Perceptions of stigma among minority groups in South Africa

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Introduction

- Limited literature exists on relations between different minority groups (White, Schmitt, & Langer 2006). 
- Understanding inter-minority intergroup attitudes and discrimination is increasingly important as the demographics of cities, neighborhoods, and schools around the world become composed primarily of different minority groups (Hindriks, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2014).
- Minority group members show increased awareness of discrimination directed toward the minority ingroup (Pew Research Center, 2013).
- It is unclear whether this increased sensitivity extends to discrimination perpetrated against a minority outgroup (Sue, 2010).
- This poster explores minority perceptions of discrimination aimed at the ingroup and at a minority outgroup.

Method: Sampling Procedure & Participants

- Data came from the “Sibhekelela izingane zehla” (SIZE) project in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa.
- Sample all Black African (Zulu) adults living in high poverty communities with high rates of HIV.
- Thirty households selected from neighborhood clusters in 24 communities.
- Data collected by trained interviewers in face-to-face interviews.

Method: Measures

- Minority group of Extremely Poor:
  - Respondents in the bottom quintile of wealth, calculated based on an assets index.
- Minority group of HIV positive:
  - Respondents indicated HIV status in the survey.
- Minority group of Poor+HIV:
  - Respondents who were members of both minority groups, i.e., those who were HIV positive and fell within the bottom quintile of wealth.

Stigma against the Poor:

- Seven items asking which group in society (the extremely poor, the HIV positive, etc) was most likely to be the victim of different kinds of discrimination were all dummy coded with a reference group vs. the extremely poor as the victim of discrimination. These seven items were then added into an index of perceived counts of discrimination (referred to here as stigma) against the extremely poor.

Stigma against the HIV positive:

- Seven items asking which group in society was most likely to be the victim of different kinds of discrimination were dummy coded with a reference group vs. the HIV positive as the victim. These seven items were then added into an index of perceived counts of stigma against the HIV positive.

Method: Analytic Plan

- Poisson regression examined marginalized group members’ perceptions of frequency of discrimination against the ingroup and a marginalized outgroup.
- Due to the nested nature of the sampling design we used robust standard errors.
- There was no evidence for clustering at the community level, ICC = .01.

Methods: Results

Results: Correlations and Descriptives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty Stigma</th>
<th>HIV Stigma</th>
<th>Poorest</th>
<th>HIV+</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Stigma</td>
<td>0.05 **</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.13 **</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV Stigma</td>
<td>0.00 **</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorest</td>
<td>0.05 **</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV+</td>
<td>0.02 **</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.00 **</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.07 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (% in Study)</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>43.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>44.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results: Minority Perceptions of Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stigma Against the Poor</th>
<th>Stigma Against the HIV+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Std. Err)</td>
<td>(Std. Err)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Poor</td>
<td>1.434 (0.254) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV+</td>
<td>0.959 (0.211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.996 (0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.775 (0.252)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stigma against the Poor:

- The IRR for the predictor variable of being extremely poor is 1.434, p<.05, indicating that on average those who are extremely poor are expected to have a rate of perceived stigma against the poor 1.434 times greater than those who are not extremely poor, holding all other variables constant. HIV status, age, and gender were not significant predictors of perceived stigma against the poor.

Stigma against the HIV Positive:

- The IRR for the predictor variable of being HIV positive is 1.530, p<.01, indicating that those who are HIV positive are on average expected to have a rate of perceived stigma against the HIV positive 1.530 times greater than those who are not HIV positive, holding all other variables constant. Age was also a significant predictor, IRR=985, p<.01, indicating that for every one year increase in age, the rate ratio of perceived stigma decreases by a factor of 985, holding all other variables constant. Membership in the minority group of the extremely poor and gender were not significant predictors.

NB:

- The predictor variable of Poor+HIV (membership in both minority groups) was not significant, and so was dropped from the final analysis.

Discussion:

Main Findings

- Minority Status and Perceptions of Discrimination:
  - Minority group membership was associated with higher perceptions of discrimination towards the minority ingroup.
  - There was no association between minority group membership and perceptions of discrimination toward a minority outgroup.
  - Double minority status (membership in both marginalized groups) was not a significant predictor of perception of discrimination against either ingroup.
  - Age:
    - There was no effect of age on perceptions of discrimination against the poor.
    - Age displayed a weak negative association with perceived discrimination against the HIV positive, such that as respondent age increased, perception of discrimination decreased, adjusting for all other variables.
  - Gender:
    - Gender was not associated with perceptions of discrimination.

Conclusion

- Findings support the hypothesis that members of marginalized groups display heightened awareness of prejudice directed at the ingroup.
- We failed to find evidence that this increased sensitivity toward discrimination extends to a marginalized minority outgroup.
- Group identities of extremely poor and HIV positive may have little meaning in community context in which HIV and poverty are both prevalent.
- Both minority statuses are “invisible,” which may affect how discrimination against these groups is enacted and perceived.
- More research is needed to further explore the phenomenon of minority perceptions of a minority outgroup.

References: