



Empathy and Racism during Childbirth: Do Medical Professionals Adequately Empathize with the Pain of Women of Color in Labor?

Proposal

Averine Sanduku, Nura Alia Hossainzadeh, Nichol Flowers, Brett Brandom



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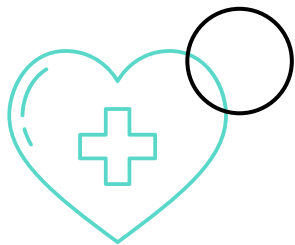
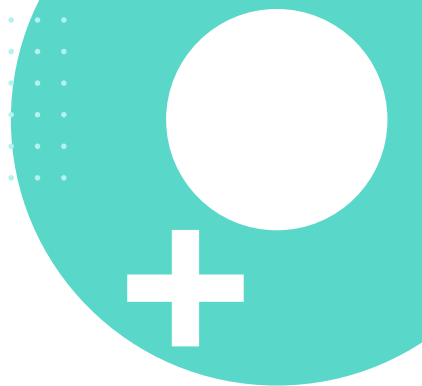
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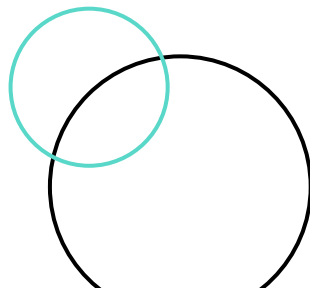
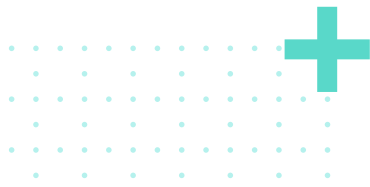
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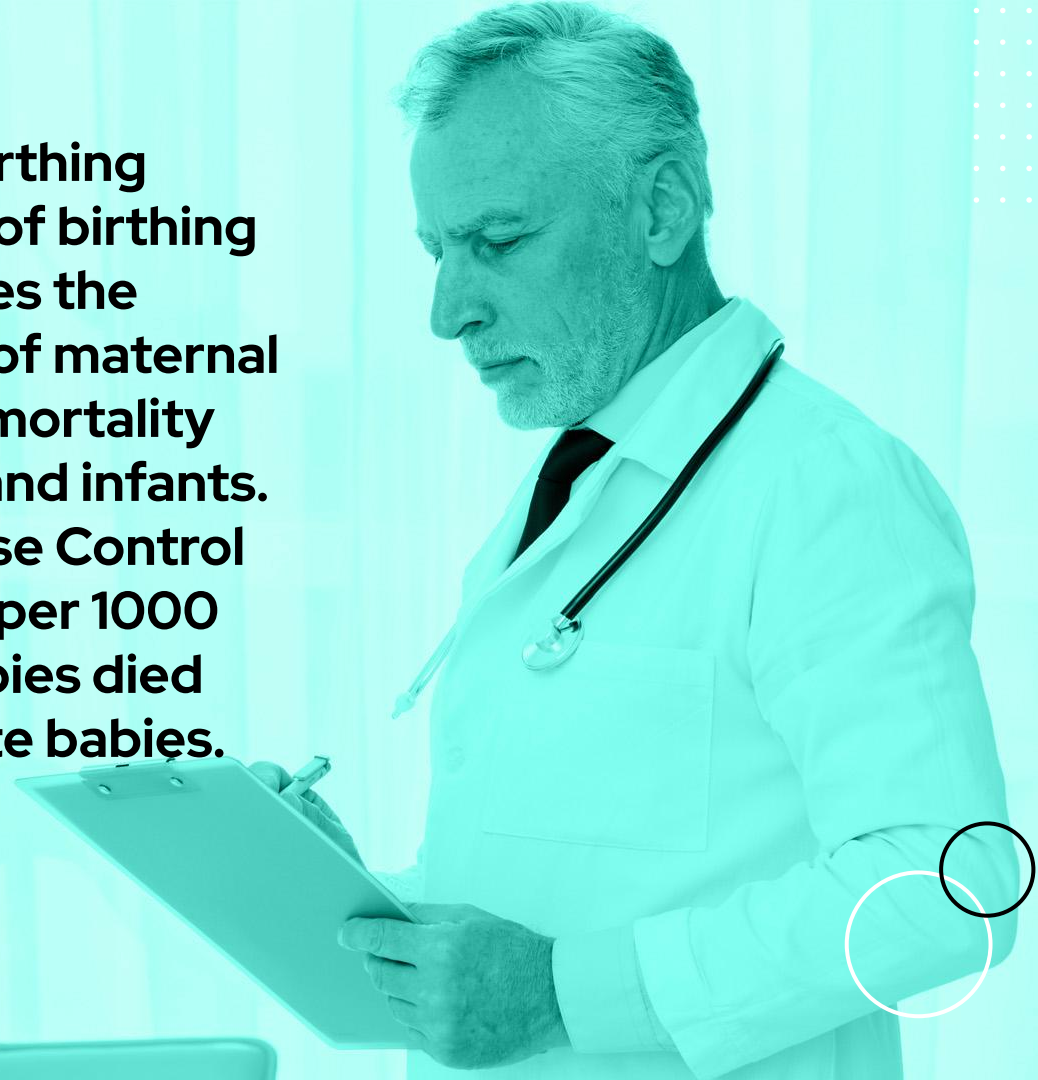
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Overview



