Measuring Racial Equity: Challenges, Opportunities, and Applications of Culturally Responsive Assessment

LaKeesha N. Woods, Ph.D. & Julia Lee, Ph.D.

September 20, 2014
The Need

- People of color still are affected by structural disadvantages
- Unique and new challenges with the changing demographics of the U.S.
- Racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in involvement in numerous systems and processes in the U.S.
The Goal

Racial Equity
- Racial identity does not predict individuals’ outcomes
- Elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce or do not eliminate differential outcomes by race

Social Justice
- Fair redistribution of resources, opportunities, & responsibilities
- Challenges oppression & injustice
  - Empowers all people
- Builds capacity for collaborative action

Center for Assessment and Policy Development (2009); School of Social Welfare, University of California (2013)
How can assessments be responsive to issues related to racial equity?
Theory of Change for Juvenile Justice

- Multilevel: From individual to environment
- Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes
- Use of racial equity as a variable and contextual influence
- Systematic, collaborative process to use evaluation findings for learning and continuous improvement
Evaluation & Assessment Measures

- Positive development
- Cultural risk and protective factors
- Empowerment and advocacy
- History and experiences with youth- and family-serving systems
- Recidivism

- Structural inequities
- Policy reform
- Integrated systems
- Informal/natural supports

- Coordinated formal support services
- Evidence-based and responsive practices
- Culturally competent policies, practices, and procedures
- Youth and family engagement
Key Measures & Data Sources

- Assessments of assets and supports (e.g., Developmental Assets, empowerment, social support, academic performance)
- Risk assessments validated for youth of color (e.g., Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory)
- Cross-sector collaboration and integration
- Cross-cultural competency

Community Science; Search Institute Survey Services (2011); Vincent, Guy, & Grisso (2012)
Key Measures & Data Sources

- Contact and referral data from law enforcement, juvenile justice, schools, and community-based services
- Policies, practices, and procedures
- Demand and will for change

Young, Yancey, Betsinger, & Farrell (2011)
Toward Racial Equity in Juvenile Justice…

- Ensure that underlying factors that perpetuate disparities are addressed in evaluation of juvenile justice efforts
- Help stakeholders bring key issues to the forefront
- Develop strategies to disseminate and apply findings that are representative of all stakeholders to advance the field
Meaning of Immigrant Integration

- English language acquisition
- Cultural and social exchange and support
- Ability to navigate systems
- Civic participation
- Sense of feeling welcomed
- Sense of community
- Sense of safety and security
- Access to opportunities & resources
- Mutual respect and equal treatment
Types of Strategies

- Support collaboratives made up of receiving community members and immigrants
- Establish welcoming or resource centers
- Facilitate improved understanding between immigrants and leaders of key institutions
- Document and share immigrant stories
- Highlight immigrant contributions to community
- Cultural competency training for service providers
- Know Your Rights training for immigrants
Types of Outcomes

- Increased positive interactions between immigrants and receiving community members
- Increased understanding of immigrant histories and experiences
- Increased positive messaging about immigrants
- Increased knowledge among immigrants about U.S. institutions and systems
- Changes in organizational programming to be more inclusive of and responsive to immigrants
- Increased civic engagement (e.g., parent involved in schools)
- Increased access to health services and other resources
Community is just and equitable for all

Receiving community members are more welcoming and accepting

Receiving communities, organizations, institutions, and systems are more inclusive of immigrants

Immigrants and refugees fully participate and thrive in community life in the five dimensions:
- Political/civic
- Social
- Economic
- Spatial
- Psychological

Joint actions between receiving community and immigrant communities

Changes in policies, practices, and formal and informal systems

Community is just and equitable for all

Context / External Factors
Evaluation-generated Insights

- Be explicit about the levels of change
- Be clear about the value of “means” vs. “end”
- Move beyond individual focus to organizations and systems
- Focus equally on receiving community
- Further understanding and examination of the indicators and measures of organizational changes, systems changes, reduced disparities, and social justice and equity
- Close attention to context and history
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Outputs of Strategies (# or % change)</th>
<th>Indicators&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Measures&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Program to recognize immigrant volunteer or community contributor ✓       | # of programs that recognize immigrant volunteer or community contributor ✓                       | Increased level of civic participation among immigrants (e.g., voting, volunteerism, public forum participation; PTA; community groups; political activism) | • Civic Health Index  
• Ethnic Diversity Survey  
• MIPEX (Political Participation) |
| Establishment of community advisory committees, task forces, and other governing bodies that intentionally reach out to and include immigrants ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ | # community forums held; # of organizations and people involved in public debates or awareness-raising campaigns; # of immigrants voting, or participating in public forums ✓ |                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Immigrant parent engagement initiatives ✓ ✓                                | # of opportunities for immigrant parent engagement ✓                                            |                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Citizenship and other mentoring programs for immigrants                   | # of citizenship and other mentoring programs for immigrants ✓  
# of naturalized citizens ✓                                               |                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Voter registration and mobilization initiatives ✓ ✓ ✓                       | # of new citizens registered to vote ✓                                                          |                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| Diverse leaders in public sector, including employment/public service opportunities for immigrants ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ | # of immigrants nominated to organizations and community work groups; # of immigrant elected or appointed to positions ✓ |                                                                                     |                                                                                   |
Continued Considerations…

- To address racial inequity, what types of approaches should be considered?
- What measures can be used to assess racial equity?
- What challenges exist and how can these be addressed to advance equity and social justice?
Thank You

LaKeesha Woods lnwoods@Verizon.net
Julia Lee jlee@communityscience.com