

# Research on stress among minorities families

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Family stress is a major part of every minority group, but studies have been done to find the barriers and facilitators of stress within these families.

Researchers were focusing on the resilience of each minority group based on the situations they were put in, most being low-income households. Many of the minority groups mentioned are Latino families, African American families, Indian families put through Indian Residential Schools, and Gay and Lesbian families. Throughout this paper, I will talk about the research methods, similarities and differences, and key findings of each study.

### Research Approaches of Family Stress Studies

The research approach used in the article, Risk and Resilience in Latinos, is “semi structured qualitative interviews” used during the Community-Based Participatory Research Study. The primary focus of this study was to figure out the resilience of Latino youth in low-income households. Based on the study, many parents of Latino adolescents would rather not have any community organizations involved in raising their child because they feel it is a private responsibility. This explains why Latino parents may shelter their children while growing up, rather than giving them outside sources. Though this is how Latino parents may feel, the study has concluded that Latino youth are more likely to recognize adults outside their family as resources, more than their parents realize.

The research approach used in the article, Same-Sex Relationships and Minority Stress, is “conceptually and methodologically beyond the focus of the individual, and focusing on the dyad and the interpersonal, institutional, and cultural sources of minority stress that affect couples in same-sex

relationships”. Focusing more on the dyad of couples, allows researchers to study the impacts of the sources of stressors, including minority stressors, on the couple’s relationship. The primary conclusion of the study suggested that minority stress affected same-sex couples’ relationships, but there happens to not be enough research to make any conclusions final. Though this study tried to find the negative effects of minority stress on couples, it seems like minority stress brings same-sex couples closer together, in addition to strengthening their relationship foundation. The research approach used in the article, *Family Functioning and Stress in African American Families*, is “multiple regression analysis to link close and flexible family relationships to lower perceived stress levels”. Much of the focus on this study is finding the relationship between positive family functioning and how the family support can lower stress levels to increase the well-being of the family as a whole. According to this article, “African Americans are sometimes considered “Stress Absorbing Systems,” which comes from the amount of racial stress and discrimination they receive. Though this stressor is very unfortunate, this can help adolescents of these families become more resilient. The research approach used in the article, *The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools: Implications for the Concept of Historical Trauma*, is “empirical support for the concept of historical trauma, which takes the perspective that the consequences of numerous and sustained attacks against a group may accumulate over generations and interact with proximal stressors to undermine collective well-being”. Much of the research conducted in the study was to find a link between Indian Residential School (IRS) trauma survivors, and the well-being of the intergenerational offspring.

The focus was primarily on “ diagnosable disorders and/or individual physiological, psychological, and emotional effects among the offspring of trauma survivors”. This meant that researchers were looking for signs of depression and anxiety, along with other disorders that may have affected the offspring of the trauma survivors.

### Similarities and Differences of Minority Stress

Throughout each minority family, participants identified their families as sources of support that helped reduce stress. African Americans believe that family support can deescalate the negative effects of discrimination and racism. Latino youth stated that family, along with other factors, were their support system. Studies have shown that same-sex relationships may be strengthened with the effects of minority stress, but internalized homophobia can negatively affect their foundation. The one big difference is that the IRS article doesn't mention family support decreasing stress but identifies how their offspring are affected through intergenerational trauma.

### Key Findings to Help Minority Families

A key finding that suggests a way to help low-income Latino families is the idea that Latino youth may be able to recognize adults outside their family as resources that could help their family in certain aspects of their life. In IRS trauma survivor's families, the offspring may start to understand why their parents behave the ways that they do. This new-found understanding can assist in “ healing certain aspects of their relationship”. Minority stress can affect same-sex relationships negatively but may also give a stronger

foundation to continue building their relationship. African American families have indicated that being in close, tight-knit families are a contributor to reduced stress levels.

## **CONCLUSION**

Stress has many effects on minority families, which either make or break a family, depending on how close they may be. Each family has a different way of coping with the stressors, but one thing they all had in common was keeping a close support system. Stress will take a toll on any family, but it's the resilient families that will keep their strength and increase their well-being as a family in the whole.