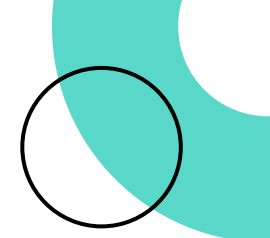
"Black mothers' birthing experiences: in search of birthing justice" emphasizes the disproportionate rates of maternal mortality and infant mortality among Black mothers and infants. The Centers for Disease Control (2019) reported that per 1000 births, 10.8 Black babies died compared to 4.6 White babies.





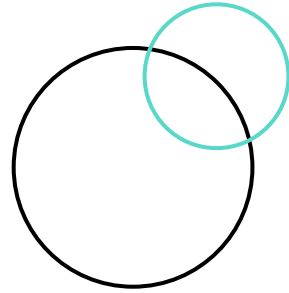
Our mission

“To investigate the relationship between empathy and race during childbirth, with broader implications for societal interactions beyond the maternity ward. We propose a comprehensive study conducted focused on hospitals and birthing centers to assess the experiences of women of different racial backgrounds and their perceptions of medical professionals’ responsiveness to pain during labor. By focusing on childbirth, a universally relatable yet intensely personal event, we aim to shed light on broader societal dynamics of empathy and race.”





Anticipated Impact:

- **Enhance medical staff training for improved cultural competency and communication skills.**
 - **Advocate for hospitals to monitor patient experiences, especially regarding empathy and responsiveness.**
 - **Call to action: Review and revise policies to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness to the needs of women of color during childbirth.**
- 



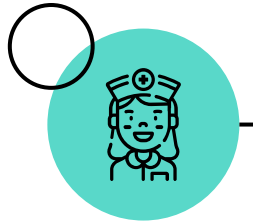


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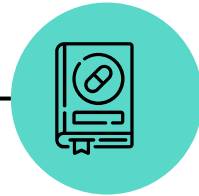
Research Question

Does race impact how empathetically medical professionals respond to expressions of pain by a woman in labor?

Sub Questions



**Do women
perceive
empathy?**



**Do labor
support people
perceive
empathy?**



**How are
medical
professionals
trained to
respond to
pain?**



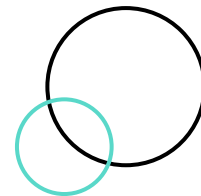
Definitions

Empathy: Our conceptualization of empathy is as an expression of concern for and a will to respond and alleviate the discomfort and pain felt by another person.

Expressions of pain: Labor is overall a painful process, but expressions of pain are meant to alert others to moments when a woman feels this pain more acutely, is finding it difficult to tolerate the pain, and/or experiences a change in the type or degree of pain that she feels.



Study Design



Convergent - Mixed Methods

1.

Quantitative

2 Surveys:
Patient Satisfaction
Support Persons

2.

