

Racial and gender discrimination among teens exposed to dating violence

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Teen dating violence (TDV) is an urgent public health concern associated with a range of lasting mental, sexual, and behavioral health consequences. Studies have revealed high rates of dating violence and

sexual coercion among youth of color, with several studies finding black female teens reporting the highest rates of victimization among all demographic groups.

Dr. Lynn Roberts, Assistant Professor of Community Health and Social Sciences, led a study examining the combined associations of racial and [gender discrimination](#) and TDV. The findings were published in the journal *Ethnicity and Disease*.

Roberts and her colleagues applied the Critical Race Theory framework, which asserts that racism is ubiquitous in the lives of people of color, and intersectionality, which recognizes that social identities are interdependent and mutually constitutive, to better understand the disparate impact of TDV on Black female teens.

The study suggests that adolescents reporting both racial and gender discrimination were 2.5 times more likely to experience dating violence than those who did not report racial and gender discrimination (after controlling for age and sex). The researchers recommend that future studies of TDV should examine the relationship between experienced racial and gender discrimination, while controlling for correlates at the individual and family levels, in order to understand and address the impact of TDV.

"I am hoping that our findings will open up more pathways for public health researchers and practitioners to consider and explore intersectionality, a central tenet of Critical Race Theory, in their research and interventions," Roberts says.

More information: Lynn Roberts et al. The Intersectionality of Racial and Gender Discrimination among Teens Exposed to Dating Violence, *Ethnicity & Disease* (2018). [DOI: 10.18865/ed.28.S1.253](https://doi.org/10.18865/ed.28.S1.253)

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