

**CONFIDENTIAL: DRAFT PROPORTIONAL-EQUITY-RATIO® (OR “P-E-R”®)
2006-2020 AKA SOCIETAL INEQUALITY RATIO® OR SYSTEM INEQUALITY
RATIO (i.e., “S-I-R” OR “SIR”®) 2006-2020**

WHAT IS THE “P-E-R®”

The “Proportional Equity Ratio (or “P-E-R”)®”¹ is a simple *quantitative metric* that can be an effective tool in better understanding, discussing and framing certain *qualitative social phenomena* such as racial discrimination, *gender bias*, economic *exploitation*, healthcare deprivation, *political oppression* and more. P-E-R was developed to highlight, in succinct mathematical terms, many of the glaring inequalities rife within US society. Specifically, P-E-R® presents an opportunity “to put a number on” the degree of inequality existing between (and/or among) comparable, yet differently-treated, groups within a society.

Mathematically speaking, the P-E-R utilizes aspects of set theory and is derived through the execution of a series of basic ratio calculations, and a final ratio-of-ratios calculation. Specifically, the P-E-R captures the degree to which proportional or weighted inequalities exist between comparable groups or “groupings”² within a given “*general population*” (or “*set*”), **when also contrasted with the ratio of each group’s presence in a selected “*subset population*”.**

On Calculating the P-E-R®

As we demonstrate in the **examples** below, the actual calculations are usually done in a two-stage process.

First Stage (ratio calculations): Divide the ratio of each compared group’s presence in the selected subset population by its correlating presence in the given general population (or set)³. We call each of these calculated amounts, an “*equity ratio*”. **Using a calculator or computer, expresses equity ratio amounts in *decimal* terms.** Typically, the equity ratio for each compared group differs and is therefore unequal. It is by calculating the proportional difference between equity ratios, that the

¹ The “Proportional Equity Ratio® /P-E-R®” was developed by Akinlabi E. A. Mackall in 2006; and the name(s) was/were coined, by AEAM in 2006-07.

² The term “groupings”, here refers to the combining of two, or more, comparable groups to become “one new comparable group”.

³ Mathematically, a group’s presence in a general population and/or in a subset population is commonly expressed, in written and oral presentations, in “percent” terms. However, a group’s presence can also be expressed as a decimal or even, in limited circumstances, as a fraction. Since the P-E-R is a calculation, it is initially expressed as a decimal.

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P-E-R is determined.⁴

Second Stage (ratio-of ratios calculation): Next, to determine the P-E-R, simply divide the larger equity ratio from the first stage by the smaller equity ratio. The P-E-R is thus a weighted number; reflecting the amount, greater than 100%, by which, the group with the larger equity ratio is present in the subset population, when compared to the group with the smaller equity ratio. The “weighting” is also a function of each group’s, *relative size (percentage) within the general population.*

**Proportional Equity Ratio® (P-E-R®) Terms, Symbols and Formula
...as cited in “First Stage” and “Second Stage” above**

Where two comparable groups are evaluated:

SS_A = % of Group A in Selected Subset Population

SS_B = % of Group B in Selected Subset Population

GP_A = % of Group A in General Population

GP_B = % of Group B in General Population

ER_A = Equity Ratio for Group A

ER_B = Equity Ratio for Group B

>ER = Larger Equity Ratio

<ER = Smaller Equity Ratio

P-E-R = Proportional Equity Ratio®

Then **Stage One** equations are:

(1) $SS_A \div GP_A = \underline{ER_A}$

(2) $SS_B \div GP_B = \underline{ER_B}$

Note: When $ER_A \neq ER_B$, proceed to Stage Two

And ∴ the **Stage Two** equation is: $>ER \div <ER = \underline{P-E-R}$

⁴ If, in the very rare occurrence, that the equity ratios of compared groups are the same, they are said to have proportionality (i.e., a 1:1 correlation) or equality. Their P-E-R is therefore “1”; and no stage two calculation would be required.

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WHY P-E-R...

It is my contention that a formulation of inequality within a society, which succinctly states that one demographic group of people is X times more likely than another group to “own their home” or “have excellent health care” or, conversely, to “be incarcerated” or “drop out of school”, etc., is both clear and potentially powerful. Of course, the underlying data must be accurate and the integrity and accuracy of the math processes are essential. The P-E-R® is such a formulation. I further contend that such a formulation is not used nearly enough; nor is it made accessible enough to the general population.

The P-E-R calculation is especially helpful in assessing the relative equity between or among comparable demographic groups within a society or social system. The closer the ratios of the compared groups are to quantitative proportionality (i.e., a 1:1 correlation) or equality, the closer the groups often are to a *qualitative state of “equity”*; and *vice versa*⁵. In US society, as in many other social systems, core demographic elements such as race, class and gender have proven to be critical sectors in which “difference” has meant profound inequality.

P-E-R® can offer the social justice activist, the research analyst, or the middle school student another means of quantifying selected inequalities in “status” or “opportunity” between comparable demographic groups within a society (or general population).

P-E-R® captures, in quantitative terms, some of the stark realities of institutionalized racism, discrimination and exploitation. Regular usage of this metric will clarify for average people and policy makers alike the compounding effects of “inequality” within society. The many social, economic, health, housing, educational, political and carceral inequities don’t wait their turn, to impact the lives of people struggling in certain demographic groups. The problems usually come in droves; and often with devastating results. The P-E-R® is actually a “multiplier”, which, we think helps to frame inequalities more glaringly; and in a light/context more demanding of meaningful redress. Over time, it may prove to be another instrument in the toolkit for comprehensive, systemic change. SISDS⁶ has long sought to find effective

⁵ Correlatively, the further the ratios of the compared groups are from quantitative proportionality or equality, the further the groups are from a qualitative state of “equity”.

⁶ S.E.E.D.S. Institute for Self Determination and Sustainability (SISDS) is the S.E.E.D.S., Inc. research and policy planning, analysis & implementation arm.

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ways to overcome the faux improvements of “*institutional tweaking*”. [We now seek your input on critiquing this piece and assessing the utility of the P-E-R®.]

When utilizing the P-E-R, the “selected subset populations” typically have either clearly positive (desirable) or clearly negative (undesirable) denotations within society (i.e., within the “general population”).

Therefore, in **Example One** below, we calculate the P-E-R for *Black males and white males in US state and federal prisons*; a clearly negative societal denotation.

In **Example Two**, we calculate the P-E-R for two groupings of *students* that had been admitted into the eight most highly rated *NYC specialized public high schools*; a clearly positive societal denotation.

Example Three is a longitudinal extension of example two, in which we calculate P-E-Rs for three limited-overlap, 4-year student enrollment cohorts, spanning 13 years.

In using the P-E-R in *longitudinal inquiries*, the analyst can also gain targeted insights regarding the degree to which a society or social system is becoming more responsive to gross inequalities and thus, more equitable over time.

In **Example Four**, 4 groups are compared. The given information is supplemented with a *table format* (Table Two) to more efficiently present the four Equity Ratios in the first stage calculations and the six P-E-Rs calculated in the second stage.

Example One: P-E-R® of Two Comparable Groups in 2011 *Black males in the US population and white males in the US population compared to Black and white males in the U. S., state & federal prison population.*⁷

A. [1st Stage] While, in 2011 there was a substantially smaller percentage of Black males in the US population (≈ 6.5%) than white

⁷ Data Source(s): Bureau of Census 2011; OJP/Bureau Justice Statistics (BJS) “Prisoners in 2011” [Table 7], E. Anne Carson, et al. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p11.pdf>

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males (> 35%), Black males were 36.1% of the US prison population and white males were 30.25%. Therefore, the ratio of Black males in prison to Black males in the general US population was an overwhelmingly high 36.1% to 6.5% [36.1÷6.5]; for a 5.55 (or 5.55:1) equity ratio. The ratio of white males in prison to white males in the general population happened to be much closer to proportionality: 30.25% to 35.6% [30.25÷35.6] for an equity ratio of .85 (or .85:1.0).

