


Considerations for Employing Intersectionality in HIV Prevention Research

Jasmine Abrams, PhD
Yale School of Public Health
Thrive Institute for Professional Development

The background of the slide features a photograph of three women from behind, looking towards the right. The woman in the center has long, dark, thick braids. She is wearing a blue long-sleeved top with white trim at the cuffs and a white textured bag with large buttons. To her left, another woman has shorter, curly braids and is wearing a white textured top. To her right, a third woman has dark, curly hair and is wearing a dark red top. The lighting is soft and diffused, creating a warm, ethereal atmosphere.

“If you build it, they will come.”



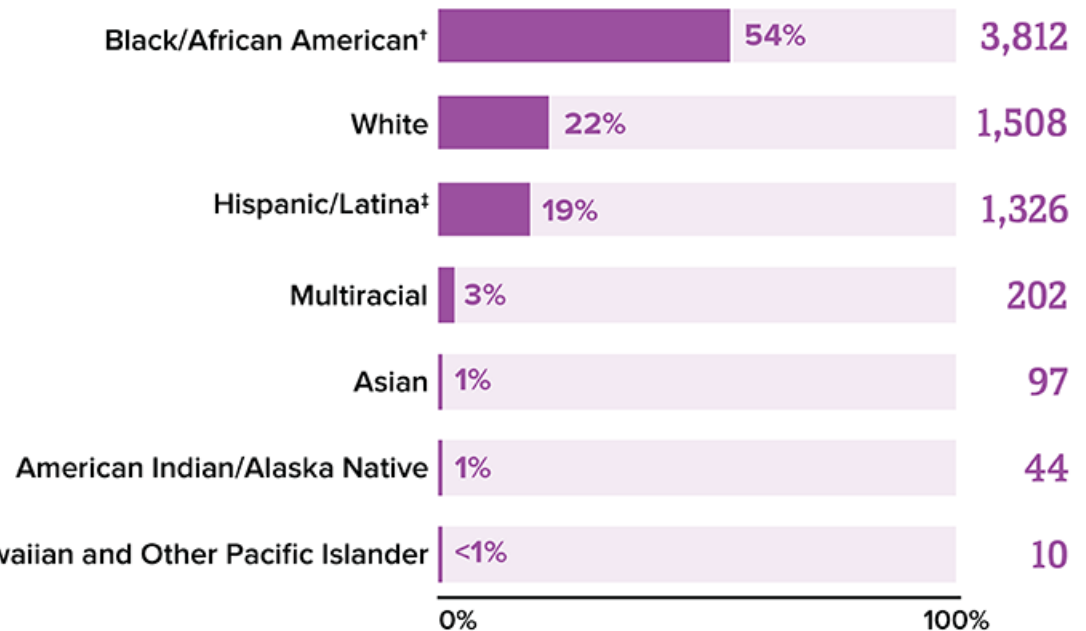
Black Women's Health

Black/African American women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV.



New HIV Diagnoses Among Women by Race/Ethnicity in the US and Dependent Areas, 2019*

Black/African American women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV.



* Based on sex assigned at birth and includes transgender people. For more information about transgender people, visit CDC's HIV and Transgender People web content.

† Black refers to people having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. African American is a term often used for people of African descent with ancestry in North America.

‡ Hispanic/Latina women can be of any race.

HIV disproportionately impacts women of color. In 2019,
**HIV mortality among Black women was 3x higher than
white women, and 4x higher than Hispanic women.**

Black women

2,083

deaths among women
diagnosed with HIV

Hispanic women

555

deaths among women
diagnosed with HIV

White women

704

deaths among women
diagnosed with HIV





“If you build it, they will come.”

I PrEP because: I never want to be unsure.



NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

NATIONAL
Women and Girls
HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY
March 10

Prevention and Testing at Every Age.
Care and Treatment at Every Stage.



Sister to Sister
Take Control of Your Health

NEW E-LEARNING COURSE

A New Training of Facilitators to Support HIV Prevention Among Women of Color



HealthHIV
E-Learning Center
for HIV Prevention
Workforce Excellence

S.org

MILEEND FILMS

safe city
in the



Intersectionality



- Intersectionality is an analytic sensibility, a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power.
- Intersectionality theory can guide the implementation of research methods that capture the lived and multifaceted experience of individuals at the crossroads of oppressed identities and social positions/locations
- Intersectionality can help us identify and challenge harmful and oppressive power structures, while deepening analyses of systemic and structural issues in health and the inequities they create



Flattening of Intersectionality



- Overemphasis on research that seeks to understand the experiences of marginalized individuals rather than the social inequities that shape their experiences

Rosenthal, 2016



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Social Science & Medicine

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/socscimed



Review article

Considerations for employing intersectionality in qualitative health research

Jasmine A. Abrams^{a,b,*}, Ariella Tabaac^c, Sarah Jung^d, Nicole M. Else-Quest^e



^a Department of Community Health Sciences, Boston University School of Public Health, Boston, MA, USA

^b Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS, Yale University School of Public Health, New Haven, CT, USA

