

Health and discrimination in Arabs, immigrants and veteran Jewish Israelis

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Background

- **Discrimination** can be expressed on an individual, institutional or structural basis
- **Perceived discrimination** is the feeling individuals have from encounters with other individuals and is expressed as the **unequal treatment of individuals**

Background I I

- ❑ Perceived discrimination has been shown to be strongly associated with mental health
- ❑ Less so with physical health
- ❑ Most of the studies have been performed in the USA and few in other populations

The aim of the study

To assess the levels of discrimination and its association with health in the three population groups in Israel:

- Veteran Jews,
- Immigrants from the former Soviet Union
- Arabs living in Israel.

Methods

- A random telephone survey of Israelis age 35-65 in Hebrew, Russian, and Arabic
- Interviews during Jan-Feb 2006
- 65% response rate
 - 404 veteran Jews
 - 200 immigrants from the fSU
 - 400 Arabs

Questionnaire

- ❑ **Discrimination** questionnaire developed and validated by N. Krieger
 - ❑ Frequency you feel unfairly treated due to **ethnicity or SES** in: (Four levels of frequency)
 1. Education,
 2. Finding a job,
 3. At the work place,
 4. When obtaining a place to live,
 5. When receiving healthcare,
 6. When dealing with public institutions
 7. In public places.
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Questionnaire (Cont.)

- **Coping style:** 1. accept being unfairly treated or 2. try to change.
- If unfairly treated would 1. you talk to other people about it or 2. keep it to yourself.

- Physical and mental **health related quality of life:** SF- 12

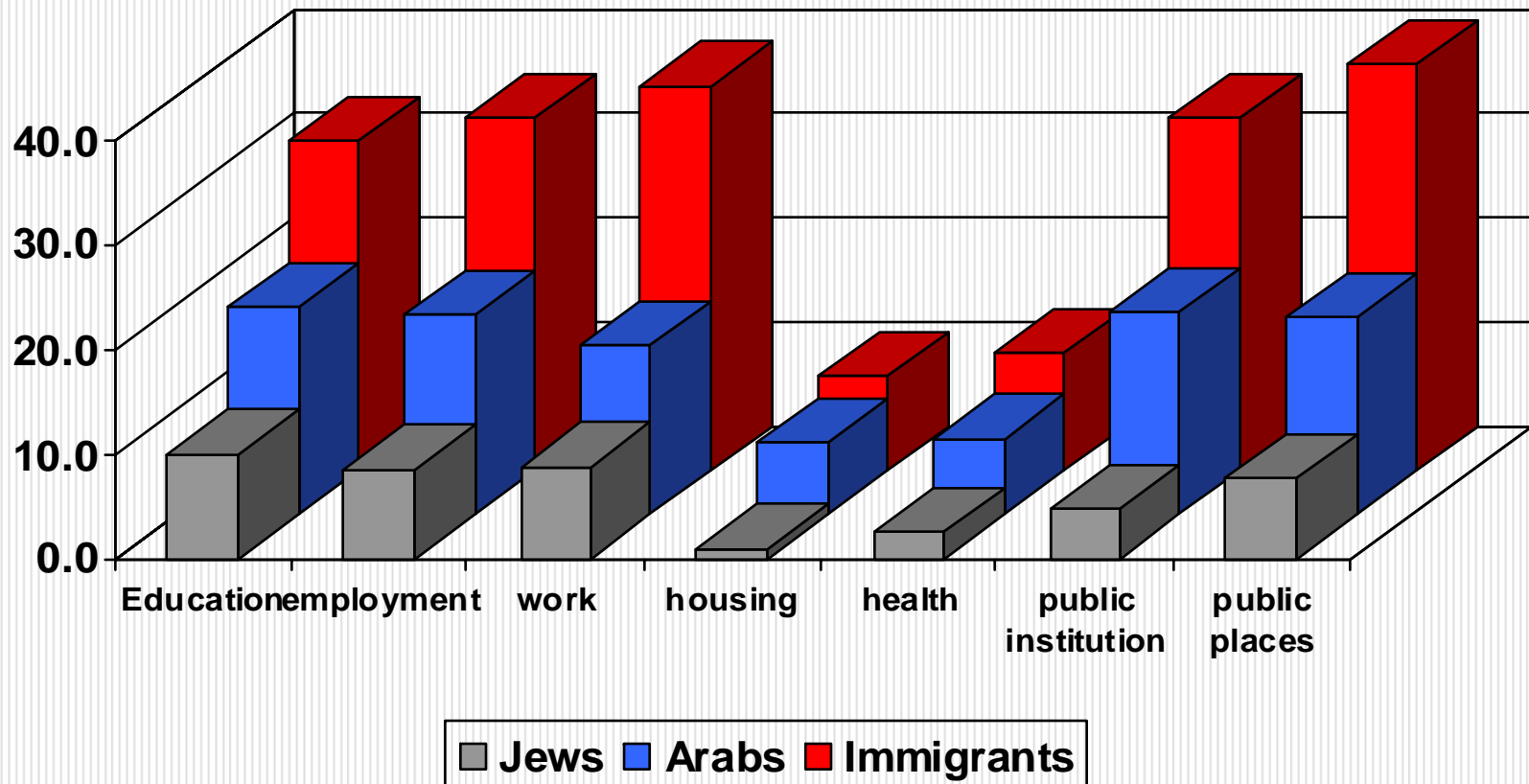
Results

Percent of respondents reporting at least some ethnic discrimination

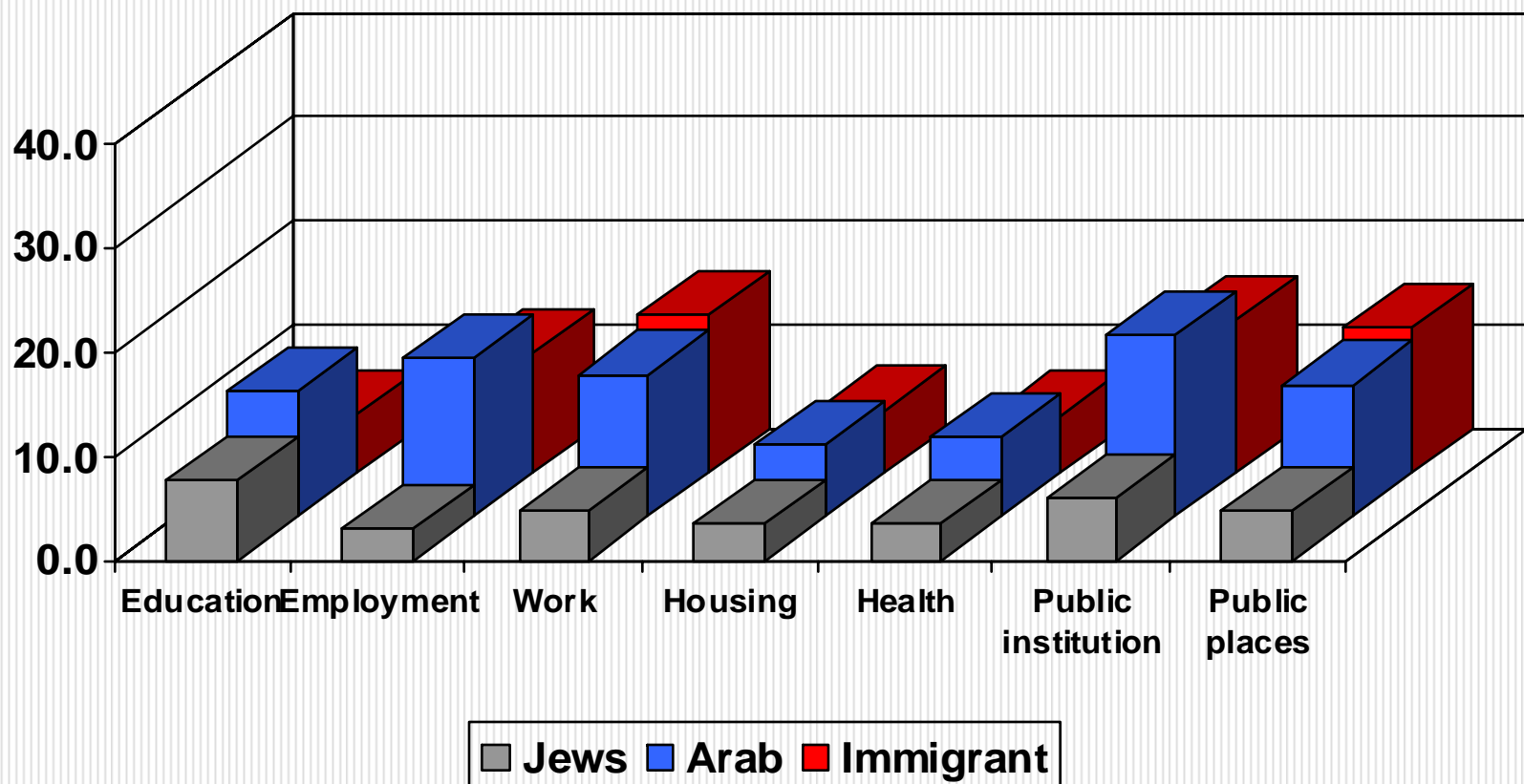
Discrimination areas	Arabs	Immigrants	Veteran Jews
The education system*	20.0	31.6	10.2
Finding employment*	19.2	33.8	8.7
At the work place*	16.3	36.9	8.9
Obtaining housing*	7.1	9.1	1.0
The health care system*	7.3	11.2	2.7
At public institutions*	19.5	33.7	5.0
Public place*	19.0	39.0	7.9
Total*	40.5	71.5	21.0

