuses on the relative importance of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic position (SEP), wealth, and gender as antecedents for understanding the nature of stress and the impact on psychological and physiological health. For example, we recognize that the effects of SEP must be assessed not only at the level of the individual and household but also at the level of the neighborhood and other macro contexts (e.g., Krieger, Williams, & Moss, 1997). Regardless of individual or household characteristics, black and white neighborhoods differ dramatically in the availability of jobs, family structure, opportunities for marriage, and exposure to conventional role models (Wilson 1987; 1996). These geographical, area-based characteristics capture important aspects of the physical and social contexts that may adversely affect health over and above the aggregation of individual characteristics (Williams and Collins 2001). These demographic and aggregate characteristics are also expected to directly influence stressors across broad domains of work, family and leisure activities.

There is little information from national studies concerning the impact of life events on

the distribution of ill health and psychopathology among race/ethnic minorities. Chronic

stressors (i.e., lack of income, marriage problems, and goal striving) may be as important

determinants of mental health as acute life events (Pearlin 1989; Sellers & Neighbors 1999).

Recent developments in the measurement of stress highlight the need to broaden the assessment

of stress beyond life events and chronic stressors. Childhood and adult traumatic events, daily

hassles, and the absence of desired events have effects on health beyond those of life events and

chronic stressors (Wheaton, 1994). This comprehensive approach to the measurement of stress

accounts for substantially more variability in health status than previous work suggested (Turner,

Wheaton, & Lloyd, 1995). Unfortunately, prior studies have not assessed the relationship

between comprehensive measures of stress and the health of most ethnic minority groups.

We argue that job and non-job stressors combine and interact to influence physical and

mental health (Jackson & Sellers, 2000). These sources of stress in turn affect strains (or short

term responses) and more enduring long-term physical and psychological health outcomes.

Stress engenders strain and is associated with a variety of psychological, physiological, and

behavioral outcomes. Reactions to stress may be psychological, physiological, and/or

behavioral. For example, several studies have found that job satisfaction is inversely related to

stress (Baker, Israel, & Schurman, 1996; Israel, House, Schurman, Heaney, & Mero, 1989).

Studies consistently find that blood pressure levels are higher for men and women during work

than after hours (Ross & Fogg, 1993). A number of behavioral response to stress have been

implicated, these include drinking smoking (Parrot 1995), sleep disturbances (Gillin & Byerley,

1990), and absenteeism. Oetting et al., 1988 found that acculturation stress among Native

American youth on the reservation was associated with increased drug abuse. The evidence

linking job stress to physiological responses, however, is inconclusive at best (French, & Kahn,

1982). This perhaps speaks not only to the multifactorial nature of behavioral outcomes but also

to the need to contextualize job stress as within a constellation of life stressors.

       One critical issue is the extent to which minority status increases risk for health and

mental health problems (Vega & Rumbaut, 1991; Williams & Fenton, 1994; Aneshensel, 1992).

Previous research has long argued that discrimination adversely affects the mental health of

African Americans (McCarthy & Yancey, 1971). However, stressors that may be unique to, or

more prevalent among, ethnic minorities have not been incorporated into the assessment of stress

(McLean & Link, 1994; Pearlin, 1989; Essed, 1991; Feagin, 1991). Several studies indicate that

racial discrimination, as measured by subjective reports, adversely affects the emotional well-

being (and physical health outcomes such as blood pressure) of African Americans and other

minorities (Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou & Rummens, 1999; Finch, Kolody, & Vega, 2000; Jackson

et al., 1996; Williams & Chung, in press; James et al., 1984; Krieger, 1990; Krieger & Signey,

1996; Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000; Krieger, 1999; Williams & Neighbors 2001;

Williams, Neighbors & Jackson, under review [James, I added recent reviews and major recent

studies of non-black groups – all of these refs are in the recent NSAL analysis proposal]). Other

evidence suggests that the experience of unfair treatment, irrespective of race or ethnicity, may

have negative consequences for health (Harburg et al., 1973; Kessler, Mickelson & Williams

1999; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997). Some researchers are concerned that

perceptions of discrimination may be a consequence of mental health problems. However,

recent analyses of multiple waves of data from the NSBA documented that being

psychologically distressed and/or meeting criteria for major depression at Wave Two was

unrelated to Wave Three reports of racial discrimination (Brown et al. 2000). It should also be

noted that although there are important commonalities in the African American experience, there

is also considerable ethnic variation *within* the black population. Blacks from the Caribbean

constitute the largest sub-group (Williams et al., 1994). But prior studies of minority health have

not addressed the consequences of this within-group ethnic variation (c.f. new NSAL). The

results may not be obvious. One national study with a small sample of persons of Caribbean

ancestry found that Afro-Caribbeans reported higher levels of stress, especially financial stress,

higher levels of psychological distress and lower levels of life satisfaction than native-born

blacks (Williams, 2000). It has been suggested that job stress, frustrated ambitions,

discrimination from whites and other blacks, immigration status, and demands from relatives still

residing in the Caribbean have negative affects on the health of Caribbean sub-groups (Allen,

1988; Gopaul-McNicol, 1993). Our research has attempted to identify the types and amounts of

discrimination that affect health, allowing us to begin to explain how racial bias combines with

other types of stress (job, family, etc.) to affect physical and psychological health between and

among ethnic minority groups. Particular attention will be given to the timing, frequency, and

cumulative impact of experiencing incidents of bias.

Although we have always expected to find direct relationship between psychological and

social resource factors and health outcomes, we are particularly interested in how these resources

moderate the relationship between stress and health. We also acknowledge important research in

this field (Wheaton 1985; Thoits 1995) which suggests that mediation and moderation can occur

individually, as well as in tandem, to buffer the impact of stress on health. For example, previous

analyses of the original 1979-80 NSBA and subsequent panel data (Williams et al. 1995) suggest

that psychological and social resources are important mediators and moderators of the

relationship between stress and health for African Americans. For example, Israel et al. (1989)

found that social resources mediated the effects of participation in decision making on job

satisfaction.

Exposure to stress does not always adversely affect health (Cohen et al., 1995). Social

and psychological resources that can mitigate the impact of stress on health include social

relationships, self-esteem, perceptions of mastery or control, anger or hostility, feelings of

helplessness or hopelessness, and repression or denial of emotions (House et al., 1988; Kessler et

al., 1995; Mirowsky & Ross, 1989; Rogler et al., 1989; Mirowsky & Ross, 1980; Williams,

1990; Williams & Fenton, 1994). For example, analyses of data from the 1995 Detroit Area

Study highlight the importance of understanding coping processes (Williams et al., 1997). In this

study, the mental health of blacks exceeded that of whites, when adjusted for the effects of race-

related stress. This pattern is consistent with the suggestion that stressful experiences may more

adversely affect the mental health of whites than blacks. Kessler (1979) documented a similar

pattern for the relationship between stressful life events and psychological distress for nonwhites

(mainly blacks). While blacks were more likely to be exposed, comparable stressful events more

adversely affected the mental health of whites. Kessler (1979) suggested that compared to

whites, African Americans may have earlier and more frequent exposure to adversity which

lessens the impact of stress, greater emotional flexibility that facilitates recovery, and access to culturally-based psychological coping resources. In an international study of organizational stress, Bhagat and colleagues (1991) reported that problem focused coping moderated the relationship between organizational stress and strain. The authors (Bhagat et al 1994) suggest that the measures of coping need to be more comprehensive, more consistent with work and cultural context. In a recent prospective study, Breslau et al. (1995) found that blacks are nearly twice as likely as whites to experience a traumatic event while the black/white odds ratio for retrospective reporting of lifetime traumatic events was only 1.22, suggesting that blacks may have lower rates of recall or reporting of negative events.

