

Clinical and Policy Implications of School-Aged Bullying: A National Study (2015)

Using a national data file of 9,927 school-aged children, we investigated the clinical and policy implications of bullying. Findings documented racial differences with American Indians or Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders experiencing the most intense level of being bullied. This effect was observed for regular bullying and cyber bullying. Despite the fact that American Indians or Alaska Natives experienced the highest intensity of bullying, their emotional state or well-being was higher than any other racial group. Thus, this group of children displayed a high level of resilience. A hierarchical regression analysis was used to explore the role of selected variables in school-aged children's emotional state. Feeling well-off, feelings about body, satisfied with family relationships, and being bullied explained 31% of the change in emotional state. Thus, being bullied has clinical implications. We explored the clinical and policy implications of bullying.

A Comparison of Obesity across Geographic Areas and Selected Socio-Economic Indicators (2014)

We investigated obesity prevalence in Mississippi across selected geographic and socio-economic factors. Findings indicated that rural counties were more obese. Also, lacking adequate social-emotional support is a strong correlate of obesity at the county level. Finally, factors such as an area's racial composition, educational level, income level, access to healthy foods, and mental health status were found to be important in understanding obesity and food choices at the county level.

Incorporating Health-related Policies within Urban Churches: A Strategy for Reducing Health Disparities (2014)

Beliefs are to religious denominations as policies are to corporate organizations. Thus, if beliefs do not target healthy lifestyles, programs to encourage healthy lifestyles cannot be easily maintained or institutionalized. We reviewed the health profile of 26,000 African Americans who are members of a church that has promoted healthy living for over a century. Cases of hypertension, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, arthritis, and several cancers were lower for this group of African Americans than both African Americans and Caucasians nationally.

Transportation-related Barriers to Care among African American Women Living with HIV/AIDS (2014)

Eight African American women engaged in medical care participated in one focus group session. Time since diagnosis ranged from 6 to 17 years. Transportation-related barriers identified by the participants were generally consistent with previous research. Participants appeared to have learned how to successfully navigate the barriers in order to remain in care.

Heart Attack Symptoms Knowledge can Lead Children to Summon Help for Grandparents (2014)

Approximately 93,000 Mississippi grandparents live with their grandchildren who are under age 18 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2012). Of the number of Mississippi grandparents living with their grandchildren, 52,000 are responsible for the care of their grandchildren, and more than 22,000 of the grandchildren cared for by the grandparents are age 5 or older. Teaching children the symptoms of stroke, and when to dial 9-1-1 can be a viable means of improving accurate recognition of a stroke occurrence and subsequently making a quick and appropriate response to call for medical attention. Thus, Mississippi children living with grandparents can help reduce the risk of the devastating effects of a stroke or a heart attack.

African American Male Unemployment in Mississippi's 50 Most Populous Cities (2013)

We investigated whether chronically high African American male unemployment rates (AAMURs) in Mississippi is linked to crime, blight, family disintegration, welfare, poverty, and social disorganization in urban areas as documented by the research literature. Study findings documented an AAMUR of 16.7%, with a wide fluctuation in values ranging between 0% and 33%. Also, statistically significant relationships were found between AAMURs and the variables representing education, married couples, and poverty. However, statistically significant relationships were not observed for AAMURs and manufacturing services, violent crime, and property crime variables. Specific policy/programmatic implications suggested by this research included evaluating the effectiveness of current employment initiatives, strengthening programs that improve educational attainment rates, promoting initiatives encouraging marriage, and promoting initiatives expanding transportation options in urban areas.

Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) (2013): The Paradigm and Burden of Black Women as an Unequal Research Priority

We investigated research funding disparities for TNBC, which is three times more likely to develop in women of African descent. The National Cancer Institute awarded \$602,728,719 to independent investigators for breast non-TNBC cancer research, while only \$2,230,044 was awarded for Triple Negative Breast Cancer.

Towards a Model for Predicting Mississippi Public School Children's Academic Performance (2013)

We investigated kindergarten teachers' rating of students' work habits as a viable addition to regular screenings of children. Using multiple-regression with kindergarten and first grade archival data, teachers' rating of work habits explained (or predicted) 35% of students' academic performance in the first grade. Yet, students' work habits are not high on the radar for desired learning outcomes at the kindergarten level.

We're Moving!

