APA Fact Sheet Series on Psychologist Supply and Demand Projections 2015-2030: Racial/Ethnic Equivalence

Key Findings

- If current health service utilization patterns continue, the national demand for psychologists is expected to be **101,120 FTE**s by 2030, an increase of **5,940 FTEs** (**6%**) from 2015.
- However, under a hypothetical racial/ethnic equivalence scenario, the national demand is projected to increase by an **31,020 FTEs**, or **33%**, to **126,200 FTEs** in 2030.
- Under this scenario, the demand is projected to increase by **7,100 FTEs** within the Black/African American population, **14,320 FTEs** within the Hispanic population, **2,120** within the White population, and **7,480** within other racial/ ethnic groups.

Background

Workforce projections[1] examine current and future psychologist supply and demand in the United States from 2015 to 2030. Supply is determined on the basis of the number of licensed psychologists active in the workforce,[2] new entrants, and workforce participation patterns, whereas demand is determined on the basis of current patterns of service utilization and projected demographic changes in the U.S. population.

The projections examined a hypothetical "racial/ethnic equivalence" scenario. This scenario projected demand if the entire U.S. population had service utilization patterns similar to the insured non-Hispanic White population in metropolitan areas.

The projections are described in terms of full-time equivalent (FTE) psychologists. An FTE is defined as a licensed, doctoral-level psychologist who works 39 hours per week.

Findings

From 2015 to 2030, the national demand for psychologists is projected to increase to 101,120 FTEs. That is an increase of 5,940 FTEs (6%) from the demand level in 2015. This assumes that current utilization patterns of health services within the population will continue.

However, under the racial/ethnic equivalence scenario, the national demand is projected to increase by a *total* of 31,020 FTEs (33%) between 2015 and 2030, which is an *additional* 25,080 FTEs on top of the 5,940 FTE increase projected under the baseline scenario. In 2030, demand is projected to be 126,200 FTEs under the racial/ethnic equivalence scenario. By racial/ethnic groups,[3] the projections under the racial/ethnic equivalence scenario indicated:

- Within the Black/African American population, demand will increase by a total of 7,100 FTEs, or 66%, to 17,820 FTEs in 2030.
- Within the Hispanic population, demand will increase by 14,320 FTEs, or 106%, to 27,840 FTEs in 2030.
- Within the White population, demand will increase by 2,120 FTEs, or 3%, to 66,900 FTEs in 2030.
- Within other racial/ethnic groups, demand will increase by 7,480 FTEs, or 112%, to 13,640 FTEs in 2030.

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[1] IHS Markit. (2018). *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

[2] Includes licensed psychologists actively working in a position that requires a psychology license, or in a position that does not require a psychology license but uses clinical skills and/or training as a psychologist.

[3] Racial/ethnic groups were treated here as mutually exclusive. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Racial/ethnic minority groups include Black/African American, Hispanic, and other racial/ethnic minority groups (Asian, Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and people of two or more races). These racial/ethnic groups were combined due to their relatively small sizes, and in some cases, the lack of detailed breakdown of racial/ethnic categories within federal data sources.

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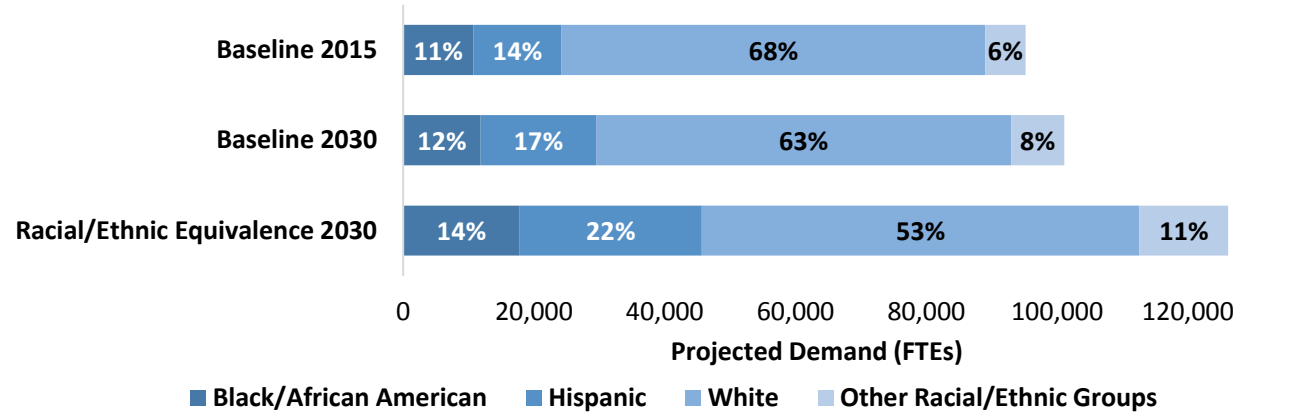
Projected Demand for Psychologists under Different Scenarios, 2015-2030

Racial/Ethnic Groups	2015 Baseline Demand	Baseline 2030			Racial/Ethnic Equivalence 2030			Increase due to Racial/Ethnic Equivalence
		2030 Projected Demand	FTE Change	Percent Change	2030 Projected Demand	FTE Change	Percent Change	
White	64,790	63,480	-1,310	-2%	66,900	2,120	3%	3,430
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	30,400	37,640	7,250	24%	59,300	28,900	95%	21,650
Black/African American	10,730	11,870	1,140	11%	17,820	7,100	66%	5,960
Hispanic	13,520	17,630	4,120	30%	27,840	14,320	106%	10,200
Other	6,160	8,150	1,990	32%	13,640	7,480	122%	5,490
All	95,180	101,120	5,940	6%	126,200	31,020	33%	25,080

Note: "Other" racial/ethnic groups include Asian, Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and people of two or more races. These groups were combined due to their relative small sizes, and in some cases, the lack of detailed breakdown of racial/ethnic categories within federal data sources. FTE Change = 2030 Projected Demand – 2015 Baseline Demand; Percent Change = FTE Change / 2015 Baseline Demand; Increase due to Racial/Ethnic Equivalence = Projected Demand under Racial/Ethnic Equivalence 2030 – Projected Demand under Baseline 2030. Projected FTEs were rounded to the nearest ten. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Source: IHS Markit. *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand* (2018).

Projected Demand for Different Scenarios by Racial/Ethnic Group, 2015-2030



Note: "Other" racial/ethnic groups include Asian, Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and people of two or more races. These groups were combined due to their relative small sizes, and in some cases, the lack of detailed breakdown of racial/ethnic categories within federal data sources. Percentages are based on total demand for psychologists in 2015 (95,180 FTEs), baseline 2030 (101,120 FTEs), and barriers removed scenario 2030 (126,200 FTEs). Details may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: IHS Markit, *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand* (2018).

Limitations

Workforce projections are based on available data that reflect current patterns. Several limitations are worth noting. Demand is based on service utilization rather than need. It is likely that the need for psychological services exceeds current utilization levels. While the projections include psychology specialties, available data do not enable separate projections by specialty. Workload definitions for psychologists in federal data sources emphasize mental health services, rather than health services more broadly. It is likely that the projections underestimate psychologists' provision of physical health-related services. Therefore, demand for health services may be higher than estimated here.

American Psychological Association

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