* P<0.0001

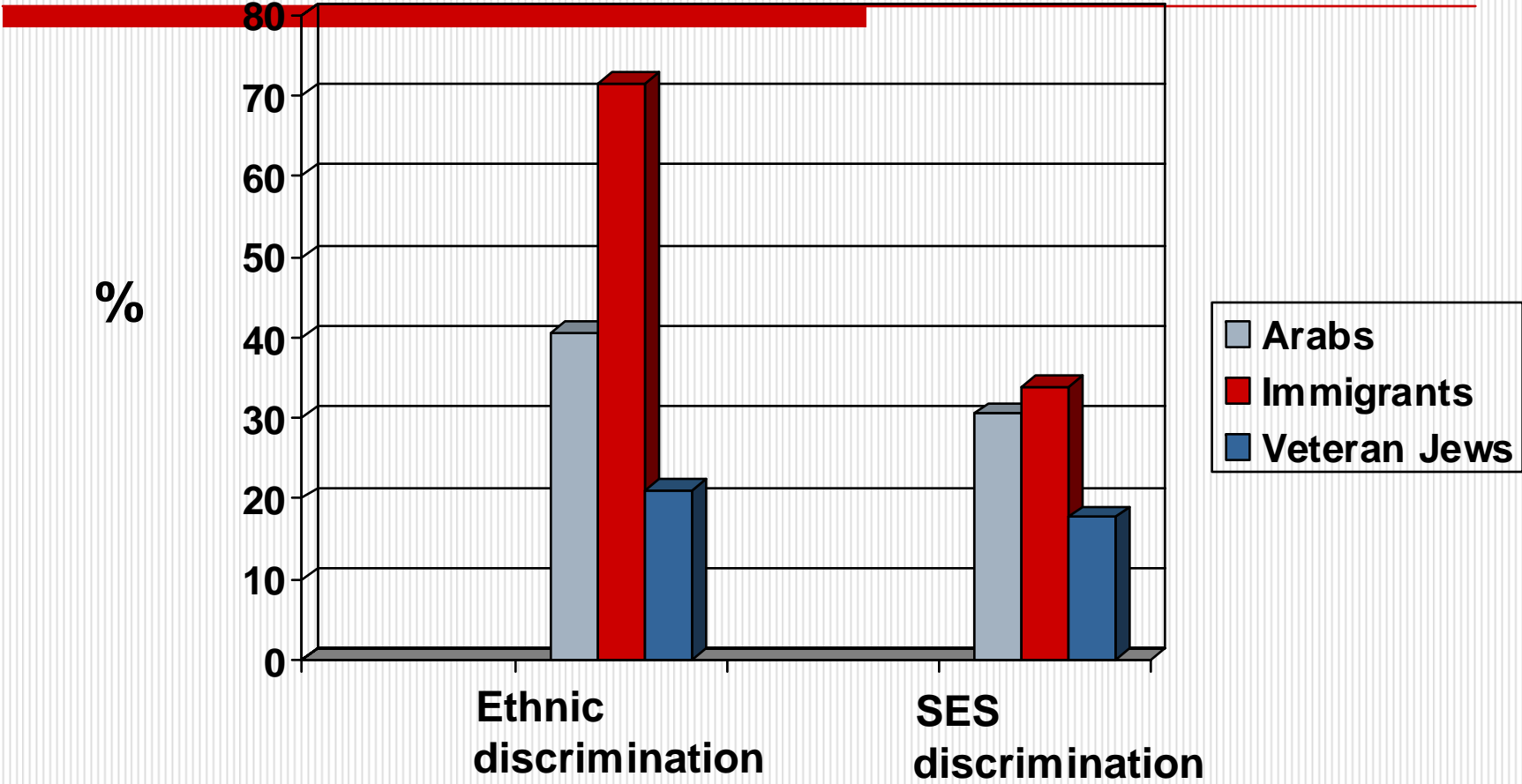
Perceived Ethnic discrimination by area and population group



