

Problem

- People of color in the US face overwhelming health disparities due to racial and ethnic bias.
- There are numerous reports in the literature regarding higher rates of untreated decay, periodontal disease, and oral cancer among black and brown people compared to their White counterparts.
- There is mounting evidence about the negative attitudes, unrealistic expectations, and unprofessional behaviors of oral health care providers and supporting staff toward patients of color and /or minority ethnicities contribute to oral health disparities.
- Addressing racial and ethnic biases among oral health providers and support staff could address oral health disparities in Maryland.

Objective

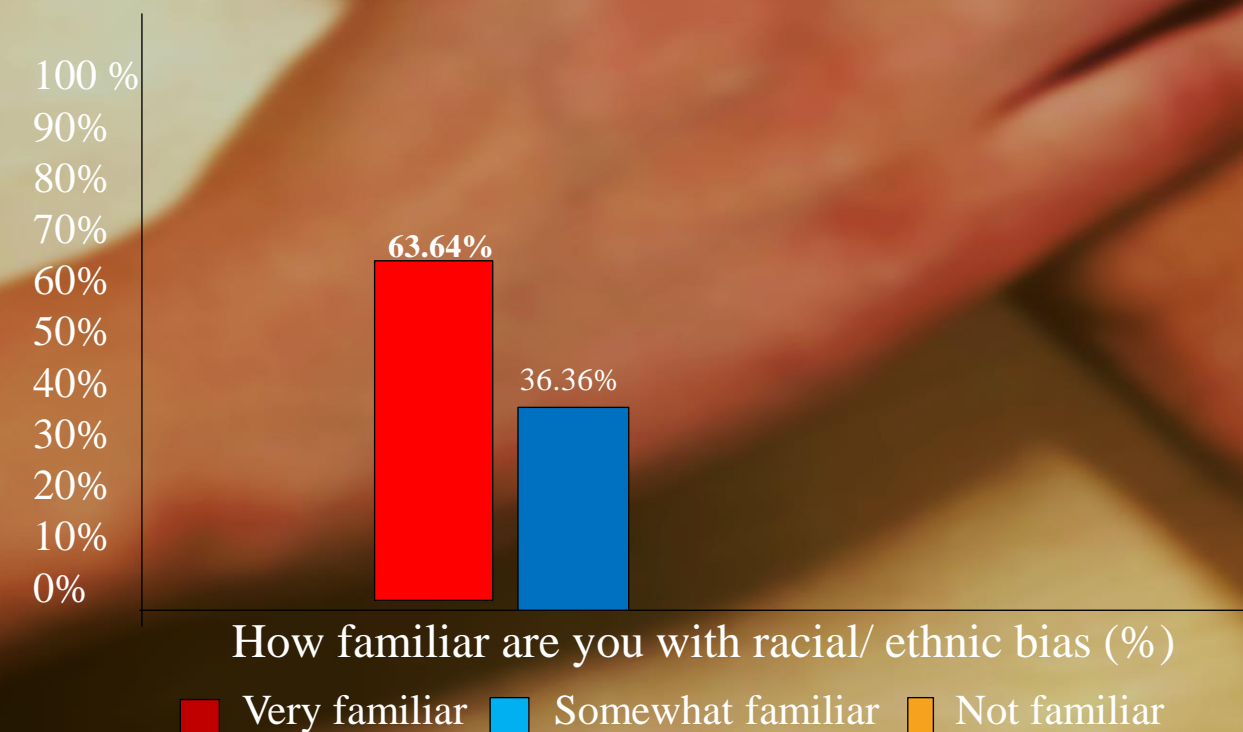
- Our study was to evaluate knowledge and experience with racial/ethnic bias among dental hygiene students to ultimately assess the value of racial/ethnic equity training in allied Dental Education.

Methodology & Statistics

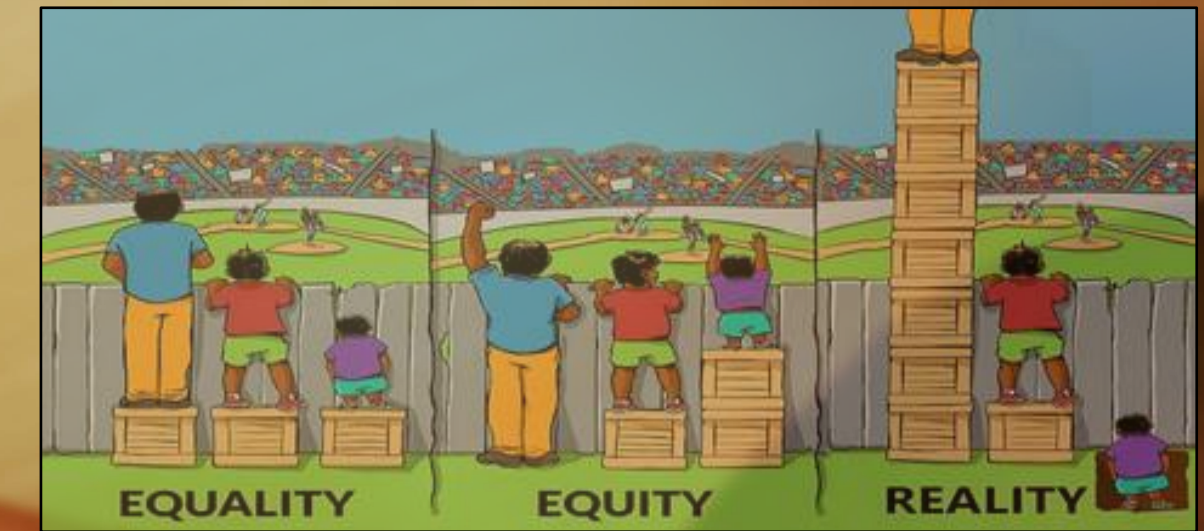
- A 10-question multiple-choice survey was developed through Qualtrics XM and emailed to a convenience sample of junior and senior dental hygiene students.
- Descriptive statistics were used to describe the study sample of 11 DH students and assess their understanding and experience with racial and ethnic bias
- The UMB Institutional Review Board determined the project to be Non-Human Subjects Research

Results

- The majority of respondents are familiar with and have experienced Racial and Ethnic bias and 100% indicated that integrating Racial and Ethnic bias education into the DH curriculum would be valuable.



How important it is to have racial/ethnic bias training integrated into your program, school, or job orientation?



Discussion

- The impact of racial and ethnic biases are harmful to the oral health profession.
- It is critical to incorporate racial/ethnic bias training into allied dental education programs.
- Oral health providers' perceptions about patients of color and/or of minority ethnicities can exacerbate oral health disparities.

Conclusions

- Racial/ethnic bias education at UMSOD will may help improve the oral health of racial and ethnic groups who are disproportionately impacted by poor oral health.
- More research is indicated with a larger and more diverse study sample to accurately evaluate knowledge and awareness of racial/ethnic bias in a dental school setting.

References

- National WIC Association. "ORAL HEALTH NEEDS IN THE WIC PROGRAM." NWA Factsheet, 2021, pp. 1–5, s3.amazonaws.com/aws.upl/nwica.org/fy21_nwa_factsheet_-oral-health-needs-in-the-wic-program.pdf.
- Sonya G. Smith, Tita Gray, Angelo C. Lee (2021, November 30). "Belonging as a Pathway to Diversity and Inclusion in Dental Education" American Dental Education Association.

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