

A Dissertation Critique

By:

Kanasha L. N. Blue

Niagara University

Fall 2018

ADS: 820

## **Dissertation Overview**

### **Dissertation Overview**

The dissertation entitled “Disparities and Systematic Racism Policies and Practices Related to Healthcare Reform, Employment, and Incarcerations: A Multi-faceted Analysis of Contemporary Experiences in the United States” was written by Marilyn Chapman-Allison in April 2016. This dissertation partial fulfilled the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership and Policy at Niagara University. This dissertation is a mixed method research design that contains six long titled chapters. The abbreviated titles on the sections included an Introduction to Research Study, A Quantitative Survey Analysis, Discrimination in Health Care in the United States, Racism in Employment Practices in the United States, Rates of Incarceration in the United States and closing with a Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations.

The dissertation examined three research questions to understand the current states of affairs of discriminatory practices and policies in the United States. The research questions explored discrimination against African Americans and minorities regarding healthcare reform, employment and incarceration. The following three research questions were posed by Marilyn Chapman-Allison( 2016):

1. Does systematic racism exist in the United States and are there policies and practices that promoted disparities.
2. What are the statistical indicators that confirm systematic racism and disparity?
3. What are the long-term effects of discriminatory policies and practices in the United States related to African Americans and other minorities? (p.1)

## A Quantitative Article Critique

Utilizing a mixed method approach Chapman-Allison collected, analyzed and summarized the findings of a quantitative survey of 138 individuals (2016). Chapman-Allison also chose to conduct 12 qualitative interviews from the 138-quantitative questionnaire response to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how African Americans and minorities are affected by the discriminatory practices and principles (Chapman-Allison, 2016). By employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, statistical analysis of existing datasets, and supporting literature evidence from the three principal fields Chapman-Allison (2016) concluded that institutional and personal discriminatory practices and policies are still customary today in American society.

### **Background and Significance**

The significance of the study explains the contribution it will add to the field, the need for the research and the anticipated outcome. This section may also contain a justification of the qualitative approach to the study (Ryan et al., 2007). The author identifies the extent of the problem of incarceration, healthcare reform, and employment with supporting background information including large statistical figures and many examples of struggles of systematic racism and discrimination across federal, state, and local agencies in the perspective fields.

This literature review was an extensive summary of previous research, theories to support the research, authors prior knowledge on the subject, and philosophical underpinnings of the study. The authors cite many primary sources, examples, and other study outcomes to illustrate the need to inform the public about racial disparities in policies and practices in healthcare, incarceration, and employment. The literature review also shed light on the long terms effect for practices a policies deemed discriminatory to African American and the minority communities.

## **Methodology**

The method section of a thesis is an in-depth description of the process of conducting the study. According to the *Publication Manual of American Psychological Association* (2010), the method segment contains five vital elements including conceptual and operational definitions of the study variables, a description of the subjects used and the procedures taken to complete the study. Other essential components of the method portion encompass an explanation of any experimental interventions including delivery mechanisms, sampling size, precisions, and procedures, measurement approaches, and the research design (American Psychological Association, 2010). An outstanding methodology chapter should include the following according to Dr. Jinyan Huang's (2017a), are using the new and existing methodology in creative ways, choosing a method that is appropriate for the topic and the study design shows a comprehensive understanding of the methods used.

### **Participant Characteristics**

One of the critical elements of a research method section is the participant's characteristics. Demographic characteristics may include gender, age, level of education and ethnic and or racial groups to name a few. Chapman-Allison appropriately identified research participants in the method section of the research. Chapman-Allison (2016), acquired the following characteristics: Age, race, gender and citizenship status during the analysis. Participants demographics are a significant part of any research as it is an essential component of generalizing finding or replicating the study according to the APA manual (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010).

## A Quantitative Article Critique

### **Variables**

Another critical element of the method section is defining variables used in the research. Accounting of the variables includes a detail description and definition of both conceptual and operational variables. In the research method section, Chapman-Allison failed to define the variables used in the study. The APA manual points out the significance of a complete definition of methods including variable description as, “Enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of your methods and the reliability and the validity of your results. It also permits experienced investigators to replicate the study” (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010, p.29).