A broad range of other coping resources, including family support and religious involvement, play an important role in buffering minority populations from the negative effects of stress. Prior research suggests that religion can have a positive impact on psychological well-being by providing systems of meaning that help make sense of stressful experiences. Additionally, involvement in religious communities can be an important source of social integration and social support (Taylor & Chatters 1988; Williams 1994). Further, it is possible that individuals who use prayer as a coping strategy have better health outcomes.

In addition to religion, a number of other social and psychological resources play a special role in adaptation to stress for racial and ethnic minority groups. These include John Henryism (James 1994), interracial contact (Rosenberg 1979), racial self-esteem (Terrel & Taylor, 1980), internalized racism (Taylor et al. 1991), and system blame (Neighbors et al. 1996). Racial self-concept and identity is a neglected resource that can buffer the relationship

between stress and health. We recently documented that keeping group identity salient protected

African Americans from some of the adverse effects of discrimination on their health (Williams

et al.,1999). The John Henryism scale measures an active predisposition to master environmental

challenges (James, 1994). Research documents that John Henryism is unrelated to the blood

pressure levels of whites and higher SEP blacks. There is, however, a strong positive relationship

between John Henryism and blood pressure among lower SEP blacks. Prior research has given

insufficient attention to the potential health consequences of John Henryism. The health

consequences of buying into the dominant society's stigma of inferiority of one's group is also

important to assess. For example, research across a broad range of societies (in the United

Kingdom, Japan, India, South Africa, Israel) indicates that groups which are socially unequal

perform more poorly on standardized tests (Fischer et al. 1996). Research on stereotype threat

has been largely confined to intellectual test performance (Steele, 1997). It is conceivable that

the salience (and persistence) of negative racial stereotypes may have effects beyond this

domain. For example, research by Taylor and his colleagues has found that blacks who score

highly on internalized racism--that is, they believe blacks are inferior--have higher levels of

psychological distress and alcohol use (Taylor et al., 1991). A similar pattern of results was

found in the NSBA (Williams & Chung, in press). Social scientists have long speculated about

the protective implications of system-blame for blacks as an explanation for their relative

disadvantaged status. The presumed benefit to African Americans of casting themselves as

victims of oppression, thereby lessening the degree of personal responsibility for low status, has

lead social psychiatric epidemiologists to employ the system-blame concept to explain the lack

of racial differences in mental health status (Neff, 1985; Veroff et al., 1981). Unfortunately, there

has been no direct test of this hypothesis to date. In fact, the opposite may be true; system-blame

may actually diminish individual feelings of self-efficacy, leading to a fatalistic attitude that

reduces coping effort in the face of adversity (Jones & Matsumoto, 1982; Neighbors, et al, 1996;

Wheaton, 1980).

Substantive Themes and Findings

The NSBA Wave one instrument was comprehensive and reflects coverage of several

broad areas related to the mental health and general life situation of black Americans. Among

these are: (a) *Neighborhood*, including topics of community integration, services, crime and

related issues; (b) *Religion* and its impact on the black community. Topics such as the role of the

church and religion in the development of the individual and the community are covered; (c)

Health Problems focuses on physical health, self perceptions and specific life events; (d)

Employment and Unemployment focuses on the impact of job-related problems and

underemployment aspects of the "irregular economy"; (e) the *Family and Friendships* section

assesses the degree of individual contact with family and friends and their social support role.

Special topics of loneliness and role relationships are also covered; (f) *Mental Health Utilization*

focuses directly on problem recognition and help-seeking processes related to self and other

definitions of mental health functioning. A special problem-centered (non-chronic) approach is

followed in this section, as well as multiple indicators of positive functioning and attitudinal

items related to mental health policies; (g) the *Identity* section contained items related to the

integration and separation of personal and group identity. Multiple indicators of identity and

consciousness were included as well as measures of socialization related to these concerns. Items

that assessed racial attitudes, and attitudes related to education, busing, civil rights and racism

were also included in this section; (i) The *Background* section included items related to

traditional demographic items for the individual and family, as well as measures of political

affiliation and participation, education, and job training experiences; (j) The last section, *Roots*

provided information concerning the family history of the respondent for use in identifying

three-generation-lineage, youth and elderly respondents. Important information was gained

concerning the extent and distribution of three-generation lineage black American families in the

United States.

The scope and breadth of this interview and subsequent data collections provide the

opportunity to trace the interrelationships of events and reactions in significant areas of a

person's life. In the employment area, for example, the broader life implications of a history of

dead-end jobs, or a breakdown in the nuclear family, or a disabling illness, can be very different

for blacks in the rural South than for those in the inner cities of the North or for younger versus

older cohort members (Bowman, Jackson, Hatchett & Gurin, 1982). There are a few other

studies in the literature that have comprehensive coverage comparable to that of the NSBA, but

these other studies have been done on very limited and narrow segments of the black population,

usually poor blacks in the northern cities. In these previous studies it is impossible to estimate to

what extent the findings are generalizable beyond the particular setting and group studied.

It was noted earlier that scientific knowledge, as well as public policies based on this knowledge, have been limited by a lack of appreciation for the heterogeneity of black American life, particularly those that are seen as experiencing special problems. For example, much has been written about the special problems of the black elderly (Taylor, 1982). Because of the Three-Generation Study, a very large national probability sample of the black elderly exists. This permits complex multivariate analyses of their problems, strengths, and coping strategies (Jackson, Chatters & Neighbors, 1982; Jackson & Gibson, 1985).

The surveys conducted by the PRBA have made significant contributions to research on mental health, aging, family support networks, religious participation, quality of life and the health consequences of discrimination, racial group consciousness, intergroup relationships, black politics, retirement, and marriage/romantic relationships. We highlight some select findings below.

Social Support

A major theme that serves to integrate the different parts of the NSBA interviews is that of "social support" (Taylor, Jackson & Quick, 1982; Taylor, 1986). This is a concept particularly relevant in a study of black Americans. Some writers have pointed to the breakdown of the black family and social networks; others have commented on the strength of black extended family and pointed to family and friendship networks as providing major supports to black Americans facing the difficult conditions in their lives (Taylor, 1985). It is not only the subject of the section of the interviews specifically devoted to family and friendships, but appears as an aspect of other sections as well: the support provided by people in one's church (Taylor & Chatters, 1986); the

availability of informal support for help when one is ill (Chatters, Taylor & Jackson, 1985a:

1985b); the people one depends upon dealing with the stresses of everyday life; the use of

informal resources when faced with major personal problems in one's life (Neighbors & Jackson,

1984). Analysis of these data have provided invaluable input to the ongoing debate on the black

family and the functions that family and social networks perform in black life in America

(Jackson, 1986a; Hatchett & Jackson, 1983; Hunter, 1997).

Taylor, Chatters and Jackson's research investigates the informal social support networks

of black Americans (e.g., Taylor et al., 1997). This work examines the support networks of the

black population in general (Chatters et al., 1989; Taylor, 1986), as well as specific sub-groups

of the black population such as single mothers (Jayakody et al., 1993), elderly blacks (Antonucci

et al., 1990; Chatters,et al., 1985; 1986; Taylor, 1985; Taylor & Chatters, 1991), and three-

generation black families (Jackson et al., 1995; Taylor et al., 1993). Several general conclusions

can be drawn from this body of work.

First, despite major demographic changes in black family structure in the last 25 years,

social support networks of black Americans continue to be strong and viable (Taylor et al.,

1997). Second, informal social support networks are comprised of extended family members

(Chatters et al., 1989; Taylor, 1986) and non-kin such as church members (Taylor & Chatters,

1986a, 1986b, 1988), best friends (Taylor & Chatters, 1986b; Taylor et al., 1997) and fictive kin

(Chatters et al., 1994). Church members, in particular, were found to be a critical yet little-

researched source of informal assistance. Third, black adults who do not have any surviving

family members or who are estranged from their family tend to rely on non-kin for assistance.

Fourth, although the majority of black adults receive assistance from at least one of these groups,

there is a small group of black adults who are socially isolated and do not have a viable support

network (Taylor, 1990; Taylor & Chatters, 1986b). Finally, differences in reports of the most

important type of support received tend to correspond to the needs and challenges facing a

specific sub-population (Jayakody et al., 1993; Taylor et al., 1993).

In sum, notable among these results has been the findings that point to a very effective,

interrelated set of support systems encompassing, friends, family and the church (Taylor &

Chatters, 1986), What has been very interesting about these results is the way that the three

sources of support wax and wane over the individual life-course (Antonucci, 2001), such that

family and friends appear particularly important in earlier years, with a successive increase of

importance of the church as people age and family and friend connections are depleted (Gibson,

1986). In addition, Antonucci & Jackson (1990) showed that the ways in which socially

supportive processes of reciprocity may operate among blacks my be more similar to the French

than it is to American whites, both the French and blacks in the US seem to be more concerned

with maintaining reciprocity of socially supportive assistance over the life course than do whites

in the U.S..

Religion and Religious Participation. In an area of work related to social support, the

NSBA data have facilitated systematic, quantitative research on religious participation among

black adults. Several conclusions can be drawn from this body of research. First, two multi-

sample analyses found that among the elderly (Levin et al., 1994) and adults in general (Taylor,et

al., 1996) blacks exhibit significantly higher levels of religious participation than whites. Second,

NSBA respondents generally regard the role of black churches as positive and recognize the

diverse functions (e.g., social, religious, material support) of black churches (Taylor et al., 1987).

Third, African Americans exhibit fairly high levels of religious involvement. In particular, they attend religious services on a frequent basis, have high rates of church membership, characterize themselves as being religious, and are extensively involved in private religious activities (e.g., prayer, reading religious materials, watching or listening to religious programs) (Taylor, 1988; Taylor & Chatters, 1991). Fourth, despite overall high levels of religiosity, there is considerable heterogeneity in religious involvement. Age (Chatters & Taylor, 1989), gender (Levin & Taylor, 1993), and region (Taylor, 1988) exert pervasive influences, while marital status, socioeconomic status, and urbanicity also demonstrate important effects on religious involvement. Fifth, poorer blacks do not exhibit significantly higher levels of religious participation than their higher income counterparts. Sixth, prayer is an important form of coping with serious personal problems (Ellison & Taylor, 1996; Neighbors et al., 1983). Ellison and Taylor (1996) found that while religious participation is an important predictor of the use of prayer in coping, this practice is also most likely among persons dealing with a health problem or bereavement, persons with low personal mastery and women. Finally, work exploring various psychosocial functions of religion indicates that religion is an important determinant of life satisfaction (Levin et al., 1995) and, in the face of stress, religious attendance reduced the adverse consequences of these stressors on psychological distress (Williams et al., 1991).

Mental Health Status

One of the major research thrusts of PRBA has been the investigation of socioeconomic influences on mental health. Our work has indicated that this relationship is much more complex than previously thought. Neighbors (1988) found that personal income, family income and a

poverty index were all negatively related to distress -- but only among respondents who indicated

that they were upset because of an economic or physical health problem. This finding suggest

that structural factors of low income and poverty may be both sources of stress as well as sources

of coping resources. In cases in which individuals are distressed because of the loss of coping

resources, it may be a particularly salient source of personal distress. Similarly, Kessler &

Neighbors (1986) demonstrated that the previously well-established relationship between race

and psychological distress was not due exclusively to social class, but that effects of race and

social class are interactive, i.e. race differences are significantly pronounced among those at

lower levels of social class. They concluded that models that fail to take the interaction into

consideration, the effects of race are suppressed and the effects of social class are magnified.

Williams, Takeuchi, and Adair (1992b) examined the relationship between socioeconomic status

and current and lifetime rates of psychiatric disorder in the ECA study. Overall, SES was

inversely related to psychiatric disorder for both racial groups, but the association was weaker

for black males than for their white peers. In contrast to prior research, they found that lower

SES white males had higher rates of psychiatric illness than lower SES blacks.

The analyses of Williams et al. (1992a) documented that there were distinctive patterns to

the distribution of psychiatric disorders in the ECA among blacks and whites. All forms of

marital dissolution (separation/divorce and widowhood) were associated with an increased risk

of psychiatric illness for blacks of both sexes and for white males, but the association was

stronger for white men than for their black peers. The finding that unmarried black women did

not have higher rates of psychiatric illness than their married peers was especially noteworthy

and underscores the need for research efforts that focus explicitly on identifying the health-

enhancing cultural strengths and resistance resources in the African American community. In a related study, Jackson & Neighbors (1988) found that unmarried black women who were divorced or widowed were especially well-off in comparison to those who were never married (of similar ages), perhaps accounting for why being in the current status of unmarried is not different from being married.

Help Seeking

Using a problem-focused approach to help-seeking, the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) found that 55% sought some form of professional help and more than 87% contacted at least 1 member of their informal network (Neighbors et al., 1983). Most respondents used informal help only (43%), or they used informal help in combination with professional help (44%); rarely was professional help used in isolation (Neighbors & Jackson, 1984). Among those respondents with physical health problems, the informal network channeled blacks to the doctor. African Americans with emotional problems were, on the other hand, least likely to seek any form of assistance. Although grief reactions were very upsetting, respondents reported that ministers rarely referred them for additional counseling. Regardless of the type or severity of the problem, those who contacted clergy first were less likely to seek help from other professionals (Neighbors & Jackson, 1996).

Specialty mental health. African Americans were unlikely to consult a mental health specialist (Neighbors et al., 1994). Only 9% of the respondents who sought professional help contacted a community mental health center, psychiatrist or psychologist (Neighbors, 1985); 14% contacted a social service agency (Neighbors & Taylor, 1985). Those with mental health

insurance were more likely to utilize private psychotherapists. The majority of those who utilized

social services, community mental health centers or private mental health therapists were

referred by family members or friends. Taylor, Neighbors and Broman (1989) found that among

those who contacted a social service agency, most indicated that a friend or relative was

instrumental in facilitating use of the agency. A follow-up investigation of NSBA respondents

employing the depression section of the Diagnostic Interview Schedule showed that 17% of the

sample met criteria for major depression. An exploration of help-seeking among the depressed

showed that 62% contacted family or friends and 37% sought some form of professional help

(only 7% contacted a mental health professional). Related analyses from the 1995 Detroit Area

Study found that 14% of African Americans met criteria for major depression. Help-seeking

among those meeting criteria for depression revealed that 38% contacted a family member, 24%

went to a primary care physician for help and 15% contacted a mental health professional

(Neighbors, 1997).

      Perceived Barriers to Mental Health Services. We conducted six focus groups with

African Americans in Detroit to gain a better understanding of how mental health issues are

understood and interpreted within the community (Neighbors, 1996). The groups uncovered four

key issues: 1) African Americans are incarcerated for behavior that would send whites to

outpatient mental health services; 2) the poor are more likely to be institutionalized for mental

health problems than the upper classes; 3) strong feelings of mistrust of whites was a major

reason for not considering professional help; and 4) men were more likely to mention their

reluctance to admit to a personal weakness (an inability to "handle their own business") as an

important reason for their negative attitudes toward going to a psychologist, psychiatrist or other

mental health professional. This tendency for male reluctance was also found in the NSBA, where men were much more likely than women to report never having had a serious personal problem in their lives than women (Neighbors & Jackson, 1996).

