

# **EVALUATION**

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# A Community Outreach Program to Reduce Cancer Disparities

- Increase health literacy
- Facilitate adherence to prevention and screening guidelines
- Increase clinical trials knowledge and exploration of clinical trials opportunities
- Increase diversity of nation's workforce

# Defining Our Program's Evaluation Goals

- Guide program's development
- Identify who will pursue cancer careers
- Identify students at risk of poor outcomes
- Identify barriers to students' persistence
- Identify strong and weak student mentors
- Identify impact of the program

# What Informs the Evaluation's Focus?

- Who is the audience of the evaluation?
  - Research team
  - NCI
  - University
  - Journal readers
- How will results be used?
- Could evaluation cause unintentional harm?

# Thinking about Evaluation Chronologically

- Proximal/Immediate/Short Term
- Intermediate/Medium Term
- Distal/Long Term

# Thinking of Evaluation from Start to Finish

- What influences attainment of those outcomes?

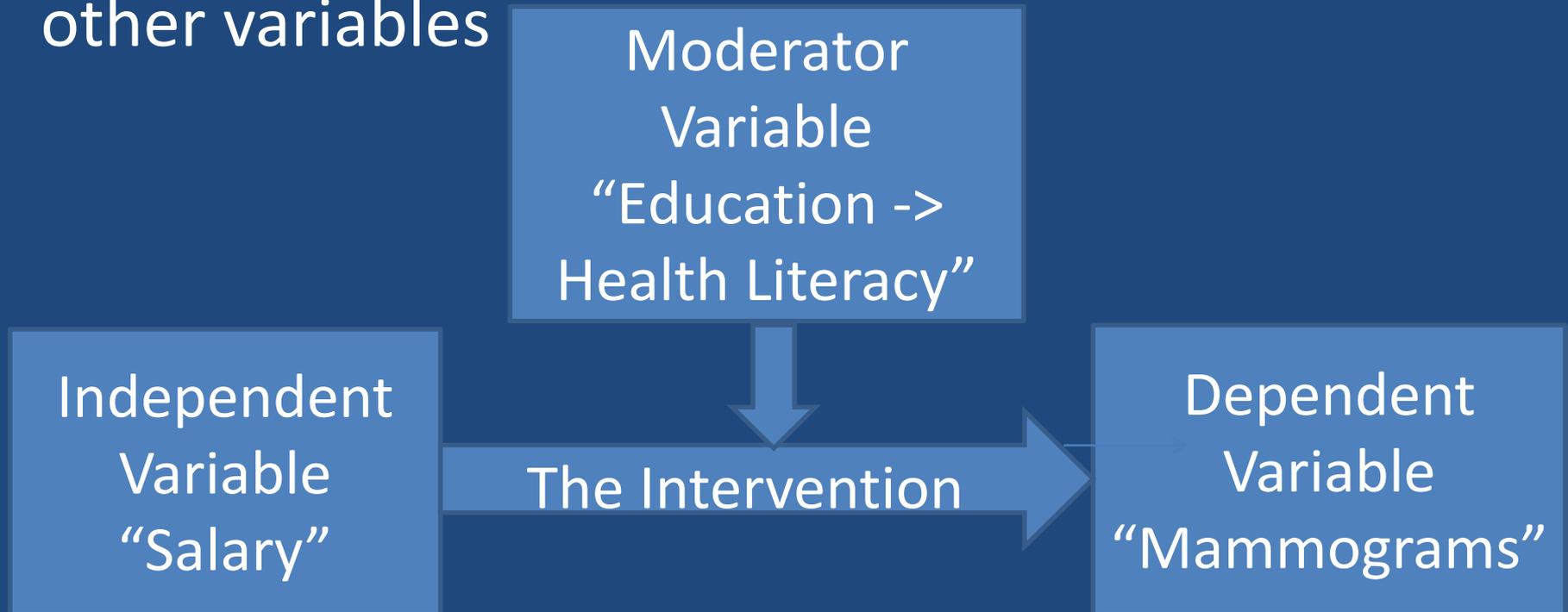
## The Program!

- But there's more.... the in between things
  - The moderators
  - The mediators

