

How little we know: A Literature review of research on the effects of exposure to race related trauma via multiple media platforms on the mental, physical and developmental health of adolescents of color.

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Introduction:

Viral videos of police killings and racially motivated killings of young black men and women are some of the most traumatic events for young adolescents of color (3). In a New York Times article published by writer Elizabeth Alexander, many are referring to those who grew up in the last 25 years as the “Trayvon Generation (2).” A generation, “that has always known these stories..watching in real time,up close and personal, stories that helped instruct young African-Americans about their embodiment and their vulnerability (2).” Given this information, it is no surprise that numerous studies have demonstrated a link between police killings and distressing race related events at members of one’s own racial or ethnic group with poor health outcomes (5). In an article by Downs et al, she discusses how escaping the imagery can be nearly impossible, especially as online users post commentary and news updates. For some, it can merely be a nuisance. But research suggests that for people of color, frequent exposure to the shootings of black people can have long-term mental health effects (1). Given the increasing frequency of these events and increased exposure to adolescents, this poses many questions about the effects of physical, mental and behavioral health of adolescents and what can be done to buffer the negative impacts of this exposure.

Purpose:

The goal of this study is to identify published research that has been done on the mental, physical and developmental health of adolescents of color as it relates to increased exposure to traumatic racial events through various media platforms.

Hypothesis:

Aim 1: To Identify studies that examine the correlation between the health of adolescents of color as it relates to viewing traumatic racial videos in the media.

Hypothesis 1: studies that have been done will show a positive correlation between increased media exposure and mental health outcomes such as anxiety, PTSD and Depression.

Aim 2: To identify the gaps in current published research on the effects of exposure to traumatic racial events in the media on adolescents of color.

Hypothesis 2: Gaps in published research exists on the mental health effects of racial trauma through media platforms on adolescents of color as well on the study of

protective factors and how adolescents of color understand, interpret and make sense of these events as it relates to their sense of self and their relationship with society.

Methods:

1. Using research engines such as Pubmed, I will identify research done since 2012 (death of Trayvon Martin) that focuses on the mental, physical and behavioral health of Black/African American and Latinx adolescents between the ages of 11yrs-19yrs secondary to viewing race related trauma on multiple media platforms.

2. Analysis of research will look at:

a. Common themes and debates in published research.

b. Gaps in areas of research that must still be done

c. Further suggestions and recommendations on future areas of study and potential solutions to preventing the negative health impacts of viewing race related trauma.

Works Cited

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2. Alexander, Elizabeth. "The Trayvon Generation." *The New Yorker*, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/06/22/the-trayvon-generation.

3. Downs, Kenya. "When Black Death Goes Viral, It Can Trigger PTSD-like Trauma." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 22 July 2016, www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/black-pain-gone-viral-racism-graphic-videos-can-create-ptsd-like-trauma.

4. Tynes, Brendesha M., et al. "Race-Related Traumatic Events Online and Mental Health Among Adolescents of Color." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 65, no. 3, 2019, pp. 371–377., doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.03.006.