Psychological Resources and Social Resources

Several studies utilizing data from the National Survey of Black Americans have underscored the importance of psychological resources to African Americans. Hughes and Demo (1989) found that personal self-esteem, racial self-esteem, and personal efficacy are inter-related and anchored in interpersonal relations with family and friends. These three psychological resources, however, are produced by fundamentally different processes. They argue that black self-esteem is insulated from racial inequality, while personal efficacy is not, which may explain why black Americans, who suffer daily and acute episodes of racial inequality (Williams et al, 2000) have relatively high self-esteem but relatively low personal efficacy. We have speculated that in a racially segregated society the sources of self-esteem which are related strongly to family, friends and direct socialization processes may be unaffected by contacts, either symbolically or tangibly, with the white out-group. On the other hand, racial inequality, either chronically or acutely, is related to contact with the white out-group and is more likely than not associated with the blocking of some desired goal (purchasing a house, going to college, getting a job, etc). The presences of racialized barriers to desired ends would conceivably have direct effects on reducing one's beliefs that these goals can be achieved, which defines a lowered sense of personal beliefs that one can influence outcomes in one's environment (Jackson et al , in press). Caldwell and Koski (1997) argue that mothers who had higher levels of self-esteem

indicated higher levels of maternal competence. Tran, Wright and Chatters (1991) found that

health difficulties tended to erode feelings of personal efficacy, whereas stress from life

problems depressed self-esteem. Finally, Krause and Tran (1989) found that aspects of religious

involvement are positively associated with self-esteem and personal mastery. Although stress

tended to erode feelings of self-worth and mastery, negative effects were offset by increased

religious involvement.

Stress and Race Related Stressors

In the past few years there has been increasing amount of work exploring the relationship

between racial discrimination and health. Williams and Chung (in press) found that blacks who

reported that they had experienced discrimination in the last month had higher levels of health

problems, disability, and psychological distress, and lower levels of happiness and life

satisfaction. While controlling for personal control, self-esteem, race/group identity, interracial

contact, and social support did not reduce the association between discrimination and health,

interactions revealed that higher levels of self-esteem, black identity, and family closeness

reduced the adverse health impact of discrimination (Williams et al., 1995). Other analyses have

explored the cumulative effects of exposure to discrimination among African Americans using

all four waves of panel data in the NSBA. Reports of racial discrimination over the thirteen-year

period were weakly predictive of lower subjective well-being in 1992 (Wave 4). A general

measure of racial beliefs (perceiving that whites want to keep blacks down) was related to poorer

physical health at Wave 1 and predicted increased psychological distress and lower levels of

subjective well-being in 1992 (Wave 4) (Jackson et al., 1996). The association between

discrimination and health has also been examined in a sample of 2,398 respondents in the Third

Wave of data collection (1994) in the Americans' Changing Lives Study (ACL). About 40% of

nonwhites reported that they had been treated badly because of their race or ethnicity. These

rates of perceived discrimination for the nonwhite groups were substantially higher than for

whites. Analyses also found that reports of discrimination were related to lower levels of life

satisfaction and higher levels of depression, chronic health problems and self-rated ill health

(Jackson, Williams, & Torres, in press).

In the 1995 Detroit Area Study (DAS) (n=1,139) we developed multiple measures of

acute, major life experiences of discrimination and an everyday discrimination scale. About 10%

of whites report discrimination in employment and harassment by the police compared to about

35% of African Americans. Blacks are about three times more likely than whites to report

everyday discrimination as "very often" or "fairly often." Both measures of discrimination are

adversely related to psychological distress and psychological well-being (Williams et al., 1997).

The association with health status, however, is stronger for the everyday discrimination measure

than the major experiences of discrimination.

International Perspectives on Prejudice and Racism

A fundamental and overarching PRBA concern is with the ways in which race, ethnicity,

socio-economic level, gender, and minority status per se, all might interactively and additively

influence risks for exposure to environmental and social stressors, the experience of stress, and

the coping and adaptation responses of black Americans. In order to address these issues we have

suggested that cross-national comparative analyses are needed (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995), and

thus we embarked upon a set of interrelated, international studies. As shown in Chart 1, while

most of these studies have involved European/United States comparisons, additional and related

work is ongoing in Japan, Brazil, and South Africa (under the direction of David Williams). In

Japan we have been interested in the ways in which the dominant Japanese relate to both

immigrants (e.g. Chinese, Koreans, etc) and internal ethnic minority groups (e.g. Burakumin). In

Brazil we are participating in a large study underway in Belo Horizonte to study the ways in

which skin color, race, and socio-economic status work additively and interactively to influence

mobility and health outcomes among different "color" groups in a purported "racial democracy".

Finally, in South Africa a large study is examining the epidemiology of mental disorders within a

society faced with a recent history of group-based torture and attempts at national reconciliation.

This latter survey is part of the larger world mental health study designed to investigate the

prevalence and correlates of mental disorders in nearly 30 countries across the world. For the

purposes of this chapter we focus upon our cross-national European work as illustrative of the

general set of international concerns.

The basic assumption of our international work has been that understanding the nature of

discrimination and racism, and their psychological and social consequences in the United States,

can only be accomplished by studying similarities and differences between dominant and

subordinate groups in comparative, cross-national, multiple-outgroup contexts (Jackson, Brown

& Kirby, 1998; Pettigrew, Jackson, Ben Brika, Lemaine, Meertens, Wagner, & Zick, 1997). In

1988 we conducted national household surveys among citizens in the twelve European Union

countries, with a specific focus on four major Western European countries, France, Great Britain,

Germany and The Netherlands. These international surveys were on intergroup attitudes, beliefs

and reported behaviors toward specific, ethnic immigrant groups (Jackson, Kirby, Barnes, &

Shepard, 1993; Pettigrew, Jackson, Ben Brika, Lemaine, Meertens, Wagner & Zick, 1997). A

subset of the questions asked in these surveys replicated part of the intergroup questions included

by researchers in the 1986 National Election Survey in the United States (Kinder & Saunders,

1986). As shown in Chart 1, this study was replicated in the fifteen European Union countries in

1997 (Lemaine, Ben Brika, Jackson & Wittek, 1998) and in 2000 by the European Union; a few

outcome items (immigration attitudes and orientations) were included in annual surveys in 1992,

1993, 1995, 1996 and 1998.

The 1988 surveys (as well as 1997 and most recently in 2000) in the five countries form a

unique set of parallel, cross-national data on factors related to expressions of prejudice and

discrimination by dominant groups toward selected subordinate immigrant and national

ethnic/racial groups. Based upon the findings of this project, we have concluded that

understanding the nature of prejudice and racism, and the psychological and social consequences

in any given country, can only be accomplished by studying similarities and differences in the

relationships between dominant and subordinate groups across countries (Jackson et al, 1993;

Jackson et al, 2001; Kohn, 1987; Pettigrew et al, 1997).

For the most part, research on prejudice and racism has been largely target-group

specific. Researchers have focused on understanding prejudiced reactions towards one specific

group, such as whites' reactions to blacks in the United States (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). We

attempted to go beyond this narrow focus in two ways. First, we studied the responses of

randomly selected dominant group members in five different nations and compared reactions

toward different, specific, target groups within these countries. Second, we also asked general

questions of respondents about reactions towards persons from other nationalities, religions,

races, cultures, and social classes (Inglehart & Yeakley, 1993). This allowed us to investigate the question of the contexts of stereotypes and prejudiced reactions.

