

Imbalance in healthcare amongst communities has plagued our society for generations due to health disparities in the present system, although efforts have been made by various groups to strive for healthcare equity. Recall that health equity is when everyone living in society has an equal opportunity to attain the same healthcare needs (Braveman et al., 2021). On the other hand, health disparity is when certain avoidable social circumstances prevent people from attaining the same healthcare needs as people of other backgrounds, which ultimately prevents society from achieving health equity (*Health Disparities Among Youth* 2020). An example of this in current events is the inequalities that prevent African Americans from attaining proper medical attention in the United States. This is demonstrated by how African Americans have lower life expectancies and are more likely to be sick than people of other backgrounds (Taylor, 2021). Furthermore, African Americans are more likely to have difficulty attaining quality medical care and are prone to misdiagnosis (Taylor, 2021). To understand the implications of these healthcare disparities, we must understand the impact of structural discrimination.

Recall that racism is when social structures discriminate against an individual or group based on physical characteristics (*Racism and Health*). Racism affects society at the organizational, community, and societal levels. It can affect individuals at the organizational level via employers hiring people similar to themselves. This makes it hard for minority groups, such as African Americans, to get hired and promoted in their field of work (McDonald, 2021). Additionally, it can affect individuals at the community level by forcing people to be spatially separated. An example would be segregated housing, which results in certain groups being pushed by the social system to live in unfavorable communities to favor a majority group, which is typically white individuals in America (Gross, 2017). Lastly, racism can affect people at the societal level by having social institutions treat people differently due to appearance. An example of this would be how African Americans are more likely to be injured by the police in comparison to white Americans for the same crimes (Peebles, 2020). Now that we have understood the effects of racism, it is important to understand the implications of classism.

Recall classism is when social structures discriminate against individuals based on social class, which leads to preferential treatment due to one's status (*Terms & definitions*). Classism affects society at the organizational, community, and societal levels. It can affect individuals at the organization level by making facilities hard to access for certain groups. For example, students from lower socioeconomic statuses are less likely to get college degrees, go to good schools, and perform well in school due to a lack of resources preventing them from performing well (Kammerer, 2020). Additionally, classism affects people at the community level as people having lower quality resources. This is demonstrated by the lack of funding for quality math and science programs in urban and rural communities, which leads to a decrease in the chance of social mobility as most jobs today require math and science skills (Randazzo, 2017). Lastly, classism affects people at the societal level as people of higher classes have the power to sway how society operates. This is demonstrated by how most politicians come from rich and prolific backgrounds (Carnes, 2018). This not only means they have more resources to enter politics, but it also means that they represent the views of the higher class. With lower-class groups having less representation, it becomes harder for them to be heard for policies that help them.

Now that we understand how racism and classism affect society, we can work towards solutions to tackle these issues. I believe that to solve today's problems, efforts must be made to change the curriculum of schoolchildren. The reason being is that problems related to racism and classism are based on ways of thinking that affect how people behave. Since the next generation will be the ones to lead tomorrow, they must be educated about the effects of racism and classism so they can attain an understanding of the problems that exist in our system. Doing so will help shape society's mindsets about certain issues, which will allow them to advocate for policies to fix those issues. Additionally, following these strategies will change the status quo as a new way of thinking will become prevalent in society as much of how children think is influenced by school since they spend most of their time there. Thus, by shaping the next generation, we can hope to solve today's issues and attain equity in the future.

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