# Moderator Variables

## “The Influencer” Variable

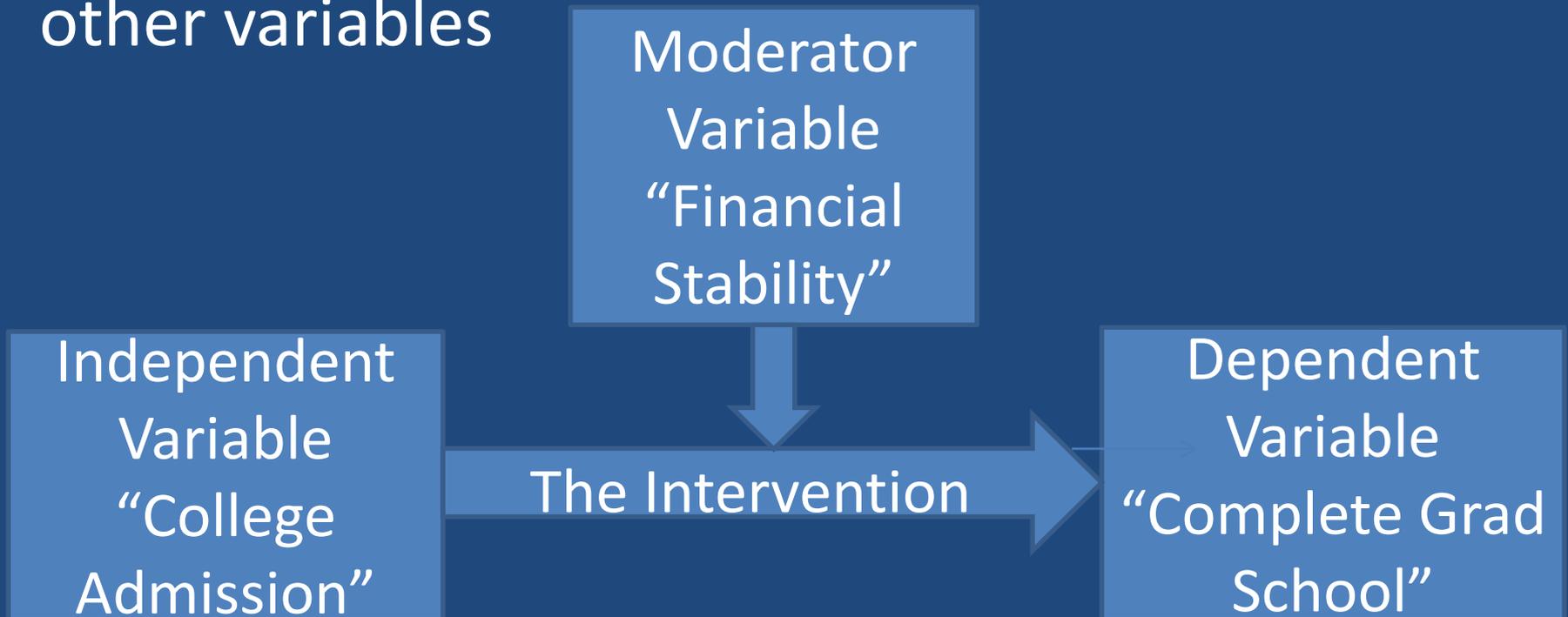
A pre-existing variable that influences strength and/or direction of the relationship between two other variables



# Moderator Variables

## “The Influencer” Variable

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# Examples of Moderator Variables

- **Qualitative Moderators – Non-numeric variables**
  - Parental support for graduate school
  - Language proficiency
  - Parents' education
  - Race
  - Student's perception of mentor's investment in the student
- **Quantitative Moderators – Numeric variables**
  - GPA
  - Number of grad school applications
  - Hours of lab work completed
  - Psychosocial scores related to emotional well-being

# Mediator Variables

## “The Middle Man” Variable

- A pre-existing variable between an independent variable and a dependent variable
- Variable that explains the relations between the two other variables



# Excited about using more measures? Challenges Faced by R25 Evaluations

- Sample size
- Comparable control groups
- Need for standardized, validated & normed instruments for our students
- Factors impacting students beyond program's control
- Long term follow-up – 15 years

# By measuring these alternate variables

Distill programs by identifying the essential ingredients to students' persistence

Find hidden deterrents to students' persistence

# Measurement Ideas for Consideration

- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Bullying
- Financial stability
- Family stability
- Student's personal health & stressors
- Family & peer support (old friends)
- Social support (new friends)
- Student's survival preparedness skills
- Student's locus of control

# Opportunities

Opportunity to create a platform for collaboration for this research agenda

Opportunity to identify common evaluation metrics all programs agree to gather

Opportunity to develop, validate, and norm new data collection instruments we need

Opportunity to identify common deliverables across programs

# Things to Consider

- IRB approval for data collection and publication will be necessary
  - Consent and assent
  - A common IRB?
- Do we need a control groups?
- Collaboration has benefits, but someone needs to merge programs' data and verify reliability of data for cumulative evaluations?

# Challenges?

COVID's impact on program evaluation

- Hands-on
- Virtual
- Hybridization of program

Return to normal?

Remain in flux for foreseeable future

Recognize the arrival of the new normal

# COVID Has Proven Necessity Is the Mother of Invention!

- Nothing else could have pushed us to so instantly and drastically examine our programs, re-imagine their delivery, make such extraordinary revisions, and yet achieve the same goals – and maybe even some bigger, better, and more bodacious ones!