DATA EQUITY IN UNIVERSITY SETTINGS

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PART 1

Overview of data equity

D
Definitions

Data Equity

Underscoring marginalized communities' unequal opportunities to access data and, at times, their harm from data's misuse, data equity is concerned with consideration, through an equity lens, of the ways in which data is collected, analyzed, interpreted, and distributed.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Using metrics, and data to guide strategic decisions that align with goals, objectives, and initiatives.
Tied to the ethics of personal data privacy, big data, and decision making that results from the "datafication" of modern society. Used to encompass the complex meanings that data equity captures, and the ways that harmful decision making may be justified or maintained through data.

Data Equity Trends on College Campus

51% of undergraduate students report being in the lowest income quartile

21 out of every 100 low income and first gen students will have attained a bachelor's degree by 6 years later

PART 2

Data Equity in Practice: Exercise

Case Study: Race-Based Data

United States

Race-based data collected since 1790, with terms and identifiers changing over time

The Census Bureau collects race data, and these data are based on self-identification

Data show higher rates of negative health outcomes and deaths related to COVID-19 among Black populations

Collection of race-based data allows for research and calls to action regarding inequitable impact of COVID-19 based on race

Historically

Pre-COVID

COVID Pandemic

Present

Case Study: Race-Based Data

History

Pre-COVID

COVID Pandemic

Present

Canada

Roots of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism; racially inequitable systems and practices that were established and preserved to present day and the lack of societal recognition of past wrongs

Race-based data is not collected in a routine and/or standard way across Canadian health and clinical databases
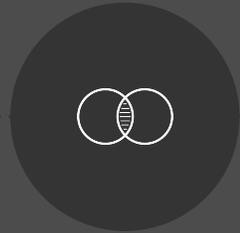
Dearth of data on race makes it difficult to monitor health inequities in the Canadian health care system

CIH releases 'Proposed Standards for Race-Based and Indigenous Identity Data Collection'

United States

Advocacy for racial health equity

Intersectional Approach: 'Two Pandemics'

Targeted Interventions by Race

Increased Accountability: COVID Racial Data Tracker
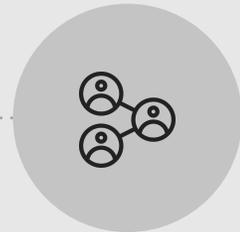
R Results

Canada

COVID health inequities unknown

Lack of effective COVID supports for individuals based on race

Call for standardized collection of race-based data

Pandemic response not intersectional

PART 3

Creating Data Equity Practices at Universities

Action Towards Data Equity

A

Conception

Outreach & Education

Dissemination

- Seek and include communities' interests in design considerations.
- Be aware of how sensitive topics can affect people and communities.
- Consider, 'why am I asking for this data? What will it be used for?'

- Share data equity practices with students and staff.
- Create university-wide data equity vision and mission statements, along with strategic plan.
- Include multiple branches of academia to develop data management strategies.
- Seek student feedback on current data equity practices.

- Account for how publication may reinforce inequities or close disparities.
- Share data to reduce the burden of duplicate data collection.
- Return data and research results to community in a form they can use.
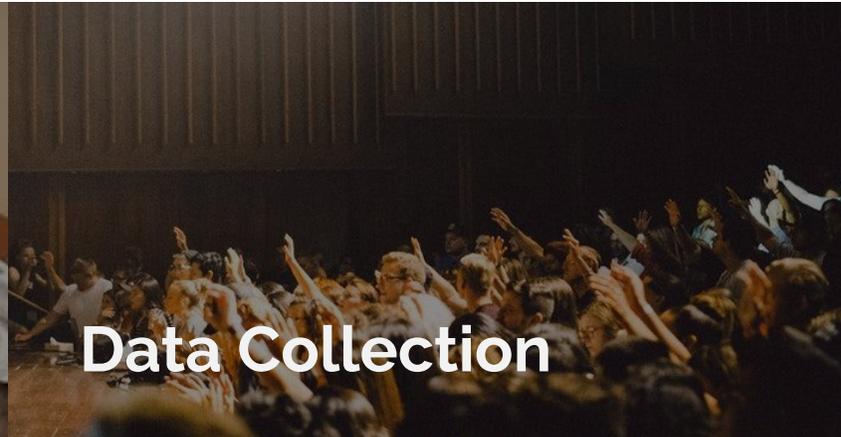- Be transparent about what the plans are for the data.

