

Implementing a Safe Space for African American Employees to Develop Individualized Racism Recovery Plans

Abstract

Aim: This project was completed to provide a safe space for African American employees to discuss experiences while developing racism recovery plans. It also explained how racism is a substantial factor that causes stress in African Americans' lives.

Background: Racism is prevalent and present in African Americans' lives, and there are no outlets within organizations that allow African Americans to talk about the circumstances involved. A supportive resource via a virtual setting was developed to provide a safe space for the employees.

Methods: The participants completed a 17-question pre-survey (Brief PEDQ-CV) to assess their exposure to racism. Four virtual sessions were implemented to discuss the steps of the racial trauma toolkit to develop a racism recovery plan. Post-program surveys were administered after each session to assess attendance, the usefulness of the racism recovery plan, and comfort within the space.

Results: Participants reported that the racism recovery plan was helpful, and they felt they would utilize it in the future. There were four participants in session one, five participants in session two, five participants in session three, and seven participants in session four. Two participants attended all four sessions and stated that the plans were helpful and will be utilized in the future. Fifty percent of the participants (N=4) in session one stated that plans were very helpful, eighty percent (N=5) in session two stated they were helpful, eighty percent (N=5) in session three stated they were helpful, and seventy-one percent (N=7) in session four stated the plans were helpful for present and future use.

Conclusion: The four virtual sessions within a safe space helped African American employees to discuss racial experiences and stressors among the group. The safe space allowed the employees to feel comfortable while facing difficult conversations. They were able to complete the steps of the racial trauma toolkit to develop individualized recovery plans.

Keywords: racism, African American, employees, trauma, safe space, recovery plan