Cross-cultural and cross-national studies permit us to examine a range of contextual factors that might influence prejudiced reactions (Triandis, 1990). Specifically, the cross-national design allows us to study: 1) the influence that different norms have on the expression of prejudiced reactions; 2) the influence that differences in value orientations and other moderating variables (e.g., control beliefs) have; and, 3) the influence of different structural factors, e.g. nature of work opportunities, unemployment (Kohn, 1987), or different social welfare systems.

Comparative cross-national studies and analyses on dominant and subordinate groups are necessary in order to understand those aspects of social psychological intergroup relations, (e.g. discrimination and racism) that are nation state and target group specific, as well as those components that are common across national boundaries and groups (Jackson, Brown & Kirby, 1998; Pettigrew et al, 1997). In general, we believe that a very broad cross-national comparative framework is required. For example, in South American countries the socio-cultural history and contemporary relationships among dominant and subordinate groups differ greatly from those in contemporary South Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, or New Zealand. In order to arrive at valid and useful theory, larger and more explicitly comparative research on these intergroup relationships in different nation states is needed (Kohn, 1987). We suggest that one source of the confusion in theoretical accounts of intergroup conflict has been the lack of comparable data in these different national contexts.

Based upon our research over the last 15 years or so (Jackson, Kirby, Barnes, & Shepard, 1993; Jackson, et al 1998; Pettigrew, et al 1997), we suggest that a synthesis may be emerging

in the intergroup relations area regarding the importance of individual-level threat based upon: 1) the perceptions of basic value differences among dominant and subordinate groups; 2) perceived threats to individual and family stability; and 3) the threats to the social, political, and economic status of the ingroup (Pettigrew et al, 1997). Several theoretical models of intergroup relations and research are couched in these terms, e.g. symbolic racism, aversive racism, relative deprivation, belief congruity, scapegoating, real group conflict, and social identity theories. Examining these different frameworks in a cross-national context may provide the opportunity for comparisons among cultures that share many commonalties in values and goals but enough dissimilarities to permit comparisons among different theoretical frameworks of individual outgroup rejection within and across national boundaries (Kinder, 1986; Kohn, 1987; Meyers, 1984).

Many of the intergroup theories have a great deal to offer, but the lack of a multi-disciplinary focus, and paucity of empirical research on a range of alternative explanations for observed effects, have hampered efforts to develop robust theoretical models. In this we agree with Kinder (1986) who suggested that there has been too little confrontation among different theoretical perspectives on outgroup rejection and, that what is needed is greater empirical tests of different theoretical predictions (Rex & Mason, 1986).

We have conceptualized our work within a framework that highlights the perception of threat to the dominant group as a major underlying characteristic of intergroup conflict models (Jackson et al, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Based upon recent writing and analyses, we argue that for some outcomes the perception of threat should be interpreted in a *stress* theoretical framework (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995).

The underlying theme in all of these models is conflict and perceptions of threat, although the kind of perceived threat differs dramatically. Threat to self-identity (Allport, 1958; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998); Stephan & Stephan, 1985) in person-centered models, threat to position dominance (Bobo, 1987; Nielsen, 1985; Yinger, 1985; Giles and Evans, 1985; Sidanius, Pratto & Bobo, 1994) in group conflict models, and threat to group identity (Milner, 1981; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) in value-congruity models, provide the motivation for overt outgroup reactions. Some recent work by Walter Stephan and his colleagues has reached similar conclusions about the central importance of intergroup anxiety and perceived threat (Stephan, Ybarra & Bachman, 1996; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1996; Ybarra & Stephan, 1994). We suggest that all of the numerous theories of intergroup conflict have some currency, dependent upon historical circumstances, cultural considerations, and the economic, social, and political contexts, and thus, may serve to highlight the operation of factors unique to each model or set of models. Under circumstances of constrained resources, real group conflict may be operative (Sherif & Sherif, 1953), resulting in perceived threat (e.g. Britain). Under conditions of relatively rich resources and a relatively tight status hierarchy among different racial and ethnic groups (e.g. the Netherlands), social identity may be more salient, resulting in threat and group anxiety (Tajfel, 1982). Under conditions in which long-term ethnic and racial divisions and conflict demarcate the status hierarchy among some groups (e.g. France and the United States), then socialization theories, symbolic concerns, and basic value differences may provide a more parsimonious explanation of group conflict (Dovidio & Gaertner; 1998; Sears, 1998). On the other hand, we argue that regardless of the specific theoretical model, threat (and stress), especially to the hierarchically dominant group and individual, is what accounts for the

proximate immediate orientation, feelings about, and actions toward individuals in the groups

lower in the status hierarchy (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995).

Understanding the nature of racism, and its psychological and social consequences in the

United States can only be accomplished by studying similarities and differences between

dominant and subordinate groups in a comparative, cross-national, multiple-outgroup context

(Pettigrew et al, 1997). **Empirical Approach to Western Europe and United States**

Comparisons. As indicated earlier, in 1988, an extensive survey of intergroup attitudes, beliefs,

and values was conducted in four European Union (EU) countries: France, Great Britain,

Germany and The Netherlands. Because of the interest in having salient populations of either

immigrant workers or racial/ethnic outgroups for the study, and cost considerations, we limited

our intensive research to samples of dominant groups in only four of the 12 EU countries: France

(N=1,001), Great Britain (N=1,017), Netherlands (N=1,006), and (West) Germany (N=1,051).

The 1986 American National Election Study (ANES) data were used for comparison with

the United States (Kinder, 1986). The American Election Studies are a long-running series of

surveys conducted on representative samples of the American population every two years. They

are a pre- and post-election panel design. A special module of questions regarding race and racial

attitudes were asked in the 1986 election study (Kinder, 1986).

Similar to racial attitudes research conducted in the United States, we pre-selected

country-specific subordinate group(s) to which dominant-group respondents reacted. This

procedure had the advantage of providing two randomly-drawn samples within three of the four

nations so that we could examine the relationships among the constructs, not only across

countries but also within countries for different groups. For some purposes, the data for each

group within each country may be combined to provide larger sample sizes. The selection of the

relevant group(s) was done within each country with the assistance of co-investigators who were

familiar and knowledgeable about the status and situations of these groups within their respective

countries.

Four major groups of analyses have been conducted by members of the research group

(Jackson et al, 1998; Pettigrew et al, 1997). These analyses reflect our interest in the interrelated

areas of psychological processes and behavioral intentions, the structure of racial attitudes,

cognitive distortions and racial attitudes, and threat, stress and racism.

Psychological Processes and Behavioral Intentions. One group of analyses focuses on

differences and similarities of psychological processes and their relationships to endorsement of

government help and positive immigration policies among the different countries. Overall, the

results of these analyses suggest some consistent differences among countries in the levels of

affective, racial, and policy positions toward government action and immigration (Jackson et al,

2001; Jackson, Lemaine, Ben Brika & Kirby, 1994; Leach, 1995). Additionally, differences are

observed in the reactions toward different groups within countries. The overall pattern of results

suggests that policy orientations regarding government help and immigration policies toward

outgroups can be accounted for largely by a combination of modern and traditional outgroup

prejudice (see Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), perceived economic threat from outgroups, and

negative feelings toward outgroup members (Jackson et al, 2001). Additional analyses reveal

modern and *traditional racism*, perceived economic threat from outgroups, and negative affect

toward outgroup members are most strongly related to negative policy positions toward

outgroups. In general, our findings strongly indicate the presence of negative racialized attitudes

among dominant group members in the United States and our selected European countries and, more importantly, an influence of these attitudes on government and immigration policy positions related to outgroup members (Jackson et al, 1993; Jackson et al, 1998; Pettigrew, et al, 1997).

