

The need for culturally competent treatment: African American women and depression

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Biography

Chalice C Rhodes is currently pursuing her Doctoral studies at ICAR-NIANP, Bangalore, India. She has completed her masters in Biotechnology. Her area of research interest is related to nutraceuticals and its effect on gut health. Her research work is focused to establish an effective and acceptable enzymatic process of D-tagatose production keeping in view the expected demands of D-tagatose in near future and to evaluate its prebiotic and anti-diabetic properties through in-vitro and in-vivo experimental models. She has experience in research and teaching. Her interest lies in conducting a long-term scientific research in the field of nutraceuticals and their role in modulating the gut microbial composition impacting the health and well-being of both animal and human

Abstract

Statement of the Problem: This interdisciplinary training in the intersection of mental health and health outcomes is intended for healthcare professionals. Healthcare professionals who interact with African American women can learn culturally- rooted strategies for assessing and treating depression in this population. Depression is gradually increasing in African American women. These women are experiencing role changes and additional life stressors. Depressed African American women may perceive themselves as being devalued by society with fewer support systems to buffer stressful events. Depressive symptoms may develop into clinical depression and a further decrease in the quality of life for the African American woman. The assumption that all women share similar experiences does not allow for differences to emerge regarding the diagnostic process, measuring tools, and successful treatment strategies for various cultures. The authors developed a Multifaceted Model of Depression in African American Women for improving treatment of African American women with depression and future research needs. Cultural background plays a vital role in how the symptoms of mental illnesses are developed, reported, interpreted, and how women are treated. African Americans who subscribed to the Strong Black Women Archetype (SBWA) are naturally strong, resilient, self-contained, and self-sacrificing. This self-reliance prevents them from reaching out for social support. This, in turn, can contribute to depressive symptoms with negative health outcomes. The African American women are more apt to have less access to routine medical care where early diagnosis and interventions can be done, so their mental health problems (e.g., depression, stress, etc.) are often more developed, complicated, and their social supports more depleted when they do access treatment. When African American women do have access to mental health care, they receive poor quality care compared to Whites.

Publication

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