

# Body Image Satisfaction and Mental, Physical and Sexual Health Among Ethno- Racialized Gay and Bisexual Men

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of Social Work, University of Toronto

# Research Team

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- Dr. Clemon George, Health Sciences, University of Ontario institute of Technology
- Dr. Trevor Hart, Department of Psychology, Ryerson University
- Dr. Peter Newman, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto
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# Background

- Gay, Bisexual Men (GBM), particularly men identifying with ethnoracialised communities, are at high risk for a variety of health **disparities** (Keogh, Henderson, Dodds, 2004; Wolitski, Stall & Valdiserri, 2008).

# Background Cont'd

- Lack of access to resources and experiences of racist, homophobic and classist oppression affect physical, mental and sexual health **outcomes** (Cain & Kington, 2003; Diaz, Ayala, Bein, Henne, & Marin, 2001) .

# Background Cont'd

- GBM score significantly higher than heterosexual identifying men on body dissatisfaction ratings, and disordered eating attitudes (Kaminski, Chapman, Haynes, & Own, 2005).
- Are GBM at greater risk for developing eating pathologies?

## Background Cont'd

- Syndemic Theory suggests that multiple health related issues compound with social oppressions to put GBM at greater health risk for each one of these outcomes as well as other health disparities.

# Gaps in Research

- Syndemic Theory fails to account for ethno-racialised experiences, and the intersectionality of experiences of sexuality, ethnicity, race, residential/legal status, abilities, sexuality, class and gender identity.

# Gaps in Research Cont'd

- Standardized instruments for Eating Disorders and Body Dissatisfaction were developed in a “socio-economic, cultural vacuum”

# Gaps in Research Cont'd

- Failure to account for the ways in which attitudes towards body image and eating are affected by:
  - ethno/cultural identity(ies), values, beliefs
  - experiences of migration and ties to countries of origin
  - experiences of racism (and as confounded by homophobia)

# Research Questions/Objectives

- Is attention to attitudes towards body image and eating relevant to the current practice and research needs of Toronto's ethno-racialised gay and bisexual men?

# Research

## Questions/Objectives Cont'd

- Is there a relationship between ethno-racialised experiences/identities, resiliencies and risks for body image dissatisfaction and associated eating behaviours and attitudes among ethnoracialised GBM?

# Research Goals

- To examine the relationship between body image satisfaction, eating attitudes and behaviour, and the mental, physical and sexual health of ethnoracialised GBM in the GTA
- To disseminate findings to participating ethnoracialised communities

# Research Goals Cont'd

- To advance Syndemic Theory
- To inform clinical practices
- To develop more accurate tools for measuring body image satisfaction and attitudes towards eating

# Focus of Research

- Men who identify as gay, bisexual, queer or the culturally relevant term specific to communities identified in the study

# Focus of Research Cont'd

Men identifying with one or more of the following 4 ethnoracialised communities in the GTA:

- South Asian
- East/South East Asian
- Black/Afro/Carribean
- Portuguese/Spanish/Latino

# Time Line (May 2009 - May, 2012) and Details of Research

## PHASE 1

July 2008	Assemblage of Research Team
October 2008	Submission of SSHRC Proposal
April 2009	SSHRC Funding Secured

# Phase 1 Cont'd

June 2009	Research Team Finalized
August 2009	Advisory Committee Struck*
Sept 2009	Research Questions and Methodology set
Sept 2009	Submission of Ethics Protocol

# PHASE 2

## (Qualitative Research)

Gather 2 focus groups for each of the 4 communities to explore the following issues:

1. experiences, attitudes, behaviours towards eating and body image and other health issues

# Phase 2: Focus Group Issues Cont'd

2. Factors affecting these attitudes, experiences, and behaviours:

- cultural values and level of identification?
- residential status?
- migration patterns?
- health status?
- experiences of racism, classism, homophobia?

## Phase 2 Cont'd

- Analyze data
- Research Findings Disseminated
- Instruments for assessing attitudes towards eating (EAT 26) and Body Image Satisfaction (MEBBIE) evaluated in relationship to research findings

## Phase 2 cont'd

- Develop Questions/Protocols for Directing Phase 3

# Phase 3 Proposed

- Develop New Measurement Instruments
- Pilot Instruments

## Phase 4 Proposed

- Implement the new tools on larger populations (n=300) of ethnoracialised GBM
- Examine the psychometric properties of the new tools

## Phase 4 Cont'd

- Examine associations between body image, eating attitudes and behaviours, and other markers of health (sexual risk, drug/alcohol use, depression)
- Disseminate research findings

# Your Participation

- Advisory Committee Members
- Naming the Research Project
- Research Assistants
- Outreach for Focus Group Participants
- Feedback, Comments, Questions