

Does the Implementation of Cultural Humility Practices Influence the Rates of Return to Homelessness Among African Americans in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs?

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Abstract:

Homelessness disproportionately affects African American communities in the United States, with significant disparities in the rates of homelessness and returns to homelessness despite the benefits of PSH programs. Cultural humility, which emphasizes self-reflection, mutual respect, and an ongoing commitment to addressing power imbalances and biases, is proposed as a transformative approach in social services, including housing. This scoping review explores the impact of cultural humility on the return-to-homelessness rate among African Americans in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs. This review synthesizes existing literature to understand how cultural humility practices by PSH staff can contribute to reducing these disparities and improving housing stability outcomes for African Americans.

Key focus areas include implementing culturally humble practices, the relationship between cultural humility and participant engagement, and the effectiveness of culturally informed interventions in mitigating return-to-homelessness rates. The findings highlight the pervasive impact of structural racism and systemic barriers, the inadequacy of color-blind policies, and the necessity for racially conscious interventions. This review underscores the critical need for targeted policy reforms, comprehensive support services, and further research to address and mitigate racial disparities in homelessness. Biblical teachings on humility and justice align with the principles of cultural humility, further emphasizing the ethical imperative to address these disparities. The results call for more equitable and practical strategies to support African American individuals in achieving lasting housing stability, contributing to the Grand Challenges of Social Work.

Keywords:

Cultural humility, race, homeless, and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).