

Exploring Contributing Factors to Black Maternal Health Disparities

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Abstract:

Black women in the United States experience adverse maternal health outcomes at disproportionately high rates. This scoping review was conducted to explore the factors contributing to Black maternal health disparities. The literature search identified 403 articles. After applying exclusion and inclusion criteria, 12 articles met the eligibility criteria for the literature review. Data extracted from these articles included the country, key findings, and study design. The study synthesizes findings from various research methodologies, including mixed methods studies and qualitative interviews with healthcare professionals and Black women who were pregnant or had recently given birth. Key themes identified were racism and healthcare provider bias. The results reveal that Black women frequently experience inadequate quality of care, microaggressions, and dismissiveness from medical providers, leading to negative maternal healthcare experiences and outcomes. Results also revealed healthcare staff recognize the existence of racism, bias, poor patient-provider relationships, and a lack of cultural awareness as contributors to Black maternal health disparities. Findings from this literature review revealed the need for healthcare staff to receive training education and use cultural humility to create a more equitable healthcare experience for Black women. Findings also highlighted the presence and effects of racism in the maternal healthcare system and its impact on pregnancy outcomes for Black women.

Keywords:

Black maternal health disparities, adverse pregnancy outcomes, racism, healthcare provider bias.