The consistency of these findings across counties and outgroups is remarkable. In fact, the rank ordering of the most important factors are highly similar across all countries and target groups (Jackson, et al, 1994). It is this finding that leads us to consider the role of threat (Blumer, 1958; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996), regardless of its source, as the proximal cause among dominant group members for prejudicial and discriminatory beliefs toward outgroups. Thus, while there may be vast differences in social, historical, economic, and political relations among dominant and subordinate groups across countries, the most immediate cause of negative beliefs, feelings, and behaviors is the perception of threat.

In addition to the findings that suggest similarities in proximal causes of public policy positions toward different target groups among dominant group members across the countries, we have also found instances of strong differential cultural influences. The 1988 study attempted to examine social cognitions (stereotypes, prejudices etc.) and affective reactions regarding persons from another nationality, religion, race, cultural, and social class. Holmes & Inglehart (1994) showed that while the overall level of prejudice in these different countries might be similar, there are clear differences in who will be chosen as a target of prejudice. We found that France and Britain are high in their negative reactions towards persons from another race, while Germans' reactions towards members of another race are comparatively the least negative. However, Germans score highest with regard to religious intolerance. Holmes & Inglehart (1994)

speculated that it may be the historical context of having experienced WWII that made Germans

sensitive to race arguments and that has led to low scores on racial prejudice. France and Britain

are highest on negative reactions. We do not interpret this finding as indicating that Germans are

generally less bigoted than the French or English, but it may mean that due to their cultural

background, they have different specific contents to which they attach their bigotry. Thus, it is

necessary to consider that some cultures focus their outgroup hostility and atrocities towards

persons from another race (e.g. Britain and France) while other nations may focus it on persons

from another nationality or religion (e.g. Turks in Germany) (Holmes & Inglehart, 1994). The

results of these preliminary analyses among four of the major Western European publics

indicate: significant overall resistance to government interventions; a small but significant

proportion in favor of removing immigrant groups; and, a small, but significant, proportion

unequivocally opposed to any punitive action against outgroups. These findings strongly suggest

that it is only by studying different dominant and subordinate groups in the different countries

that we can understand how the content of prejudice and psychological processes interact.

Structure of Prejudice and Racism. The second group of analyses focuses on

understanding the structure of prejudice and racism. These studies have attempted to disentangle

different forms of racism (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995) and to understand how prejudice and

racism might be embedded in a general world view of values and beliefs about the world

(Jackson & Inglehart, 1995). From twenty items traditionally associated with the measurement of

racism, five groupings (or factors) emerged as cohesive scales: a four-item factor focusing on

intimacy with an outgroup; a six-item grouping pertaining to threat and rejection of the outgroup;

a four-item index of traditional values not to be violated by the outgroup; a four-indicator

cultural differences factor assessing the degree of difference between the majority and outgroup; and a two-item grouping measuring negative emotions evoked by the outgroup. These factors tap into various aspects of what have been conceived as subtle and blatant manifestation of racism (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). They have proven to be reliable across each of the target groups in each country with little variation (Brown, Crocker, Jackson, Lightborn & Torres, 1996; Brown, Torres & Jackson, 1996; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). Following in the vein of studying the more elusive and indirect forms of racism, e.g. symbolic (Sears, 1998) and aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998), Pettigrew and his colleagues (Pettigrew, 1989; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995; Pettigrew et al, 1997) developed the two ten item Blatant/Subtle prejudice scale. The Blatant scale has two dimensions, four items measuring intimacy and six threat and rejection items. The Subtle scale contains thee dimensions, four items measuring traditional values, four cultural difference items and two affective prejudice items. As with other work on the structure of racial attitudes, the dimensions of the Subtle/Blatant scale was stable with similar reliability across countries and target groups. In addition, research on the scales suggest that Blatant and Subtle prejudice are not simple polar opposites but instead represent different types of prejudicial reactions of dominant groups toward subordinate target groups.

In their research, Pettigrew & Meertens (1995) have found three major trends: 1) large differences in two nations, France and the Netherlands, indicating much greater French prejudice toward North Africans than Southeast Asians and significantly greater Dutch prejudice against Turks than Surinamers; 2) a notable patten in the Netherlands of lower blatant but higher subtle prejudice toward both groups; and 3) much higher subtle than blatant prejudice across all countries and target groups. Pettigrew and Meertens (1995) suggest that these findings indicate

normative pressures, especially among the Dutch, to control blatant expressions of prejudice but that these same normative pressures do not operate against the expression of more subtle forms of outgroup prejudice. Pettigrew and Meertens (1995) refer to those individuals who score low on both scales as *Equalitarians*, those who score high on both as *Bigots* and those who score low on the blatant and high on the subtle as *Subtle* racists. Those who score high on the Blatant scale but low on the Subtle scale were too few of the respondents to analyze (2%). One analysis of interest indicated that *Bigots* favor sending all immigrants home, regardless of their immigrant status; *Equalitarians* generally prefer to send none of the immigrants home regardless of their status; and, *Subtles* favor sending immigrants home only when their is a seemingly non-prejudicial reason to do so, e.g. they have committed crimes or do not have their documents (Pettigrew et al, 1997). This latter finding is very similar to the aversive racist so aptly noted and described by Dovido and Gaertner (1998).

Normative Analyses. Pluralistic Ignorance, broadly construed, is the shared erroneous belief, either over- or under-estimates, of the extent to which others in a given population hold the same views as the believer. (Fields & Schuman, 1976). Recent writings have emphasized errors of <u>overestimation</u>, but the general concept of *pluralistic ignorance* refers to any such errors. Prior studies on this topic (e.g. Allport, 1958; Banton, 1986; Katz, 199; Fields & Schuman, 1976; O'Gorman, 1986) have all found the tendency for dominant group members who are positive toward subordinate outgroups to overestimate the proportion in the dominant group population who hold negative views, and for those who are negative to overestimate the proportion in the majority population who are negative, even more so than those who are positive.

It is possible that this phenomenon may play a role in contributing to and maintaining institutionalized forms of racism and anti-immigrant sentiments. By institutionalized we refer to the established laws, customs, and practices that systematically reflect and produce racial and ethnic inequities, regardless of the level of individual racism that exists (Jones, 1997). It may also provide an assessment of the extent of support or lack of support for the upward mobility of outgroups.

The pluralistic ignorance variables were formed by crossing self-perceptions of willingness to have an outgroup members as a boss (or outgroup member as a close family member by marriage) with perceptions of the willingness of others, like themselves, in the country to do the same. In examining the descriptive differences among countries in the distribution of the pluralistic ignorance beliefs, two major themes are found. First, the results substantially replicate the major findings of previous work, largely done in the United States and Great Britain (Miller & McFarkand, 1987; Leach, Kirby & Jackson, 1995) showing that people who are positive tend to overestimate the numbers in the population who are negative; and, that those who are negative overestimate even more than the positive individuals the numbers in the population who are negative. And secondly, there is one notable exception in the major trends, Germany (West), where the full pluralistic ignorance effect is not found. In nearly every country and for every group, those individuals who are personally positive towards working with an outgroup as a boss, or marriage to an outgroup member, tend to overestimate the degree to which other citizens of their countries like themselves are negative. The effect is present regardless of the average level of personal negativity expressed within each country. Similarly, in all cases except one, those members who are personally negative toward an outgroup member as a boss or

marriage to an outgroup member, tend to overestimate even more than those who are positive, the extent to which others like themselves are negative. The lack of a full effect in (West) Germany may reflect the effects of high mean levels of personal negativity toward boss and marriage; higher than any country or target group. However, similar to the findings in all other countries and target groups, these (West) Germans who are themselves negative, view others like themselves as being even more negative that they are in fact.

In general, the findings thus far indicate that marriage to outgroup members is viewed much more negatively than is being supervised by outgroups in work settings, and that the magnitude of these differences vary by country and outgroup targets. Overall, the (West) Germans are much more negative toward Turks in their country than any other country by group combination. The French are especially negative toward North Africans in both employment and marriage domains in comparison to South East Asians, and the Dutch tend to be more negative toward Turks, especially in the marriage domain; while the British are slightly more negative toward South Asians in the marriage domain and slightly less negative toward this same group in the employment situation.

These results replicate prior work on pluralistic ignorance in the United States and Great Britain, suggesting that the concept has cross-national validity. The lack of a full effect in (West) Germany may suggest the presence of different socialization and environmental variables, leading to a operation of a divergent set of cognitive processes in that national context, as opposed to other countries (Brislin, 1990). The *cognitive distortions* are related to the negative views held by dominant members toward the policy issues of relevance for immigrant groups. As we have found, even in the absence of personal antipathies toward immigrant groups, many

Europeans, based upon their distortions of the beliefs about the views of "others like

themselves", may not support positive public immigration policies (Jackson et al, 1993). It may

be that more than "simple" racism may be operating to influence the negative positions that many

European citizens hold toward immigration policies.

Threat, Racism, Stress and Health. We have proposed (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995) that

the concept of perceived threat (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) is theoretically related to the concept

of *stress*. One common definition of *stress* relates to events in which environmental demands,

internal demands, or both, tax or exceed the adaptive resources of an individual, social system, or

tissue system. Stress is neither an environmental condition nor an individual's response, but

rather an environment/person transaction. Recent work (Cohen, Kessler, & Gordon, 1995) points

to the important psychological dimensions of the stress response. They suggested in relation to

the psychological dimension of stress that "the perception of threat arises when the demands

imposed upon an individual are perceived to exceed his or her felt ability to cope with these

demands". Perceiving members of other social groups as a threat can be stress-provoking

(Stephan & Stephan, 1985) and negative for one's psychological and mental health.

We propose that: (a) a person's basic beliefs, attitudes and values will feed into the

subjective appraisal process. However, we also argue that: (b) situational/structural factors will

shape the subjective appraisal of social situations. For example, political, social, and economic

changes in the "real" world might lead to high rates of unemployment and inflation, crime and

violence. These are structural factors that clearly cause stress both on a community and on an

individual level, and might prime and enhance negative appraisals of social situations. For

example, Affirmative Action provides a timely illustration of threat. In the US, blacks constitute

only 12-15% or so of the total population, and an even lower proportion of those who are adult,

able bodied, and capable of work. If all blacks were simply given jobs, it is not clear, given the

size of the American population and economy, whether this would pose a significant risk of

preventing other Americans from obtaining gainful employment. Yet, the perceptions of threat to

jobs among whites certainly revolve around opposition to Affirmative Action and stated fears of

either loss of opportunity or blocked opportunities for advancement in careers and jobs (Sidaneus

et al., 1998; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998). Opinion poll results indicate that 60% of whites felt that

Affirmative Action discriminated against whites (Painton, 1991). Additional opinion poll results

indicate that 47% of women thought that whites' losing out because of Affirmative Action in the

workplace was a bigger problem than blacks' facing discrimination (Alpern, 1995). Both of these

results imply a perception that the job that respondents felt they were entitled to went to someone

else because of Affirmative Action. We believe that this points to the importance of perceptual

processes and the psychological nature of threats to hierarchical position (Williams et al, 2000).

It is obvious that individual, cultural, and institutional racism can be, and are, interpreted

as stressors for the targets of discrimination, and can thus negatively affect social, economic,

psychological, and health outcomes (Jackson et al, 1996; Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995). However,

the significance of understanding the effects of racism and intergroup conflict on the dominant

groups' stress level and individual psychological and physical health status has been a neglected

topic. For example, by neglecting the fact that being a bigot can be "dangerous to one's health"

(Jackson & Inglehart, 1995), a wide range of considerations have been excluded from empirical

investigation and, as a result, an important area for initiating changes in social policies has been

overlooked.

We have proposed that stressors, like unemployment and downturns in economic conditions, will influence the perceptions of both dominant and subordinate group members in a given community, country, or other defined geographical area. Among dominant group members, we suggest that stress will directly lower psychological well-being and lead to increased racist sentiments toward subordinate groups. Among subordinate groups we argue that these same negative macro-economic conditions will contribute to the experiences of stress which, in turn, will lower well-being. In addition, we hypothesized that the racism directed toward subordinate groups by dominant groups will also be experienced as stressful and will contribute independently to lowering well-being even further. Thus, community-level stressors enhance individual-level stress among both dominant and subordinate group members. This stress contributes to dominant groups acting in racist ways toward subordinate groups, which adds even more stress to the lives of subordinate group members. We have speculated that there may be several causal mechanisms to account for the hypothesized threat-stress-racism relationships: a) pure economic competition, i.e. removal of potential competitors under stressful conditions; b) cognitive explanation, i.e. lowered cognitive ability to individuate under stress; c) lowers psychological barriers against expressing racism; d) heightens ingroup bias; or e) accentuates negative outgroup feelings.

We hypothesized that: a) community level stressors influence individuals in all dominant and subordinate groups; b) stress contributes directly to increased racism in a hierarchical manner among relatively well and poorly situated dominant and subordinate groups; c) racism is stressful to both dominant and subordinate groups: and, d) the lower the subordinate group, the higher the stress and associated experienced group conflict and group and individual mental

health-related disorders. We tested these relationships among dominant (white) and subordinate (African Americans) in the United States and among dominant groups (Europeans) in Western Europe. We lacked the data to test these predictions among subordinate groups in Western Europe. The data are from the National Panel Survey of Black Americans (1979-80 and 1987-88), the 1984 General Social Science Survey (GSS), and the 1988 Eurobarometer Survey, using the selected countries of France, Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands. Details on the samples and measures are presented in Jackson and Inglehart (1995).

Overall, the results provided strong preliminary evidence for the Reverberation Model of Stress and Racism that we hypothesized. Increased stress, represented by perceived financial strain due to unemployment and poor job prospects, is associated with increased negative antipathy toward outgroup(s). These relationships were found in national samples from the United States among whites and also in combined national samples of Europeans across four major Western countries. In addition, the same relationships were found in each of the four Western European countries. It is also clear that while perceived economic stress directly reduces well-being, racism also has direct effects. Thus, there are costs associated with holding racist beliefs. While lower levels of well-being might lead to increased racism, the pattern of relationships and the direction of the stress effects argue against this interpretation.

Finally, though not directly testable, racism among the dominant groups might be related to the nature of perceived racism, experienced stress, and well-being among subordinate groups. A partial test of this hypothesis among a longitudinal sample of African Americans (in both 1979-80 and in 1987-88) showed that reports of experiences of both racism and stress are directly related to reduced well-being; and that economic stress may be more strongly related to

experience of racism, than experiences of racism are related to perceptions of economic stress.

These results suggest that stressors, such as unemployment and poor economic conditions, are related to the nature of experienced stress and discriminatory responses among both dominant and subordinate groups. In most theoretical models of intergroup competition and conflict, the poor social, economic, and psychological outcomes of those lower in the hierarchy are acknowledged, i.e. the cost of being black (North African, etc). These results support recent theorizing that stress also may increase the propensity of dominant groups to behave in prejudicial and discriminatory ways toward subordinate groups. The observed relationships are modest in comparison to the stress producing potential of natural disasters, but given the millions of people involved worldwide in ethnically and racially stratified, hierarchial communities, the impact can be enormous, socially, psychologically and financially. Racism and discrimination may create a chronic psychological and physical health risk for both perpetrators and victims (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995).