B. [2nd Stage] Since the P-E-R calculation is done in two steps, we next compare (by dividing) the *larger* equity ratio of Black males in prison and Black males in the US by the *smaller* equity ratio of white males in prison and white males in the US: 5.55 to .85 or $5.55 \div .85 \approx 6.53 \quad \therefore \text{P-E-R} \approx 6.53 \text{ (to 1)}$.

This means that *based on their respective percentages within the US population*, Black males were incarcerated at a rate of *more than six and one-half times* (i.e., >650%) that of white males in 2011.

Example Two: P-E-R of Two Comparable Groupings in 2005

New York City (NYC) Public School Black students & Latinx (B & L) students compared to their Asian student & white (A & W) student counterparts regarding admittance to the specialized high school admission test (SHSAT) schools.⁸

A. [1st Stage] While, in 2005-06 there was a substantially smaller percentage of Asian & white students in the NYC general student population ($\approx 28\%$), than Black & Latinx ($\approx 72\%$); Asian & white students were 84% of the NYC specialized high school student population and Black & Latinx students were 16%. Therefore, the ratio of Asian & white students in specialized high schools to Asian & white students in the general NYC student population was an extremely high 84% to 28% [84÷28] for a **3.0 (or 3.0:1) equity ratio**. The ratio of Black & Latinx students to Black & Latinx students in the general population was hugely disproportional: 16% to 72% [16÷72] for an equity ratio of **.222... (or .222:1.0)**.

⁸ Data sources: NYC DoE 2005-06; NYS Ed Department 2005-06; SISDS 2010 Education Study Update.

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- B. [2nd Stage] Since the P-E-R calculation is done in two steps, we next compare, by dividing the *larger* equity ratio of Asian & white students in NYC specialized high school and Asian & white students NYC general student population by the *smaller* equity ratio of Black & Latinx students in the NYC specialized high schools and Black & Latinx students in the NYC general student population: $3.0 \div .222... \approx 13.5 \therefore \text{P-E-R} \approx 13.5$ (to 1).

This means that *based on their respective percentages within the NYC public school student population*, Asian & white students were 13.5 times (i.e., 1,350%) more likely than Black & Latinx students to gain admission to the NYC SHSAT high schools in 2005. This degree of inequality is substantially greater than an “order of magnitude” (i.e., 10x or 1,000%). Average people and policymakers alike, must realize that to correct such levels of inequality, profound systemic changes are required -and nothing less.

Example Three: Longitudinal P-E-R® of Two Comparable Groupings in 2005, 2011 & 2019: New York City (NYC) Public School Black students & Latinx students (B & L) compared to their Asian student & white (A & W) student counterparts regarding admittance to the specialized high school admission test (SHSAT) schools.

TABLE ONE: NYC Specialized Test HS 3-Year Demographic Enrollment Data (2005-06, 2010-11, 2018-19)

% B & L Pub School Students 2005-06		% A & W Pub School Students 2005-06		% B & L SP TEST HS Students 2005-06		% A & W SP TEST HS Students 2005-06	
35	37	14	14	9	7		
72		28		16		84	

% B & L Pub School Students	% A & W Pub School Students	% B & L SP TEST HS Students	% A & W SP TEST HS Students

⁹ NYC DoE & NYSED Data sources for 2010-11 to be re-confirmed.