A
Action in Data Equity

Analysis

Data Collection

Instrumentation

- Seek out and incorporate communities' interpretation of the data.
- Be transparent about the limits of the data.
- Use analytic methods that appropriately suit the data, without collapsing important variables.
- Be aware of interpretation bias.

- Avoid undue burden.
- Incorporate informed consent whenever possible, even if not formally required.
- Stay up to date on appropriate identifiers, making changes as needed.
- Consort with institutional data leaders to advocate for more equitable categorizations.

- Be conscientious about re-identification risk.
- Balance minimizing the amount of personally identifiable information (PII) collected with the need for reflective self-identification categories.

Questions to Consider: Data Collection

Why are we seeking to collect data?

Who is empowered to collect data?

What is the dynamic between question asker vs. question answerer?

Who will be the end user of the data?

Who and what will the data be in service to?

Who are the "experts" in the data project?
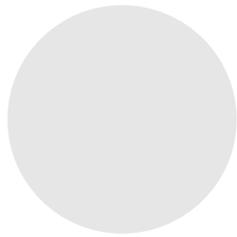
PART 4

Case Example: Collecting Data Equitably

Case Example

"Please select one from the three following options"

Transgender

Lesbian
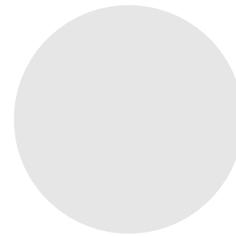
Gay

Barriers of Data Inequity

Intent

Provide identity-specific services to LGBTQ+ populations during COVID

Engender more inclusive data on COVID impact

Learn of barriers faced by LGBTQ+ populations during the pandemic
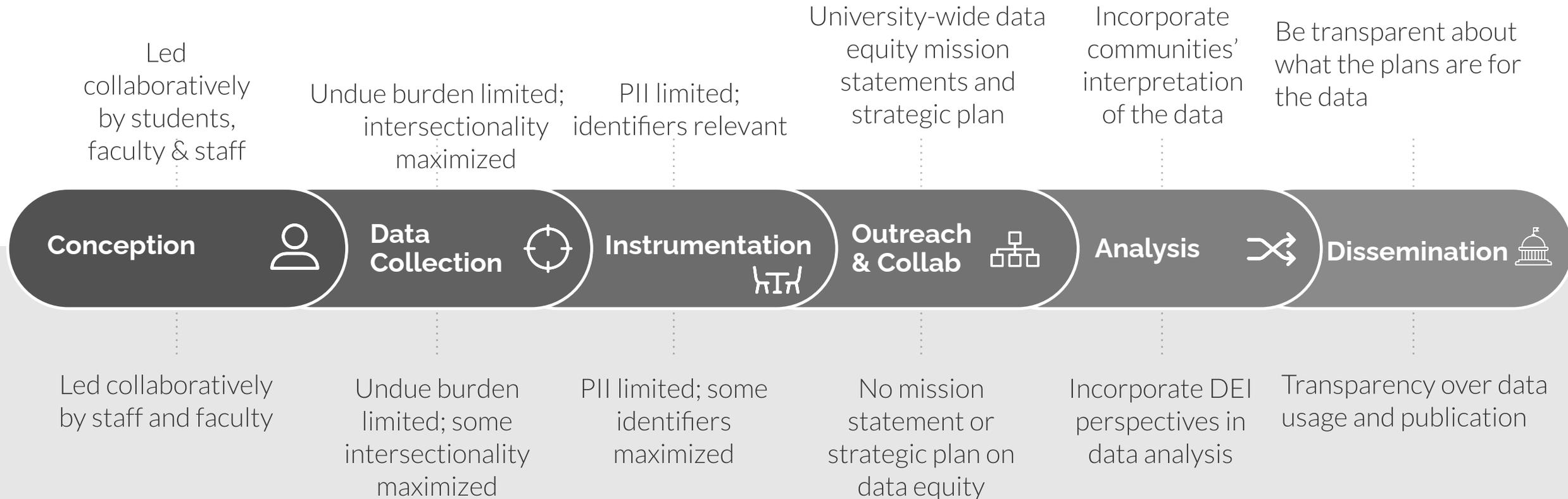
Consequences

