Differential Response: A Racial Equity Analysis

Annette Semanchin Jones, PhD, MSW
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Overview

- Context
  - Racial Disparities
  - Differential Response
  - Culturally Responsive Practice
- Recent Research Projects
  - Racial equity analysis
  - Comparative case study
- Implications for Policy and Practice

Racial Disparities and Disproportionality

Recent Research Projects

- Racial equity analysis
- Comparative case study

Implications for Policy and Practice

Racial Disparities and Disproportionality in Child Welfare

- Causes are complex and varied:
  - Social factors related to poverty and neighborhood effects
  - Systematic bias at key decision-making points in child welfare
  - Disparities in services
  - Impact of child welfare and social policies

Minnesota Data: Child Subjects of Reports

Racial Disparities and Disproportionality in Child Welfare

- Causes are complex and varied:
  - Social factors related to poverty and neighborhood effects
  - Systematic bias at key decision-making points in child welfare
  - Disparities in services
  - Impact of child welfare and social policies

Differential Response

- Family Assessment Response
- Alternative Response
- Multiple-Response
4/24/15

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE OF DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

- Shifts in values and philosophies: From forensic investigation to more holistic engaging approach
- Ecological models of child development: Child well-being linked to the family and community systems
- Minnesota: Forerunner and leader

(Coakley, 1983; Putnam, 1995; Brofenbrenner, 1979; Kempe Center QIC-DR, 2015)

PREVIOUS RESEARCH: DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

- Critiques and concerns
  - Lack of studies and evaluations that explored how family assessment impacts families across racial and ethnic groups
  - Lack of understanding about which elements of family assessment response are most effective
  - Studies and research have so far focused on initial pilot phase of implementation

- Gaps:
  - Increased family and worker satisfaction
  - Increased family engagement
  - Ecological models of child development: Child well-being linked to the family and community systems

MINNESOTA: FORERUNNER AND LEADER

(Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995; Brofenbrenner, 1979; Kempe Center QIC-DR, 2015)

PREVIOUS RESEARCH: DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

- Process:
  - Increased family and worker satisfaction
  - Increased family engagement
- Outcomes:
  - Children in family assessment response are as safe or safer than in the traditional track
  - Families in family assessment response were more likely to receive services earlier and services deemed important by the family
- DR as one strategy to keep children safely at home and reduce numbers in foster care


DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Impact on Disparities</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Potential Impact on Disparities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage family in decision-making</td>
<td>From fault-finding to engagement</td>
<td>Reduce racial bias by including the family in making key decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address families' known needs</td>
<td>Assist more low-income families</td>
<td>More likely to receive concrete support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift to prevention</td>
<td>Assist more “low-risk” families</td>
<td>Help families that may otherwise be turned away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify networks of support</td>
<td>Identify missing assets and resources</td>
<td>Build social capital of parents and families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner with community organizations</td>
<td>Families are facing increasingly complex challenges</td>
<td>Engaging and supporting extended families linked to positive outcomes for families of color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(Presented by Jones, A.; based on literature: Hill, 2006; Rivaux, et al., 2008; U.S. GAO, 2007)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & METHODOLOGY

- Minnesota's statewide child welfare data (SSIS)
- Access to data: Minn-LInK at CASCW collaborative project with the University of Minnesota
- Total sample of unduplicated cases:
  - Administrative child welfare data from all 87 counties in Minnesota
  - All accepted reports to child protective services from January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2010 (n=122,095)

ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DATA: SAMPLE

- Racial Equity Outcomes
- Family Assessment Response Implementation

What is the impact of FA on racial equity outcomes?
Which aspects of FA implementation can help account for differences in these outcomes?
DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

Race
- White (n=75,298)
- African American (n=25,201)
- American Indian (n=28,899)
- Asian or Pacific Islander (n=3,458)
- Two or More Races (n=8,179)

Latino/Hispanic Ethnicity (Any Race) | Frequency | Percent
--- | --- | ---
Not identified as Hispanic | 139,935 | 49.9
Identified as Hispanic | 12,690 | 4.2
Total | 152,625 | 100

DATA ANALYSIS
- Analysis by year: Explore trends in racial disparities
- Unique cases: Examine questions of re-reporting
- Logistic regression model to examine the effect of race on decision-points, controlling for:
  - Poverty (food support)
  - Risk (SDM score)
  - Age of child (at time of report)
  - Family structure (at time of report)
  - Mandatory investigation
  - Hispanic ethnicity
  - County participation in the family assessment pilot
  - Urban, suburban, or rural location
  - Percentage of minority population in county