### **Sampling Size and Procedures**

The next essential element of the method section is sampling size and procedures. Chapman-Allison (2016) identified the sample size as 153 participants whom 100 percent completed the survey. In person questionnaire distribution and collection took place at a historically African American religious organization and several professional and cultural institutions in Buffalo, NY. Chapman-Allison (2016), also identified that participants selection was voluntary. According to the APA manual, all the procedures for selecting participants were achieved by Chapman-Allison as described by the method section.

### **Measures and Instrument**

The validity of the instrument used is also an essential component of the method section. A discussion of the validity of the tools used was missing from the document, but since the writer used both questionnaires and interviews to corroborate findings, this is a means of internal validity called triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). The validity of the instruments and results ensure the survey and interviews measure what it intended to evaluate and allow the replication and generalizability of the study. The method section of this dissertation is not clear

## A Quantitative Article Critique

about content, internal, external validity or criterion-related validity. The measure does appear to contain face validity

### **Results**

Chapman-Allison (2016), reported the results of the quantitative section of the study in a brief one-and-a-half-page written summary followed by 16 tables. The information in the tables represents a descriptive study as it reports a summary of data including the central tendency: mean, mode, median, and sum, dispersion: variation, the correlation between variables, and deviance of the mean to name a few. The software name Statistical Package for the Social Sciences or SPSS was used to identify the descriptive statistics needed to report the outcome of the quantitative research. This written summary of the result section focused on the Analysis of Variance or ANOVA statistical model to predict questionnaire respondents perceptions of racism in the United States was used for all factor analysis as explicitly noted by Chapman- Allison. Three different three-way ANOVA's were performed to determine if there was a three-way interaction between the dependent variables of citizenship status, race, and gender to the independent variables of health care, employment, and incarceration.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Following the outline of the other section of Chapman-Allison (2016), dissertation, there was also four discussions or conclusion section. The first section discusses and concludes the results of the quantitative study. Chapman-Allison (2016), noted there was a sound perception amongst survey participants especially African Americans between the role of race in the correlation of equitable treatment in the sectors of healthcare access, legal system and incarceration and employment discrimination. African Americans represented a majority of the survey contributors which does not represent the population makeup of Buffalo, New York.

## A Quantitative Article Critique

African Americans were the target population of the research with an overwhelming racial bias in access to service and treatment in the three research areas of healthcare, incarceration, and employment. White respondents made up 27% of survey participants and believed race affected research areas at a rate significantly less than African American responders (Chapman-Allison, 2016). Chapman-Allison concluded that the racism found in the 1940s thru 1960s is not different from the racism of the present day as systems are in place that cultivates racism and the perception of it.

This discussion section provides an unequivocal statement of support for two of the three following original research questions of “Does systematic racism exist in the United States and are there policies and practices that promoted disparities.

What are the statistical indicators that confirm systematic racism and disparity”(Chapman-Allison, 2016, p.1)? This section shedding light bias being part of the decision-making process and in the long term may continue to negatively affect African Americans and other minorities in healthcare, incarceration, and employment. Bring in the outcome of other studies or referring finding to the literature review would improve the overall strength of the section.

Another area that was lacking in this discussion and conclusion section was conversations regarding research validity internal or external. Chapman-Allison (2016), the survey population were majority African American despite the majority of Buffalo, New York population are White. Chapman-Allison also stated 153 participants complete the survey at 100 percent, but only 150 participants responses were in the results, no information regarding the three additional response was mention in the discussion or conclusion (Chapman-Allison, 2016). This section also lacks discussion or information regarding study limitations. Limitations could affect the

## A Quantitative Article Critique

outcome of the research including the self-reporting of survey data. One of the survey questions inquired about relative or friends who have an incarceration history.



### References

- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Huang, J. (2017a). ADS 805 Rubric for Quantitative Dissertation Critique [Class Handout]. Research and Statistics, Niagara University, Lewiston, New York.
- Huang, J. (2017b). Measurement Issues in Quantitative Research [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved from [https://niagara.instructure.com/courses/6409/files/330920?module\\_item\\_id=17593](https://niagara.instructure.com/courses/6409/files/330920?module_item_id=17593)
- Ryan, F., Coughlan, M., & Cronin, P. (2007). Step-by-step guide to critiquing research. Part 2: Qualitative research. *British journal of nursing*, 16(12), 738-744.
- SkillsYouNeed (2015) Writing your Dissertation: Results and Discussion. Retrieved from [www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/what-is-communication.html](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/what-is-communication.html)
- Zohrabi, M. (2013). Mixed method research: Instruments, validity, reliability and reporting findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(2), 254.