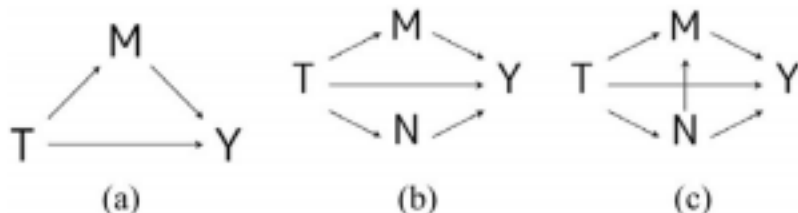


## FIGURE 1. Diagrams Representing Various Causal Mechanisms



*Note:* (a) is a simple graphical representation of the decomposition where the treatment  $T$  causally affects the outcome  $Y$  directly or indirectly through the mediator  $M$ . The other two diagrams show causal mechanisms involving two measured mediators. In (b), there is no causal relationship between the two mediators and hence sequential ignorability (Assumption 1) is satisfied. The other diagram (c) does not satisfy the assumption, because  $N$  serves as a posttreatment confounder for  $M$ .