Qualitative

Semi Structured
Interviews

Study Design

Participants:

- Women who have recently given birth (within 2 weeks)

- Support person
- L&D Care Teams (processes/protocol only)

Setting:

- In- Person
- Option for Virtual participation



Data



Surveys and Interviews:

Did medical professionals show empathy by...

- Questioning
- Recognizing and understanding
- Alleviating
- Providing pain medication
- Comforting and soothing, verbally
- Comforting and soothing, physically



Sample

Where:

- In- Person at prenatal and postnatal groups
- Virtually through Facebook Groups and emails

How:

- Distribute flyers
- Speak during classes
- Work with staff to provide clientele with study information

Sampling Goals:

- Approximately equal number of white and non-white women
- Saturation: new themes no longer arise



Hypothesis

We test the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between the **race of a person in labor** and **how empathetically they are treated by medical staff** and the alternative hypothesis that **women of color** are treated with **less empathy**.

The New York Times

How Unconscious Bias in Health Care Puts Pregnant Black Women at Higher Risk

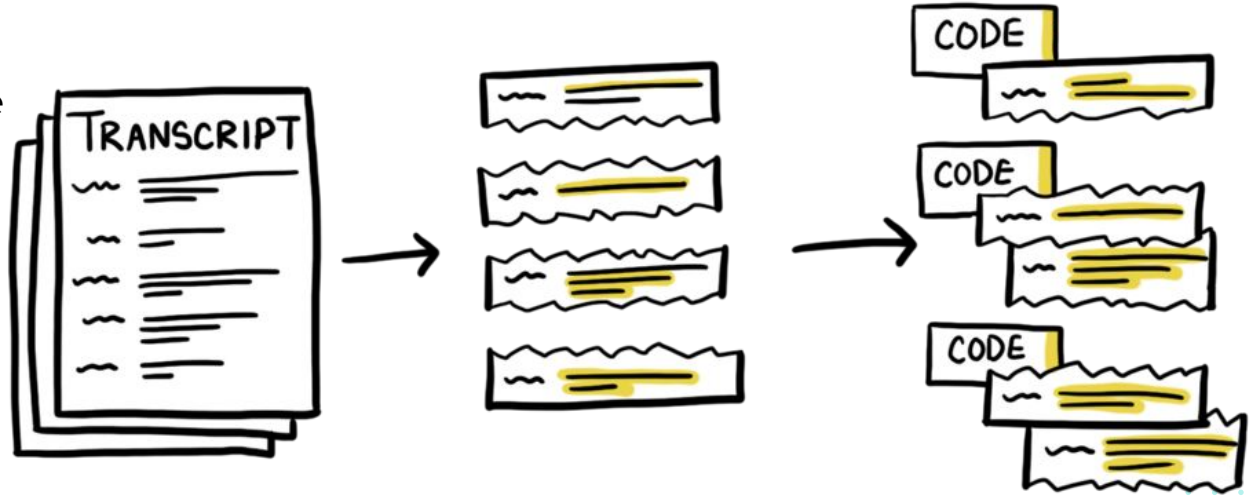
Many Black women report feeling ignored or dismissed by doctors. The consequences can be deadly for mothers and babies.

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Variables

- We will generate codes for the interview data in accordance with typical qualitative research design
 - Identify common themes across participant's accounts
- Will also use survey responses to generate quantitative variables.



Interpretation

- **Aggregate code distributions across participants, grouped by race**
- **Compare patterns in codes between the two racial groups; identify similarities and differences**
- **Use the survey results to reinforce consistency in contrasting narratives**
- **Develop parallel narratives detailing our findings, illustrating the differences detected between white women and women of color. Compare with literature.**



Potential Risks



1

Rigorous Sampling and Data Collection

2

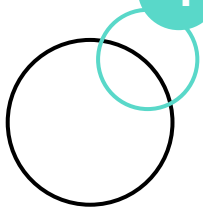
Addressing Stakeholder Expectations

3

Confidentiality Concerns

4

Upholding Legal and Ethical Standards



Deliverables

Who

Stakeholders



What

Report



When

90 Days



How

Email



BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