The **Mississippi Urban Research Center** is relocating in January 2015 to
JSU's downtown campus, formerly known as 101 Capitol Centre.
Our new physical address is: 101 West Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

Black and Poorer? An Examination of White Flight from the City of Jackson (2012)

We used U.S. census data to investigate demographically-driven changes occurring in the City of Jackson since 1970. During this period, the city experienced a loss of approximately 82,000 of its white residents and a gain of approximately 76,000 black residents. The South Jackson geographic area experienced the most dramatic changes of the five areas examined. It experienced the largest out-migration of white residents, the largest in-migration of black residents, and the third largest drop in median household income (inflation-adjusted); yet it ranked second behind Northeast Jackson (anecdotally and statistically recognized as the wealthiest area of the city). Potential policy measures city officials may want to consider include: increased inter-jurisdictional cooperative service agreements, stronger enforcement of zoning and city code requirements, increasing academic performance in the public school system, eliminating discriminatory mortgage lending practices, implementing community-based crime prevention initiatives, working with community groups promoting community-enhancing values and norms, and promoting greater racial harmony and understanding.

Cell Phone Use While Driving Becoming a Deadly Problem (2010)

We surveyed 691 college students with the Cell Phone Use Questionnaire developed by researchers at the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center. African American college freshman students enrolled at Mississippi's urban university were almost twice as likely ($OR = 1.8$) to have an accident when receiving incoming calls on their cell phone. Specific policy/programmatic implications included: 1) promoting state-wide cell phone use restrictions, especially for college freshman students; 2) supporting the development of culturally sensitive interventions to curtail the usage of cell phones while driving; 3) conducting additional research; and 4) documenting the driving history and implications of cell phone use while driving in the State of Mississippi.

The Economic Impact of Jackson State University (2007)

JSU passed the cost-benefit test. Relative to its annual 2004 appropriation of approximately \$33.8 million or the cost of JSU to taxpayers, JSU's 2004 economic impact or the benefit to taxpayers, had a dollar value that exceeded the appropriation at both the MSA and county level.

The Social and Behavioral Ecology of Youth Violence in West Jackson (2005)

The findings provided suggestive evidence that violence in West Jackson can be explained by a social/behavior ecology that starts in the adolescent school years. Correlations between violent tendencies and risky behavior suggest that there is a feedback process from the collective behavioral environment to individual behavior that ultimately engenders violence and crime. In a broad context, the findings suggest that there are indeed neighborhood effects in the West Jackson community that engender violent behavior. A future research goal should be to identify specific causal pathways.

Blueprint Mississippi Reconsidered (2005)

Our analysis suggested that successful implementation of the Blueprint Mississippi policy recommendation for increasing the high-technology industry employment share in the state would likely have, at least in the short run, an adverse effect on urban and Delta region counties in the absence of appropriate human capital development interventions. Increases in the employment share of the high-technology industry would render urban and Delta region economies worse.



Mississippi Urban Research Center

OVERVIEW

The Mississippi Urban Research Center, an entity of Jackson State University, is located in the capital city of Jackson, Mississippi. Housed in the Jackson Medical Mall, MURC operates as a unit of the JSU College of Public Service. MURC consists of Research and Contractual Services and provides the following services:

- Basic and applied research, policy analysis, consultation and general advisory services which contribute to current practices and provide insight on solutions to urban problems
- Census data research and training for urban planners, policymakers, service providers, as well as the academic and lay communities
- Dissemination of research findings and program information via newsletters, an online peer-reviewed journal, research reports and presentations.
- Focus group facilitation services
- Needs assessment and analysis
- Program evaluation tailored specifically for proposed and current projects
- Statistical Analysis Laboratory
- Telephone/Mail Survey Research Laboratory
- Publication of the *Online Journal of Rural and Urban Research* and *The MURC Digest*.

MISSION

The Mississippi Urban Research Center conducts basic and applied research into problems and public policy and makes research data available to policymakers, public bodies and officials, urban planners, service providers, private groups, and the lay community. The center offers consultation and general advisory services concerning urban issues and their solutions and instructional and training programs.

Its commitment to building better urban communities and improving the quality of life in Mississippi is demonstrated by offering the widest possible dissemination of research and the greatest possible opportunities for public scrutiny and interpretation of collected data.

HISTORY

The Mississippi Urban Research Center was authorized through Mississippi Senate Bill 2720, which was passed by the Mississippi Legislature in 1983. Its operation was funded by legislative appropriation in July 1994. Since that time, the Center has established itself as a leader in providing specialized assistance to address the unique problems facing Mississippi's urban communities and their leaders, including policymakers and grassroots stakeholders, through research, interpretation and dissemination.

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