In sum, based upon our cross-national studies, we have proposed that dominant group attitudes and behaviors and subordinate group responses are inextricably linked (Jackson et al, 1998). Yet, theoretical approaches to the study of dominant and subordinate group relationships have lacked clear articulation and conceptualization of these linkages. The possibly self-affirming processes of dominance maintenance on the one hand, and the interrelated cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses of subordinate groups on the other, should be studied in tandem. In fact, this is why we have conceptualized much of our work within a framework that views the perception of threat to the dominant group (e.g. Stephan & Stephan, 1985) as the major underlying characteristic of intergroup conflict models (Jackson & Inglehart, 1995). Based upon

recent writing and analyses we argue that the perception and experiences of threat (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) will add to our understanding of dominant, hegemonic models of intergroup interaction. Comparative studies and analyses done simultaneously on both dominant and subordinate groups in different national contexts, with different social, political, and economic histories, may contribute to understanding those social psychological dimensions of intergroup relations that are nation state and target group-specific, as well as those components that are common across national boundaries and contending ethnic and racial groups (Jackson, in press).

The National Survey of American Life

The most recent of the PRBA national studies, the National Survey of American Life (NSAL), is designed to be a two decade follow-up to the NSBA with Field work scheduled to end in late 2002. Several aspects of the NSAL are different from earlier, national epidemiologic studies, as well as extending prior PRBA studies. First, the survey contains a large, nationally representative sample of African Americans (about 4,000), something neither the ECA nor the NCS were able to do. Moreover, the NSAL contains a sample that also represents Caribbean blacks (about 2,000) and important demographic sub-groups within both the African American and Afro-Caribbean populations (for example 1,500 African American and Afro-Caribbean adolescents 13 to 17 years of age) and smaller samples of adult non-Hispanic whites (about 1,000), Hispanic (about 500) and Asian Americans (about 500). As a result, this project will permit the exploration of similarities and differences in among various sub-groups within the black American population, as well as comparisons with non-Hispanic whites and limited but important comparisons with other major groups of color. For example, these types of analyses

are critical due to the major changes that have occurred in black family structure over the last 20 years (Farley, 1996; Jackson, 2000).

Second, the use of multiple, theoretically driven measures of SES (e.g. Krieger, Williams & Moss, 1997) resulted in better measures of SES being available for data analyses. Even when racial differences are "explained" by statistical adjustment for SES, the nature of SES differences across groups makes the interpretation of such findings difficult.

Third, this study employed successfully the novel geographical screening procedures developed in the NSBA. Once again, these methods assured that every black American household in the continental United States had a known probability of selection (Hess, 1985; Jackson, Tucker & Bowman, 1982).

Fourth, this study addresses the heterogeneity of experience across ethnic groups within the black population. Most prior research on African Americans has lacked adequate sample sizes to systematically address this ethnic variation. For example, the NSAL's incorporation of blacks of Caribbean descent will allow empirical analyses of issues never before addressed.

Fifth, this study not only assesses the presence of physical health and mental disorders, but also examines levels of impairment, improving upon a major limitation of the data gathered in previous national mental health surveys.

Sixth, all respondents were selected from segments selected in proportion to the African American and Afro-Caribbean population, making this the first national sample of peoples of different race and ethnic groups who live in the same contexts and geographical areas as blacks are distributed.

Survey research focusing on racial and ethnic disparities in health and psychopathology,

and within-group differences among black Americans is important because of the precarious

economic and social situations of many Americans of color. In addition, there are differences

across race/ethnic groups over and above considerations of socioeconomic status. Explorations

of these additional differences (e.g. acculturation, values, unequal treatment, health behaviors,

etc.) can underscore just how much race and ethnicity matter in terms of explaining differences

in outcomes at every level of SES (Williams & Jackson, 2000). Moreover, not all of these

disparities are in the direction of showing a disadvantage for ethnic groups of color. These

patterns are not well understood. Despite the impressive advances in knowledge concerning the

assessment of national distributions of health and mental health disparities, the prevalence of

psychological distress, and help-seeking behavior, our knowledge of health and mental health

among African Americans, and other black sub-group populations, remains meager. The NSAL

survey addresses many of these limitations.

Conclusions

The Program for Research on Black Americans (PRBA) is the oldest, currently operating

social science research team devoted to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data based

upon national and regional probability samples of black Americans. The work completed thus far

suggests that findings from analyses of the original 1979-80 NSBA and subsequent datasets

continue to be of major scientific value and relevance to social policy issues. Both the quality

and the precision of the original national cross-section and three-generation samples, as well as

the numerous subsequent studies (See Chart 1) make the results of immense importance to social

scientists and policymakers. The adult cross-section data permitted, for the first time, national

estimates of the status and life situation of black Americans across the entire range of socioeconomic and other demographic groupings in the population.

The breadth of areas and issues addressed allows more definitive scientific scrutiny of hypotheses advanced regarding blacks, but never adequately tested. Issues of coping and adaptation (Bowman, 1984; Neighbors, Jackson, Bowman & Gurin, 1983), family structure (Hatchett & Jackson, 1983; Hunter, 1997; Taylor, 1986), educational experiences (Hatchett & Nacoste, 1985), race attitudes and identity development (Allen & Hatchett, 1986; Jackson et al., 1981; Bowman and Howard, 1985), social support (Chatters, Taylor, & Jackson , 1985a; 1985b), and non-traditional economic networks (Jackson & Gibson, 1985) are only some of the areas that have been addressed in analyses of the NSBA datasets. PRBA research on physical health, mental health, employment, family life, individual and group identification and political behavior provided the first in-depth investigation of these issues in large representative samples of the entire black population (Jackson, 1991). Scientifically, the results of these surveys are having significant influence on current theorizing about blacks as well as the content and direction of future research. The inclusion of many policy-relevant questions provides, for the first time, individual and group opinions and feelings that fully represent the breadth and diversity of black people located in all walks of life across the entire United States.

Complementing the types of analyses possible in the cross-section NSBA data set, the three-generation data provided an opportunity to more fully analyze two important at risk sub-populations--the black elderly and black youth. Analyses of this sample have permitted an assessment of family socialization patterns, economic and social transmission across generations, generational similarity and change, and for the first time in a data set of national scope, the

opportunity to assess parental and family social and economic contributions to the growth and development of children and grandchildren (Jackson & Hatchett, 1986).

Although the National Black Young Adults (NYBA) study (Bowman, Gurin and Howard, 1984), the National Black Election Studies (NBES) (Gurin, Hatchett & Jackson, 1989; Jackson, Gurin & Hatchett, 1984), the Americans Changing Lives Study (ACL), the Detroit Area Studies, the Prevalence of Mental Disorders in Michigan Prisons, the NCAA Study of Social and Group Experiences (Jackson et. al., 2001), and the new National Survey of American Life (NSAL), were not detailed fully in this chapter, their development and execution share the values, assumptions, and procedures as described for the NSBA and other studies. For example, in examining how cultural, racial, and ethnic factors influence the nature and expression of productive activities and their antecedents and consequences over the life-course (Jackson, 2001), we have ongoing collaborations with the Social Environment and Health Program at the Institute for Social Research. This collaboration has provided extensive data on the life course circumstances of black and white adults through the American Changing Lives longitudinal panel study. Large studies of political participation, racism and health, religion, and physical and metal health, and life-course development have emanated from the path-breaking NSBA longitudinal panel project (Jackson et al, 1996).

PRBA research continues to make major contributions to the general investigation of how social, cultural, and other contextual factors relate to the ways in which racial status and racialized treatment affect the behavior, physical and mental health, attitudes, and values of blacks in the United States. This research has been focused particularly on the role of race and

socio-cultural factors in shaping theoretical and empirical developments in the understanding of

human social behavior more generally (Jackson, 1991).

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