Possible need to re-collect data

Misrepresentation of respondents' identities

Discomfort & alienating of respondents, research partners

Influencing Factors

Led collaboratively by students, faculty & staff

Undue burden limited; intersectionality maximized

PII limited; identifiers relevant

University-wide data equity mission statements and strategic plan

Incorporate communities' interpretation of the data

Be transparent about what the plans are for the data

Conception	Data Collection	Instrumentation	Outreach & Collab	Analysis	Dissemination

Led collaboratively by staff and faculty

Undue burden limited; some intersectionality maximized

PII limited; some identifiers maximized

No mission statement or strategic plan on data equity

Incorporate DEI perspectives in data analysis

Transparency over data usage and publication

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References

Research Articles

Kaptchuk, 'Effect of interpretive bias on research evidence' Inequities in COVID-19 Health Outcomes: The Need for Race- and Ethnicity-Based Data

University-level

Pell Institute - Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the US American Council of Education - Data Equity & Accountability
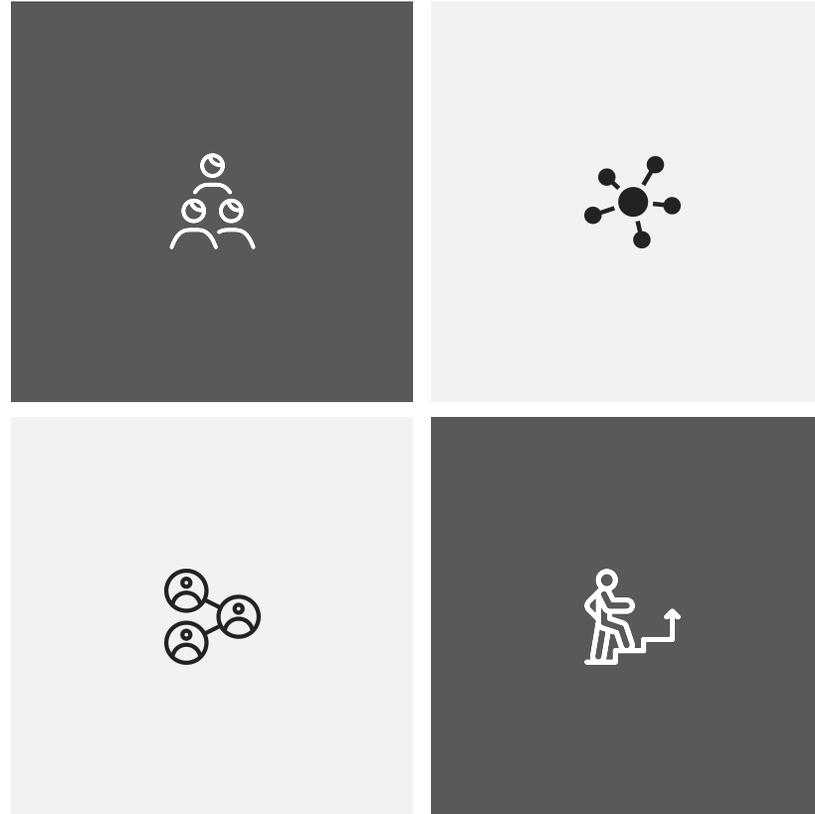
Data Equity Definitions & Practices

Urban Institute - Principles for Advancing Equitable Data Practice JLI Consulting - Data Equity

Other Resources

Education Trust West - Data Equity Walk
US Census - Measuring Race and Ethnicity Across the Decades