

Differences in the Development of Disability Among African Americans & its Contributing Factors: A Mini Review

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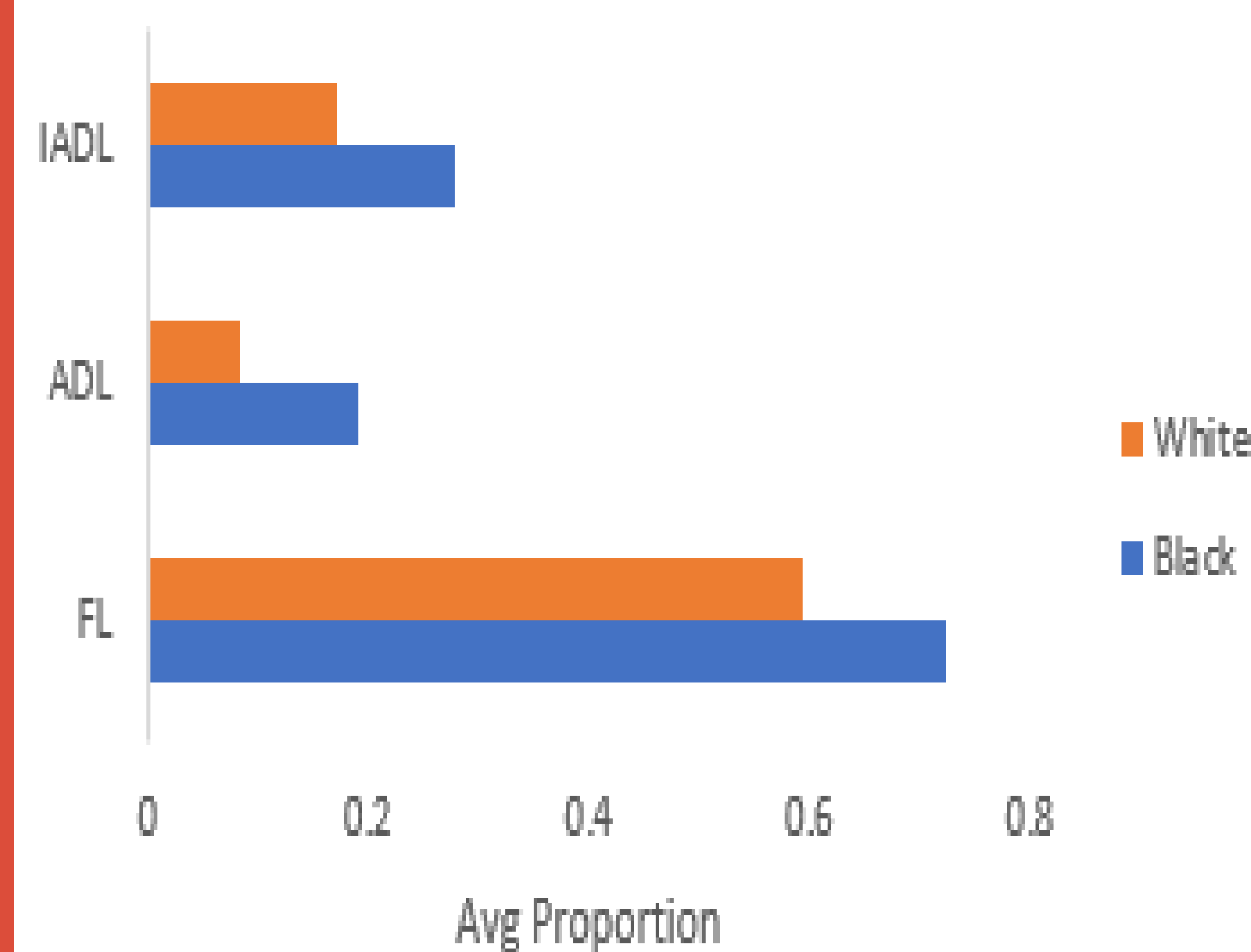


INTRODUCTION

- The number of Americans 65 years or older with chronic disability exceeds 7 million. US minority groups are the fastest growing group in the US population, inevitably becoming a part of this increasing population with disability.
- The African American population has been found to face a large disparity when it comes to their development in their disability in comparison to their White counterparts. Factors such as health conditions, health behaviors, and socioeconomic factors were the overwhelming contributors found to widen this inequality.



The Avg Proportion Reporting FL, ADL, & IADL among Black & White Respondants



(Melvin et al., 2014)

FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

- Future research is needed to understand the convoluted interplay among race/ethnicity and disability.
- As socioeconomic and health factors were the leading causes of this inequity, a multipronged approach that focuses on primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention is needed.

CONCLUSIONS

- Individuals with a low socioeconomic status and poor health status are often increasingly exposed to air and water pollution, adverse toxins, food deserts, high crime rates, lack of adequate transportation, sidewalks, parks, and quality health care services.
- This plays a **big** role in an individual's projected health outcome and creates a continuous and never-ending loop of disability, disease, and mortality.
- Studies prove that African Americans experience poor development of health compared to their White counterparts.

AIM

- This study aims to gather all relevant research and discuss racial/ethnic differences in disability prevalence – most especially within the African American community.
- We aim to find contributing factors that influence this disparity in disability development and identify interventions that can help close this gap.

METHOD

- Academic literature where derived from search engines: PubMed (n=38) and Google Scholars (n=40,600).
- Ten articles were included in this mini review.
- Keywords used: "disability", "disparity", "African American", "racial/ethnic differences".
- Inclusion criteria included:
 - Written in the English language
 - Published in the United States
 - Published between the years of 2000 - 2023
 - Inclusion of an African American study population
 - Inclusion of physical disability

MAIN THEMES

HEALTH FACTORS (5)

Health Factors was another frequently mentioned factor contributing to the health disparity within disability. Health Conditions referred to chronic health problems such as heart problems, diabetes, stroke, arthritis, hypertension, and etc. Health behaviors referred to lifestyle such as smoking status, alcohol use, and exercise.

- Differences in health related to chronic conditions, functional limitations, and health behaviors all contributed to disparities in the development of disability.
- Black adults are more likely to smoke and be obese.

(Bowen et al., 2009)
(Dunlop et al., 2007)

SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS (9)

Socioeconomic status was the main contributing factor that accounted for the large racial/ethnic disparities in the development of disability among African Americans. Socioeconomic factors alone explained **65% of excess risk** for African Americans.

- "Black parents reported fewer years of education than white parents and black fathers were less likely than white fathers to work in professional, craftsman, and clerical/sales occupations."
- Black respondents had lower educational attainment; were less likely to live with a spouse or partner only(...)"

(Bowen et al., 2009)
(Dong et al., 2019)
(Dunlop et al., 2007)

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