

# Prostate Cancer and Afro-Caribbean Men: Experiences, Perceptions, and Beliefs

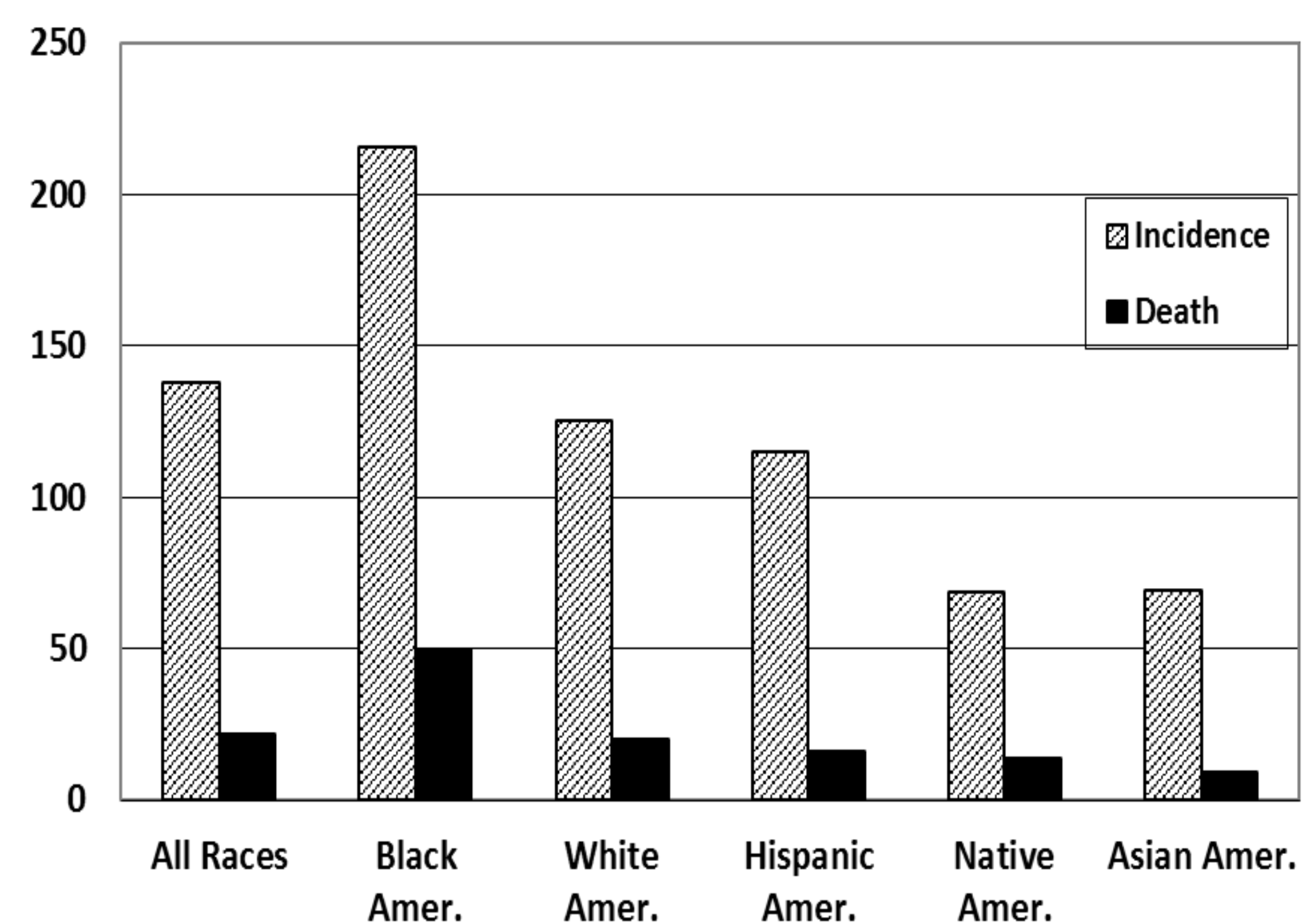
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## Abstract

The incidence of prostate cancer is high among men of African descent. Research questions in this phenomenological study considered the perceptions and beliefs of Afro-Caribbean men. Participants conveyed low disease awareness, but believed that early diagnosis increased survival chances. Findings revealed strategies to help reduce mortality from the disease.