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2011		2011		2011		2011	
31	41	14	14	5	6		
72		28		11		87	
% B & L Pub School Students 2019	% A & W Pub School Students 2019	% B & L SP TEST HS Students 2019	% A & W SP ¹⁰ TEST HS Students 2019				
25.5	40.6	16.2	15.1	3.9	6.3	61.6	24.3
66.1		31.3		10.2		85.9	

A. **[1st Stage]** While, in 2005-06 there was a substantially smaller percentage of Asian & white students in the NYC general student population ($\approx 28\%$), than Black & Latinx ($\approx 72\%$); Asian & white students were 84% of the NYC specialized high school student population and Black & Latinx students were 16%. Therefore, the ratio of Asian & white students in specialized high schools to Asian & white students in the general NYC student population was an extremely high 84% to 28% [$84 \div 28$] for a **3.0 (or 3.0:1) equity ratio**. The ratio of Black & Latinx students to Black & Latinx students in the general population was hugely disproportional: 16% to 72% [$16 \div 72$] for an **equity ratio of .222... (or .222:1.0)**.

B. **[2nd Stage]** Since the P-E-R calculation is done in two steps, we next compare, by dividing the *larger* equity ratio of Asian & white students in NYC specialized high school and Asian & white students NYC general student population by the *smaller* equity ratio of Black & Latinx students in the NYC specialized high schools and Black & Latinx students in the NYC general student population: $3.0 \div .222... \approx 13.5 \therefore$ **P-E-R ≈ 13.5 (to 1)**.

C. **[1st Stage]** While, in 2010-11 there was a substantially smaller

¹⁰ NYC DoE Data At-A-Glance (2019):
<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/reports/doe-data-at-a-glance>
<https://council.nyc.gov/data/school-diversity-in-nyc/>

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percentage of Asian & white students in the NYC general student population ($\approx 28\%$), than Black & Latinx ($\approx 72\%$); Asian & white students were 87% of the NYC specialized high school student population and Black & Latinx students were 11%. Therefore, the ratio of Asian & white students in specialized high schools to Asian & white students in the general NYC student population was an extremely high 87% to 28% [$87 \div 28$] for a **3.11 (or 3.11:1) equity ratio**. The ratio of Black & Latinx students to Black & Latinx students in the general population was hugely disproportional: 11% to 72% [$11 \div 72$] for an equity ratio of **.1527... (or .1527...:1.0)**.

- D. **[2nd Stage]** Since the P-E-R calculation is done in two steps, we next compare, by dividing the *larger* equity ratio of Asian & white students in NYC specialized high school and Asian & white students NYC general student population by the *smaller* equity ratio of Black & Latinx students in the NYC specialized high schools and Black & Latinx students in the NYC general student population: $3.11 \div .1527... \approx 20.35 \therefore$ P-E-R ≈ 20.35 (to 1).
- E. **[1st Stage]** While, in 2018-19, there was a substantially smaller percentage of Asian & white students in the NYC general student population ($\approx 31.3\%$), than Black & Latinx ($\approx 66.1\%$); Asian & white students were 85.9% of the NYC specialized high school student population and Black & Latinx students were 10.2%. Therefore, the ratio of Asian & white students in specialized high schools to Asian & white students in the general NYC student population was an extremely high 85.9% to 31.3% [$85.9 \div 31.3$] for a **2.74 (or 2.74:1) equity ratio**. The ratio of Black & Latinx students to Black & LatinX students in the general population was hugely disproportional: 10.2% to 66.1% [$10.2 \div 66.1$] for an equity ratio of **.1543 (or .1543:1.0)**.
- F. **[2nd Stage]** Since the P-E-R calculation is done in two steps, we next compare, by dividing the *larger* equity ratio of Asian & white students in NYC specialized high school and Asian & white students NYC general student population by the *smaller* equity ratio of Black & Latinx students in the NYC specialized high schools and Black & Latinx students in the NYC general student population: $2.74 \div .1543 \approx 17.76 \therefore$ P-E-R ≈ 17.76 (to 1).

