

Examining the Experiences of Black Women in Medical School

Contact Information
 Isabelle Marcelin
 646-774-6297
Isabelle.Marcelin@nyspi.columbia.edu



Isabelle Marcelin, MD¹, Martha Duah, MD², Adrienne J. Green, MD³, Tiffany E. Cook, MA⁴, Melissa Arbuckle, MD, PhD⁵, Joseph E. Ravenell, MD⁶

¹New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia Department of Psychiatry, ²Boston Medical Center Department of Psychiatry, ³New York Presbyterian Department of General Surgery, ⁴UMass Chan Medical School, ⁵New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia Department of Psychiatry ⁶NYU Grossman School of Medicine

BACKGROUND

Existing literature has uncovered unique challenges that Black women face in higher education, attributable to both race and gender (1, 2)

- Systemic racism
- Stereotype threat
- Minority stress: more work, fewer rewards
- Lack of critical mass

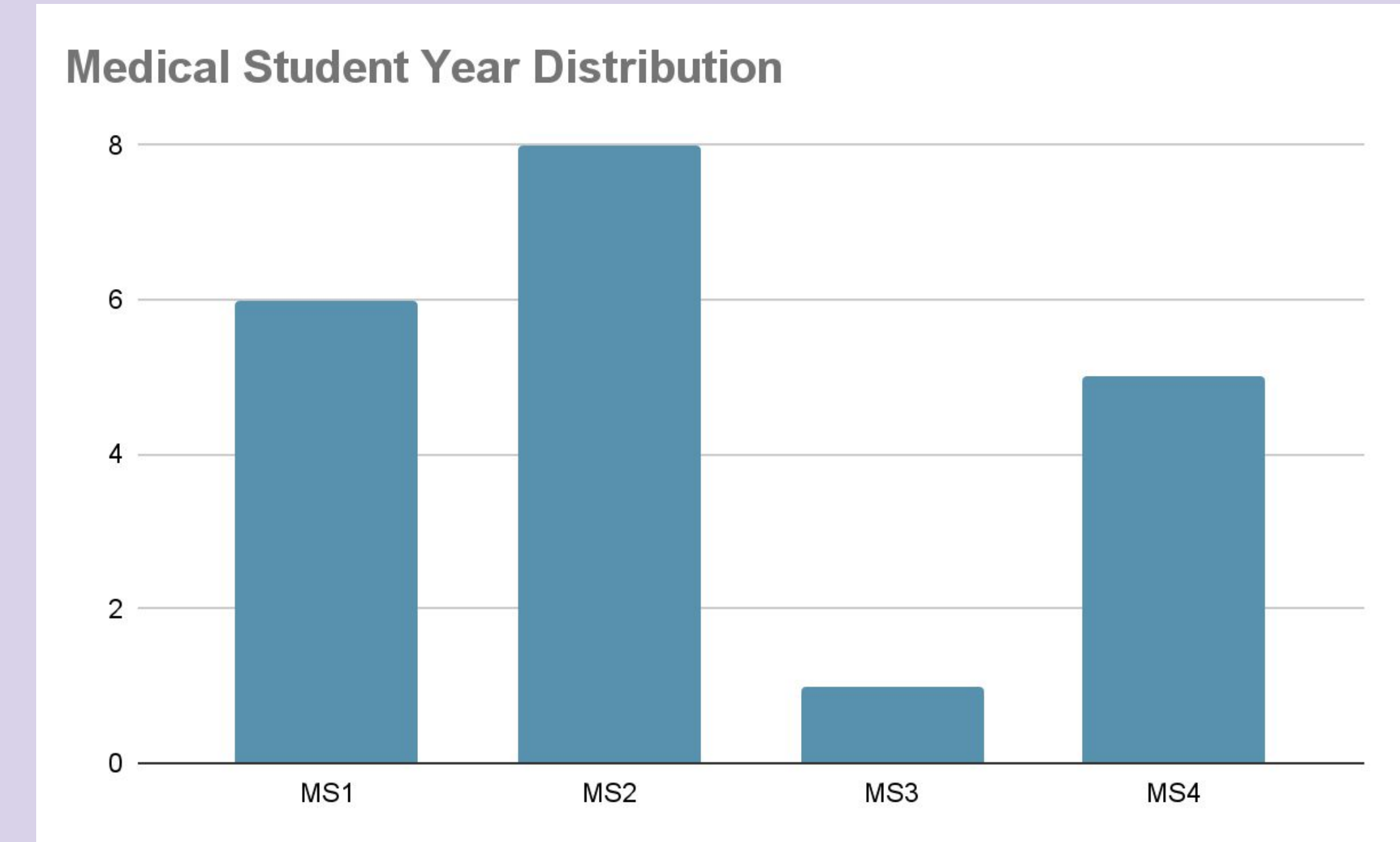
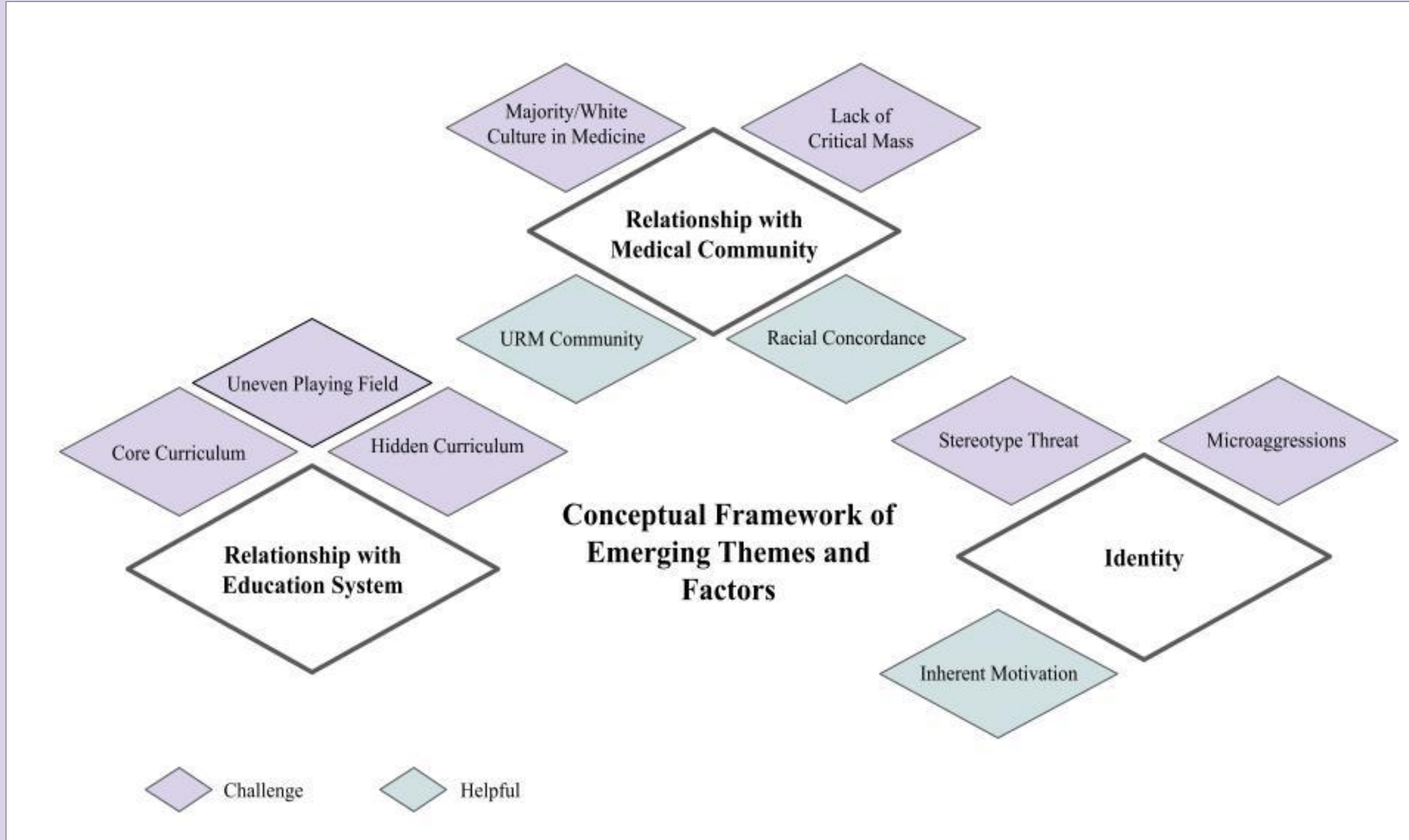
Little remains known about Black women's experiences throughout medical training as medical students (3, 4)