^c Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA

^d Department of Psychology, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD, USA

^e Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, USA


ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Intersectionality research methods
Qualitative research methods
Qualitative inquiry
Health disparities
Health equity

ABSTRACT

Intersectionality theory has recently emerged in the health sciences as a critical theoretical and methodical approach. Though some scholars have outlined explicit guidelines for applying intersectionality in research using quantitative methods, others have cited epistemological concerns and additive thinking to advocate for the analysis of intersectionality with qualitative methods. Thus, there remains a need for additional guidance and support for utilizing and applying intersectionality theory throughout the qualitative research process. With the goal of demystifying the process of utilizing intersectionality as a methodological approach in qualitative research in the health sciences, this paper provides researchers with recommendations, specific examples, and important considerations for incorporating intersectional approaches into study conceptualization, participant recruitment, data collection, and data analysis. Additionally, this paper reviews challenges that researchers may experience in conducting research using intersectional approaches and offers suggestions for overcoming challenges. This paper offers timely and relevant information that can be used to strengthen the theoretical and methodological rigor of qualitative health research, especially studies that seek to advance health equity.



1. Avoid Using
White Women as
the Default or
Reference Group





2. Avoid Treating Black Women as a Monolith in Research



3. Avoid Funding Teams of All White Investigators to Study Black Women

This is relevant for all dominant and marginalized groups

1. Avoid Using Dominant Groups as Defaults or Reference Groups
2. Avoid Treating Marginalized Groups as Monoliths in Research
3. Avoid Funding Teams of Dominant Individuals to Study Marginalized Groups

Considerations for Intersectionality in HIV Research



Avoid Using Dominant Groups as Defaults or Reference Groups

Avoids Homogenization
Challenges Power Structures
Unveils Nuanced Health Inequities



Avoid Treating Marginalized Groups as Monoliths in Research

Reflects Social Realities
Minimizes Risk of Stereotyping
Acknowledges Privilege and Bias
Enhances Cultural Sensitivity

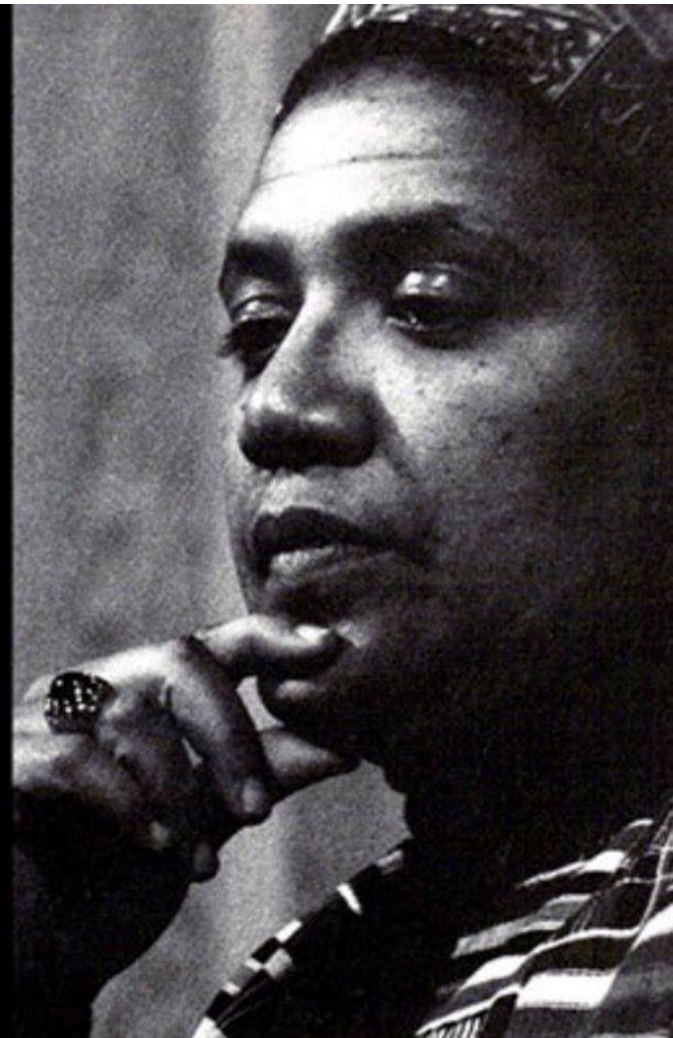


Avoid Funding Teams of Dominant Individuals to Study Marginalized Groups

Avoids Tokenism
Addresses Power Imbalances
Authentic Engagement
Promotes Ethical and Equitable Research

**There is no such thing
as single-issue struggle
because we do not live
single-issue lives.**

—Audre Lorde



“Intersectionality has been the banner under which many demands for inclusion have been made, but a term can do no more than those who use it have the power to demand.”

Kimberlé Crenshaw

Acknowledgments

- Sponsors
- Study Participants
- Community Partners
- Faye Belgrave
- Morgan Maxwell
- Trace Kershaw
- Jessica Jordan
- Jean Baptiste
- Joanne Gaillard
- Undergraduate Research Assistants