This means that *based on their respective percentages within*

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the NYC public school student population, Asian & white students were 13.5 (i.e., 1,350%), 20.35 (i.e., 2,035%) & 17.76 (i.e., 1,776%) times more likely than Black & Latinx students to gain admission to the NYC SHSAT high schools in 2006, 2011 & 2019 respectively. The two latter years produced P-E-Rs that were approximately 150 percent and 132 percent greater respectively, than the huge inequality in Black and Latinx enrollment already evidenced in year one (2005). Thus there is no indication of meaningful movement toward a truly more equitable admissions alignment between the two demographic student groupings.

Furthermore, these degrees of inequality are all substantially greater than an “order of magnitude” (i.e., 10x or 1,000%). In fact, the P-E-R in 2011 was more than 2 orders of magnitude; and in 2019, more than 1.77 orders of magnitude. Average people and policymakers alike, must realize that to correct such extreme, clearly structural inequality, profound structural re-imagining of the specialized high school student admissions system, as well as a critical analysis of student admissions preparation processes, are urgently required - and nothing less.

Example Four: P-E-R® of Four Comparable Groups in 2020: A weighted comparison of death rates through June 2020, from the COVID19 Pandemic, in New York City among Black, Latinx, white and Asian residents.

A. [1st Stage] In 2020, there are an estimated 32% white, 29% Latinx, 22% Black and 14% Asian residents in New York City. However, the death rates through June from COVID-19, for these four demographic groups were: 27%, 34%, 28% and 7%, respectively. Thus, NYC’s Black and Latinx residents died at rates slightly more than 27 percent and 17 percent *greater than* their respective presences in the general population. While the white and Asian residents died at rates that were slightly under 16 percent, and exactly 50 percent *less than* their respective presences in the general population.

Since there are four compared groups, there are also four Equity Ratios (ERs) to be calculated in the first stage: Group A, Black residents: $.28 \div .22 \approx 1.2727$ (ERA); Group B, Latinx residents: $.34 \div .29 \approx 1.1724$ (ERB); Group C, white residents: $.27 \div .32 \approx .8438$ (ERC); Group D, Asian residents: $.07 \div .14 = .5$ (ERD). Note that the ERs are presented in descending order.

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B. [2nd Stage] A P-E-R is calculated by dividing the larger equity ratio by the smaller equity ratio ($>ER \div <ER = P-E-R$). From the four equity ratios in the first stage, six P-E-Rs have been derived in the second stage. [See “Table Two”, below.] Here, P-E-R calculations quantify the relative degree of inequality or disproportionality of the COVID19 death rates between NYC’s Black, Latinx, white and Asian residents through June 2020. The P-E-Rs for the foregoing resident groups are: Black: P-E-R1 \approx 1.09 (to 1) of Latinx residents; P-E-R2 \approx 1.51 (to 1) white residents, and P-E-R3 \approx 2.545 (to 1) Asian residents. Latinx: P-E-R4 \approx 1.39 (to 1) of white residents; P-E-R5 \approx 2.345 (to 1) of Asian residents. White: P-E-R6 \approx 1.688 (to 1) of Asian residents.

Given: Proportional Equity Ratio® (P-E-R®) Terms, Symbols and Formula

Where *four* comparable demographic groups are evaluated:

Stage One

- SSA: % of Group A in Selected Subset Population
- SSB: % of Group B in Selected Subset Population
- SSC: % of Group C in Selected Subset Population
- SSD: % of Group D in Selected Subset Population
- GPA: % of Group A in General Population
- GPB: % of Group B in General Population
- GPC: % of Group C in General Population
- GPD: % of Group D in General Population
- ERA: Equity Ratio for Group A
- ERB: Equity Ratio for Group B
- ERC: Equity Ratio for Group C
- ERD: Equity Ratio for Group D

Then **Stage One** equations are:

- (1) $SSA \div GPA = \underline{ERA}$
- (2) $SSB \div GPB = \underline{ERB}$
- (3) $SSC \div GPC = \underline{ERC}$
- (4) $SSD \div GPD = \underline{ERD}$