Table 1. Logistic regression analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Odds of being assigned to Family Assessment compared to White children.</th>
<th>(n=8,179)</th>
<th>95% C.I. Lower</th>
<th>95% C.I. Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Assessment</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of children to out-of-home placement</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switching pathway assignment from FA to FI</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial pathway assignment</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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After controlling for other risk factors, does race predict outcomes for the following decision-making points:
1. Initial pathway assignment
2. Switching pathway assignment from FA to FI
3. Removal of children to out-of-home placement
4. Re-reporting of families within 12 months of case closing
2) ODDS OF PATHWAY SWITCH FROM FA TO FI COMPARED TO REFERENCE GROUP

3) EFFECT OF RACE ON REMOVAL TO OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT
- African American, Native American, Multi-racial and Latino children were more likely to be removed from their home in BOTH tracks
- Mixed findings – children of color in TI slightly more likely to be removed compared to FA
- Latino children were more likely to be removed from their home in TI and less likely to be removed in FA

4) EFFECT OF RACE ON RE-REPORTING OF CHILD WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF CASE CLOSING
- Findings on racial disparities on re-reporting were inconsistent across the study timeframe
- For each group, in some of the years there was NO EFFECT of race
- Multi-cultural children tended to be more likely to be re-reported, particularly in the TI pathway

MIXED METHODS STUDY

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

Sample Description: Total of 9 counties
- 3 counties in each category
- Selected based on county level analysis and outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>Racial Diversity of Staff</th>
<th>Percentage of County Minority Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0% 0%</td>
<td>15 to 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0% 0%</td>
<td>7 to 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed or No Effect</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0% 0%</td>
<td>14 to 17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection
- Focus groups with social workers using FA in each selected county
- Semi-structured interviews with supervisor(s) from each county
- Document analysis: review of written protocols, training materials, etc. from the counties and from Minnesota DHS

Data Analysis
- Comparative case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994)
- Modal narrative approach of hypothetical case scenario (Clark, et al., 2007)
I'm hoping we can be part of that? Maybe a little bit, you know. forward to the other generations. But can we culture and then hopefully bringing that people are finding strength within their own a long time to have that be different and after generation after generation. And it takes that have occurred that can impact generation think there also are just cultural traumas times. I'm not saying that's the only reason. I to engage other cultures is not helpful at and how that comes across when we're trying tend to be pretty white middle class people, think I would say across Minnesota that we been we'd be in a different spot by now. … I think it also a good way to look at disparities, because if it had been we'd be in a different spot by now. … I think would say across Minnesota that we tend to be pretty white middle class people, and how that comes across when we're trying to engage other cultures is not helpful at. I'm not saying that's the only reason. I think there also are just cultural traumas that have occurred that can impact generation after generation. And it takes a long time to have that be different and people are finding strength within their own culture and then hopefully bringing that forward to the other generations. But can we be part of that? Maybe a little bit, you know. I'm hoping we can.

**Factors Impacting Implementation**

- Context and Constraints
- FA Structure
- Organizational Capacity
- Values and Beliefs
- Other Factors (Structural barriers, family and child characteristics)

**Racial Equity and Child Safety Outcomes**

**Enduring Supports:**
"I encourage them to have family and friends that are present as well as their child, because this is going to be about problem solving and finding a solution from the get go." (Worker)

**Family-Led Process:**
"We move families forward...by letting them define what is going on...talking openly about what the concerns are, the risk factors...and the next step...the problem solving part...is being driven by the client with the support of the worker to really bring change for that family." (Worker)

**In terms of the family assessment response, I think it is a good way to look at disparities, but it's not the only way, because if it had been we'd be in a different spot by now. … I think I would say across Minnesota that we tend to be pretty white middle class people, and how that comes across when we're trying to engage other cultures is not helpful at. I'm not saying that's the only reason. I think there also are just cultural traumas that have occurred that can impact generation after generation. And it takes a long time to have that be different and people are finding strength within their own culture and then hopefully bringing that forward to the other generations. But can we be part of that? Maybe a little bit, you know. I'm hoping we can.

**Supervisor**

**Findings: Culturally Responsive Practice**
- Enduring Supports
- Family-led process

**Findings: FA and Racial Disparities**

**Implications:**
- Mixed racial equity findings: Importance of applying a racial equity lens
- Reducing discretion at decision making points
- Implementation:
  - Strong supervision – on-going coaching and group consultation
  - Resource rich communities – culturally responsive services; meet financial needs of families
- Collaboration with communities: mitigate risk factors and address potential bias of mandated reporters
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Dissertation Support awarded by Children’s Bureau National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response in Child Protective Services (QIC-DR)
- Minn-Link at CASCW
- County Child Welfare Supervisors and Workers

THANK YOU.
Questions and Discussion.