Objective: characterize how racial and gender identity impacts Black female medical students' experiences in and interactions with the medical environment

METHODS

Recruitment	Data Collection	Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● October 2019-January 2020 ● Black/African American medical students who identified as women at U.S. medical schools along the East Coast ● Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and Offices of Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9 medical schools ● 20 semi-structured interviews by phone, audio-recorded ● Transcription of electronically recorded interview content ● Demographic REDCap survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Qualitative analysis grounded in theoretical framework of grounded theory (5)

RESULTS



CONCLUSION

- Black women faced similar challenges in medical school as compared to the literature of those in other higher educational settings (1)
- Majority of these challenges were associated with their intersectional racial and gender identity
- Tailored medical institutional efforts are needed towards addressing challenges and enhancing support as this cohort navigates the medical community and educational system
 - Pipeline program funding
 - Funding and programming to support identity-safe environments (eg diversity offices), URM networking, and mentorship (3, 4)

INTERVIEW QUOTES

"It's difficult in addition to what everybody else is doing... a white male is just worrying about coursework. We're worrying about coursework plus appearance, trying not to be too loud in a room, trying not to get stares from someone for just existing, or trying not to look bad for the whole race. So, it's just a lot of social factors that we have to deal with in addition to the coursework."

"It reminds me why we need more physicians of color....patients are more comfortable. It's easier to build rapport with them if they see people who look like them that are a part of the team that's caring for them.. it makes me feel like my presence is important and it matters."

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