Stage Two

P-E-R® = (Larger Equity Ratio) $>ER \div <ER$ (Smaller Equity Ratio)

And \therefore the **Stage Two** equations are: $>ERA \div <ERB = \underline{P-E-R1}$; $>ERA \div <ERC = \underline{P-E-R2}$;
 $>ERA \div <ERD = \underline{P-E-R3}$; $>ERB \div <ERC = \underline{P-E-R4}$; $>ERB \div <ERD = \underline{P-E-R5}$; $>ERC \div <ERD = \underline{P-E-R6}$;

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TABLE TWO: P-E-R® NYC COVID-19 RACIAL GROUP DEATH DATA¹¹

	B¹² (Grp A)	LX (GRP B)	W (Grp C)	A (Grp D)
[Stage One]				
SS÷GP= ER	.28÷.22 ^A	.34÷.29 ^B	.27÷.32 ^c	.07÷.14 ^D
Equity Ratios:	ER _A = 1.2727	ER _B = 1.1724	ER _C = .8438	ER _D = .50
[Stage Two]				
>ER÷<ER = P-E-R				
P-E-R_{1,2,3}:	1.2727÷1.1724 ≈ <u>1.09</u> ; 1.2727÷.8438 ≈ <u>1.5083</u> ; 1.2727÷.50 ≈ <u>2.545</u>			
P-E-R_{4,5}:	1.1724 ÷ .8438 ≈ <u>1.39</u> ; 1.1724÷.50 ≈ <u>2.345</u>			
P-E-R₆:	.8438 ÷ .5 ≈ <u>1.688</u>			
P-E-R_{1,2,3}:	→ B	1.0856₁	1.5083₂	2.5454₃
P-E-R_{4,5}:	→ Lx		1.3894₄	2.3448₅
P-E-R₆:	→ W			1.6876₆

These data suggest that during the period in question Black and Latinx NYC residents (1) died from COVID19 at proximate rates to each other; and those rates ranged from about 1.4 times & 1.5 times that of NYC’s white resident COVID19 death rate to an astounding 2.5 times & 2.3 times that of Asian residents. The COVID19 death rate for white residents was nearly 1.7 times that of Asian residents.

Our purpose in this writing is to introduce and provide insights on the workings of the Proportional Equity Ratio® and its potential utility to justice activists, a multi-sector array of researchers & analysts, as well as interested members of the general public. However, the extreme, relative success of the city’s Asian residents to avoid any proximate death rate to the other compared groups, should draw significant inquiry as to what life-preserving “best practices” might be identifiable.

¹¹ SOURCES: P-E-R calculations based on: (1) <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page>
 (2) <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/new-york-city-ny-population>
 (3) <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/newyorkcitynewyork>

¹² Legend: **B**: African Ancestry/Black; **Lx**: Latinx; **W**: White, not Hispanic; **A**: Asian & Pacific Islander;

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P-E-R® has been introduced in this writing to spur consideration of its potential utility as an aid in the struggle for a more just and equitable society. We suspect that the proliferation of the P-E-R concept in the consciousness and on the lips of many can and will hasten movement toward that equitable society.

RELATED USES OF P-E-R (TO BE COMPLETED)

In the coming months, SISDS will present P-E-R *interdisciplinary compilation* data. These are data, which will coherently quantify and underscore the interconnectedness of key sectors of U.S. structural inequality.¹³ These P-E-R data are intended to better arm “justice activists”, researchers, analysts and serious policymakers, who struggle for fundamental, systemic change.

Also, to date, P-E-R® is utilized to frame and amplify socio-economic & socio-political data. However, there may be other significant taxonomic uses for it, in such areas as the sciences, medicine and mathematics.

INTERNAL

¹³ Disciplines and sectors such as race, class, gender, economics, income, housing, education, criminal ‘justice’, healthcare et al.