

Examining the Impact of Community Racism and Classism on Human Service Organizations

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BACKGROUND

- Racism and classism negatively affect human service organizations (HSOs) ability to provide services to clients (Walters, 2020).
- To our knowledge, no studies have investigated the impact of racism and classism on HSOs and their services and organizational capacity.



METHOD

Research Objectives

- Understand relationship between perceived community racism and downward classism and perceived impact on HSOs.
- Examine incidents of community racism and downward classism challenges and solutions in HSOs.

Sample

- HSO staff and volunteers in U.S. ($n = 19$).

Data Collection

- Online mixed methods survey via emailed and social media.

Analysis

- Descriptive statistics & ANOVA.
- Qualitative – Pattern coding.

53% of HSOs noted challenges in service access due to community racism or downward classism.

Many HSOs stated that racism or classism impacted their ability to fundraise for their programs.

CHALLENGES

- Minorities feeling unwelcome
- Homogeneous White communities
- Housing discrimination and affordability
- Inequitable resources
- Separate and unequal services

SOLUTIONS

- Diversity committees
- Outreach programs
- Community education
- Workplace trainings
- Increasing accessibility
- Reducing resource gaps

Perceived community racism and downward classism significantly impacted HSOs' ability to:

- Raise funds ($p = .048$)
- Recruit new employees ($p = .038$)
- Maintain employees ($p = .001$)
- Provide services ($p = .016$)



CONCLUSION

- Our study provides preliminary evidence that HSOs who encounter more community racism and downward classism are impacted in their ability to provide services, receive funding, and recruit and maintain employees.
- This information will be helpful to researchers, policymakers, funders, and educators in assisting HSOs.
- Understanding challenges and solutions will be helpful to other HSOs who may be experiencing similar challenges.

LIMITATIONS

- This is a preliminary analysis with a small sample size; further data collection is being conducted via mail.
- Participant answers may be influenced by beliefs, opinions, or social desirability bias.