Biases, barriers, and possible solutions: Steps towards addressing autism researchers under-engagement with racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities

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ABSTRACT

Autistic individuals who are also people of color or from lower socioeconomic strata are historically underrepresented in research. Lack of representation in autism research has contributed to health and healthcare disparities. Reducing these disparities will require culturally competent research that is relevant to under-resourced communities as well as collecting large nationally representative samples, or samples in which traditionally disenfranchised groups are over-represented. To achieve these goals, a diverse group of culturally competent researchers must partner with and gain the trust of communities to identify and eliminate barriers to participating in research. We suggest community-academic partnerships as one promising approach that results in high-quality research built on cultural competency, respect, and shared decision making.

Keywords: autism, ASD, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, engagement, diverse, barriers, biases, participation

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