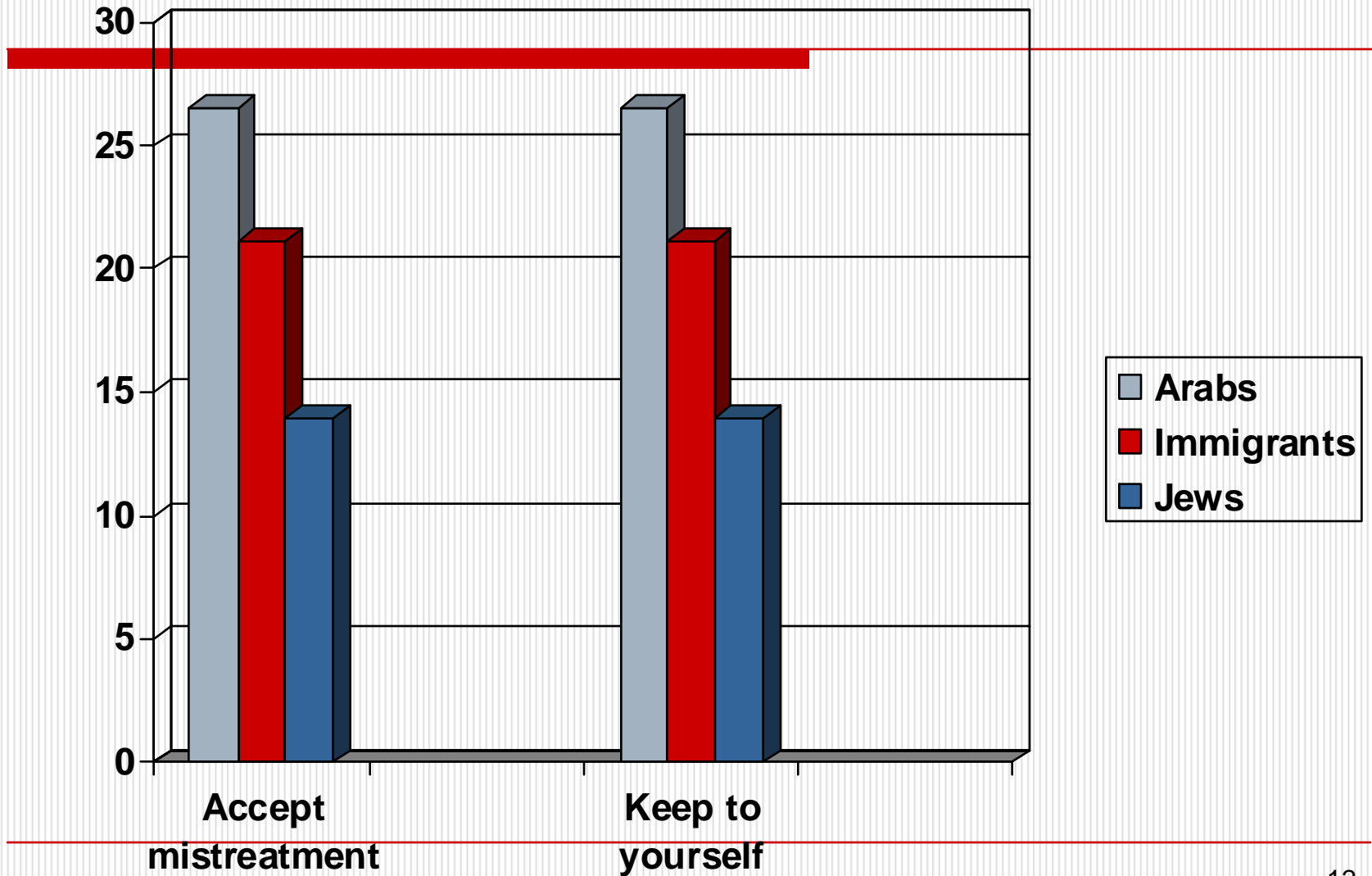
Perceived SES discrimination by area and population group



