

# Associations Between Lifetime Experiences of Discrimination and Suicide Attempts Among Adult Hispanic Males: Findings from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC)

Jessica R. Marden, Amaya G. Perez-Brumer, and Stephen E. Gilman

Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Harvard School of Public Health

## Presenter Disclosures

**Jessica R. Marden**

- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

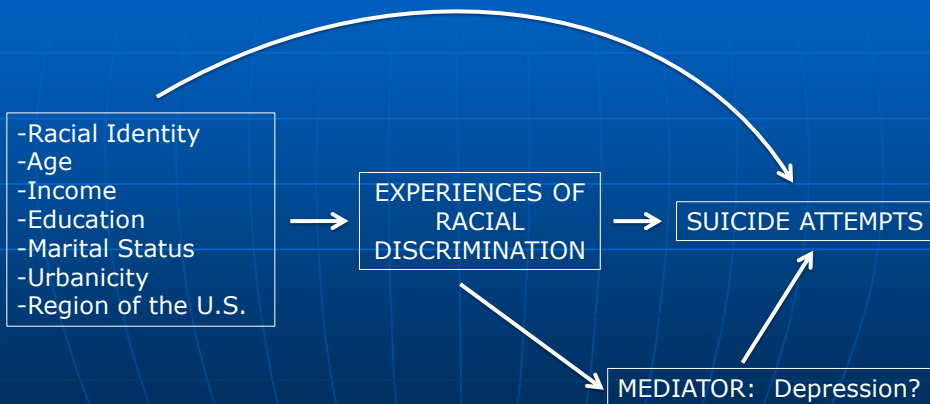
**No Relationships to Disclose**

## Introduction

- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among Hispanic males aged 15 to 34
- Experiences of race-based discrimination are associated with depression and suicidal ideation
- Research Question:  
Do experiences of racial discrimination increase the risk of attempting suicide among Hispanic males?

3

## Hypothesized Causal Structure



4

## Methods

**Data Source:** National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions [NESARC] Wave 2 (2004-2005)

**Sample Size:** 2,618 Hispanic males

**Key Measures:**

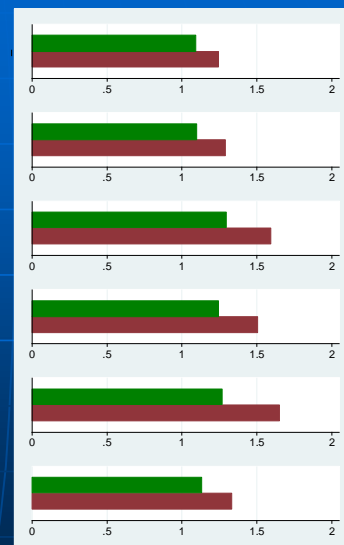
- Lifetime suicide attempts (self-reported)
- Lifetime experiences of racial discrimination (self-reported)
- Lifetime depression (AUDADIS)

**Statistical Analysis:** Logistic regression with and without depression in the model

5

## Domains of Discrimination

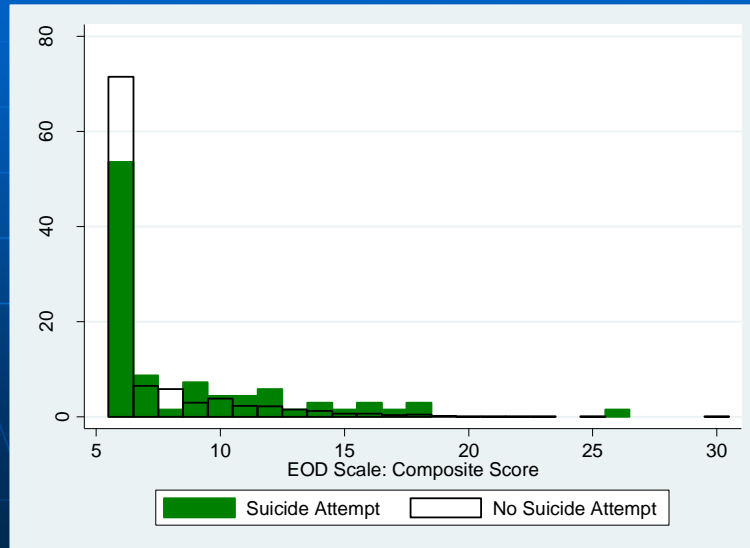
1. Ability to obtain health care
2. Treatment from health care providers
3. In public: streets, stores, restaurants
4. Other: jobs, school, courts, police, housing
5. Being called a racist name
6. Made fun of, picked on, pushed/shoved, hit or threatened with harm



6

Legend: No Suicide Attempt (Green), Suicide Attempt (Red)

## Experiences of Racial Discrimination in the NESARC



7

## Results: Logistic Regression

	Model 1	
	OR	CI 95%
<b>Experiences of Racial Discrimination Scale</b>		
<b>1-unit</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>1.12-1.17</b>
<b>1 SD-unit</b>	<b>2.78</b>	

Controlling for the following covariates: age, income, education, marital status, region of the U.S., urbanicity, and racial identity.

8

## Results: Logistic Regression

	Model 1		Model 2*	
	OR	CI 95%	OR	CI 95%
<b>Experiences of Racial Discrimination Scale</b>				
<b>1-unit</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>1.12-1.17</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>1.10-1.15</b>
<b>1 SD-unit</b>	<b>2.78</b>		<b>2.80</b>	

**\*Additionally controlling for DEPRESSION**

Controlling for the following covariates: age, income, education, marital status, region of the U.S., urbanicity, and racial identity.

9

## Limitations

**Cross-sectional data:** These data do not establish temporality between racial discrimination, depression and suicide attempts. Each measure is a lifetime self-report. Therefore, there is the potential for reverse causation – though unlikely.

**Recall bias:** We used lifetime measures for racial discrimination, depression, and suicide attempts

**Experiences of discrimination scale:** Study cannot address the potentially important distinction between perceptions and/or experiences of race-based discrimination and attempted suicide

10

## What might explain these results?

- Direct pathways from experiences of racial discrimination to attempting suicide NOT mediated by depression
  - Ex: Acculturative Stress
- Depression may precede experiences of discrimination
  - Cannot tease out – cross-sectional

11

## Implications of this Research

A better understanding of how experiences of race-based discrimination potentially influence individual suicidal behavior may help clinicians identify symptoms that are predictive of suicide attempts among adult Hispanic males, especially if the mechanisms linking discrimination and suicide don't include depression.

12

Thank you!