## Problem

### Prostate Cancer Rates in Racial Groups in America



American Cancer Society, 2013; Siegel et al., 2013

### Afro-Caribbean Men in America

- The incidence of prostate cancer in Afro-Caribbean men is **amongst the highest in the world** (Belpomme & Irigaray, 2011; Glover et al., 1998; Mallick et al., 2005).
- Perceptions of prostate cancer may be directly related to whether Afro-Caribbean men seek early diagnosis and treatment, thereby affecting the morbidity and mortality of the disease in this group.
- To date, there has been a **paucity of qualitative studies** of prostate cancer and Afro-Caribbean men in the United States.

## Purpose

To explore and analyze beliefs about prostate cancer in a sample of Afro-Caribbean men.

To provide recommendations on educational and outreach efforts specifically targeted to Afro-Caribbean men.

## Relevant Literature

### Conceptual framework

A synthesis of the **health belief model** (HBM) and the **theory of reasoned action** (TRA).

- HBM explores the relationship between health beliefs and behaviors while attempting to understand and predict how one would comply with appropriate therapies (Clarke-Tasker & Wade, 2002).
- TRA attempts to explain the relationship between attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Poss, 2001).

It was appropriate to combine these two frameworks because HBM does not account for cultural and ethnicity factors that may influence responses in the study group, while TRA allows for culturally based relevance and perspectives (Poss, 2001).

## Research Questions

- RQ1.** What are the lived experiences of Afro-Caribbean men relative to prostate cancer?
- RQ2.** What are the perceptions of risk, risk factors, prevention, detection, and treatment of prostate cancer?
- RQ3:** To what extent, if any, does culture affect the lived experiences, beliefs, and motivation to act relative to prostate cancer for Afro-Caribbean men?

## Procedures

**Design:** A qualitative phenomenological approach using a hermeneutic design.

**Sample:** Purposive homogenous sample of 13 men from 7 Caribbean countries, who were between 40 and 75 years old and had resided in the US for a minimum of 10 years.

### Instrumentation

- 8 - 12 researcher-designed, open ended questions using one-on-one interviews.
- Audio-taped and member-checked for data validation.

## Data Analysis

After the interview data were transcribed and sorted, patterns were coded, classified, and labeled in order to identify emergent themes.

## Findings

### Emergent themes

- Awareness has a lot to do with it
- it's a matter of attitude
- if something is wrong, my doctor will tell me
- I know very little about the disease
- I don't worry about it
- if I got the disease I would be concerned
- you can still live a long live if treated early and follow doctor's advice
- prostate cancer may affect my lifestyle
- finance and health insurance can be burdens
- there is a stigma with the anal stuff

### Interpretation of findings

- Low level of awareness and little education about prostate cancer.
- High level of awareness of the importance of disease education.
- High percentage (92%) of participants were tested.
- If disease was caught early, there is a high probability of a long life.
- Role of culture was minimal.

## Limitations

Potential researcher bias.

Categorizing men from Caribbean region as a single group

Using only one method of data collection.

Purposive sampling strategy and small sample size.

## Conclusions

**Education** and **awareness** are primary factors in motivating Afro-Caribbean men to seek early prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Most participants seemed **eager to acquire the necessary information** to help them make diagnosis and treatment decisions.

**Culture played an insignificant role** in participants' perceptions, attitudes, and decisions.

If education and awareness programs were made available, participants would be more proactive.

## Social Change Implications

Findings from this research:

- Provides valuable insights into how to target Afro-Caribbean men for early detection and educational programs aimed at increasing awareness, prevention, and treatment.
- May also assist in facilitating the development of strategies aimed at the overall management of PC in Afro-Caribbean men.
- Add to the body of knowledge on PC and Afro-Caribbean men with the hope of increasing awareness of how this ethnic group perceives, experiences, and manages this potential deadly disease.

Chair: **Robert Hoye**, Second Member: **Jim Goes**, URR Member: **Vincent Agboto**