Summary of total perceived discrimination in the 7 areas



Prevalence of coping styles



Predictors of **physical health** logistic regression model

Independent variables	N=952		
	OR	CI	p
Ethnic discrimination	0.71	0.52-0.97	0.029
Age	0.97	0.96-0.99	0.003
Sex	0.55	0.41-0.75	<0.0001
Employment status	1.70	1.22-2.36	0.002
Education	1.51	1.24-1.85	<0.0001
SSES	1.18	1.10-1.27	<0.0001
Immigrants vs Jews	1.36	0.95-1.96	0.10
Arabs vs Jews	0.88	0.55-1.40	0.59

Predictors of **Mental health** in a logistic regression model

Independent variables	N=952		
	OR	CI	p
Ethnic discrimination	0.67	0.50-0.90	0.009
Age	1.01	0.99-1.03	0.24
Sex	0.67	0.50-0.90	0.007
Employment status	1.37	0.98-1.92	0.07
Education	1.14	0.94-1.38	0.18
SSES	1.35	1.25-1.46	<0.0001
Immigrants vs Jews	1.42	1.00-2.01	0.048
Arabs vs Jews	1.14	0.72-1.80	0.58

Summary of results

- ❑ Immigrants report high rates of perceived ethnic discrimination compared with Arabs and Jews
- ❑ Discrimination in education, the work place and public places and institutions seem to be the problematic areas
- ❑ Arabs seem to accept and keep to themselves perceived discrimination more frequently than others (this is not associated with health)

Summary of results

- ❑ Mental health is worse when higher rates of discrimination are reported, in all ethnic groups.
- ❑ Physical health is worse with higher rates of discrimination.
- ❑ However, among Arabs ethnic discrimination is not associated with physical health.

Conclusions

- ❑ Discrimination is a prevalent problem in Israel and needs to be attended to both in Arabs and immigrants.
- ❑ Discrimination may contribute to the differences in levels of health between the three population groups, especially among immigrants.