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# Understanding Racism through socio-cultural considerations in health policies: Analysis from Infant feeding guidelines for Black Mothers living with HIV in Two North American Cities.

*Poster presented at the 31st Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research (CAHR 2022)  
April 27- 29, 2022*

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## INTRODUCTION

Anti-Black racism is a public health concern for Canada.

Moreso, conflicting infant feeding guidelines with sociocultural expectations potentially aggravate racism experiences of HIV+ mothers in health facilities.

Hence, we explored the effects of policy alignment with cultural norms in reducing the everyday racism experiences.

## METHODS

This study is based on a broader mixed-method community-based participatory research to examine infant feeding practices among HIV+ Black mothers in:

- Ottawa, Canada,
- Miami, Florida, US,
- Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Ethics approval was obtained.

We used quantitative data from Ottawa (n=89)

Miami (n= 201)

with (Total = 290).

An inclusion criterion was having a baby after being HIV+.

By Hierarchical binary logistic regression modeling (HBLM), we estimated the relationship between sociocultural factors (aligned to infant feeding guideline) and Everyday Racism Experiences of the mothers.

We controlled for the effects of socioeconomic variables, HIV related factors, and city of residence.

Error estimate ( -2LL) significantly reduced until the final model ( $\chi^2 = 26.01, p < .01, Accuracy = 81.1\%$ ).



# KEY RESULTS

## Sociodemographic statistics

average ages were:

- Ottawa ( $M = 36.6$  years,  $SD = 6.4$ ) years,
- Miami-FL ( $M = 32.4$  years,  $SD = 5.8$ ).

Married mothers were:

- Ottawa (33.3%,  $n=29$ )
- Miami (60.8%,  $n= 122$ ).

Mothers with university education were :

- Ottawa (58.8%,  $n=50$ )  
Miami (33.2%,  $n= 66$ ).

Employed mothers were:

- Ottawa (57.3%,  $n=51$ )
- Miami (32.7%,  $n=62$ ).

Mean years since being HIV positive were

- Ottawa ( $M = 12.7$  years,  $SD = 6.4$ )
- Miami ( $M = 10.9$  years,  $SD = 7.3$ ).

## Results of Inferential Analysis

Factors that reduced the odds of everyday racism at statistically significant levels were:

- congruency of mothers' cultural beliefs ( $OR = .06$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $CI = .01$ ,  $.38$ )
- family opinions ( $OR = .05$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $CI = .01$ ,  $.4$ )

Also, the following control variables reduced odds of everyday racism at statistically significant levels,

- social supports
- Hypervigilance



## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

Although the infant feeding guideline was exclusive formula feeding for HIV mothers, its congruency with their family and cultural beliefs reduced the odds of racism.

We suggest due consideration of the sociocultural context in policy formulation targeting specific population.

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