



Table: Racial ways of knowing and associated methods in research and knowledge production

This table is taken from a blog post written by Sume Ndumbe-Eyoh titled “On knowledge and racism: How do we know what we know?” [Click here](#) to access the original post.

Epistemology (way of knowing)	Focus	Who has authority to know?	How does one know? Knowledge is based on	What counts as evidence for knowledge?	Canadian or public health examples
<b>Black/White</b>	Contemporary racism is rooted in chattel slavery. Power differentials between Whites and Blacks are considered a persistent aspect of race relations.	African Americans, who have the most authentic experience with racism.  They are surveyed for this knowledge without necessary being considered authorities or experts.	experience of racism, particularly for African Americans. Whites are not “raced,” and other people are thought of as ethnic, cultural or religious groups.	There is a focus on racism as material (and not cultural). Racism is expressed as existing between Black or White racial groups.	Veentra and Patterson’s analysis of health inequalities between Black and White Canadians. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Assimilationist</b>	Discrimination is something that is temporarily experienced by foreigners. Over time, as foreigners assimilate, discrimination reduces.	Immigrants, who are considered ‘successful’ because they have assimilated, and Whites, who are the dominant group and seen as arbiters of [Western] life  Colonized peoples are “non-knowers,” as they insist that	experience of the “knowers,” which is framed in the belief that working hard enough and assimilating will lead to ‘success.’	Personal knowledge focused on success is privileged over large-scale studies that demonstrate discrimination.	Adams’ (in <i>Unlikely Utopia: The surprising triumph of Canadian Multiculturalism</i> ) <sup>10</sup> simultaneous acknowledgement of colonialism, racism and discrimination and suggestion that multiculturalism is a “surprising triumph.”

		racial domination is a reality.			
<b>Colonial domination</b>	The focus is on returning to pre-colonial identity before European colonization.	<p>People who have returned to pre-colonial identity (“decolonized”).</p> <p>Colonizers do not have the ability to be knowers because of their dominant position.</p>	the perspective of the colonized (not the colonizer).	Knowledge is based on a historical evidence of European domination, which is used as the context for understanding current racial and ethnic relations	Borum’s evaluation of the use of afrocentricity as a cultural model for people of African descent. <sup>11</sup>
<b>Critical intersectional</b>	Race is linked to other social identities that influence inequities.	<p>Anyone speaking about their own experience.</p> <p>When speaking for others, one has to acknowledge this “partial perspective.”</p>	<p>various methods, including “scientific method, experience, historical narrative, etc.”<sup>6(p.128)</sup></p> <p>The researcher has to reflect on their relationship with those being studied and how power may influence the research.</p>	<p>Evidence must be validated by participants.</p> <p>This reflects common practices in feminist and qualitative research and can also be applied to quantitative research.</p>	Logie et al.’s analysis of HIV-related stigma, racial discrimination, gender discrimination, physical and mental health–related quality of life among a national cohort of women living with HIV. <sup>12</sup>
<b>Neoliberal positivist</b>	The dominant and mainstream approach, it assumes one universal truth which can be used and applied by anyone through scientific inquiry. There is one reality about racism that can be known. It serves the interest of the dominant group by claiming	Anyone who engages with scientific inquiry that follows a positivist (universal truth) way of knowing	Traditional scientific methods that lead to the truth free from bias. Research is thought to be objective.	Evidence must be gathered and analysed through traditional scientific methods. Experience, history and culture are not considered legitimate sources of knowledge.	A significant proportion of population health surveys in Canada do not readily provide data on race or racialization.

	that racism is a thing of the past.				
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### Abridged reference list

*To see the full list of references, see the source blog post, found [here](#).*

[6.] Hunter M. Rethinking epistemology, methodology, and racism: or, is White sociology really dead? *Race and Society*. 2002;5(2):119-138.

[9.] Veentra G, Patterson AC. Black-White health inequalities in Canada. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*. 2016;18:51-57.

[10.] Adams M. *Unlikely utopia: the surprising triumph of Canadian multiculturalism*. Toronto (ON): Penguin Canada. c2008.

[11.] Borum V. African Americans' perceived sociocultural determinants of suicide: afrocentric implications for public health inequalities. *Social Work in Public Health*. 2014 Nov-Dec;29(7):656-670

[12.] Logie CH, Wang Y, Lacombe-Duncan A, Wagner AC, Kaida A, Conway T, et al. HIV-related stigma, racial discrimination, and gender discrimination: pathways to physical and mental health-related quality of life among a national cohort of women living with HIV. *Prev.Med*. 2018;107:36-44.

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