

Examining How Social Determinants of Health Factors Were Worsened by the COVID-19 Pandemic in African Communities

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Background

Social Determinants of Health Factors

- According to the CDC (2021) Social Determinants of Health are, “... conditions in the places where people live, learn, work and play that affect a wide range of health and quality of life risks and outcomes.”
- The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected communities of color in King County. The Washington State Department of Health reported the death toll of Black residents at (215 per 100,000) and that of white residents at (100 per 100,000), (King County, 2022)

- Healthcare and Quality
- Education Access and Quality
- Neighborhood and Built Environment
- Social and Community Contact
- Economic Stability



Methods

Study Design

Qualitative study involving key informant interviews and thematic analysis

Data Collection

- Respondents recruited from HealthPoint Community Health Center in Kent Washington
- Study intervention involved: (1) Completion of Informed Consent; (2) Completion of Background Questionnaire; (3) Respondent answered 10 open-ended questions
- Study respondent given a \$25 gift card at end of interview session and then debriefed by researcher

Data Analysis

- Interview component of session was recorded and transcribed
- Transcribed responses were manually analyzed by applying a thematic analysis procedure
- Weekly meetings with research assistants established inter-rater reliability of derived themes

Results

Table 1: Questions, Themes and Direct Quotes from Subjects Addressing Social Determinants of Health Factors, $n = 8$

Questions	Themes	Direct Quotes from Respondents
Has the last year affected your psychological health?	<p>Emotional trauma from inadequate healthcare provision</p> <p>Anxiety due to lack of access to healthcare and social safety-nets</p>	<p><i>“I wasn’t able to get prenatal care till it was too late and (l) lost my baby”</i></p> <p><i>“I was anxious because l couldn’t afford not to work if l contracted COVID. I don’t have healthcare and unemployment benefits”</i></p>
Did you need any type of social, economic or psychological support?	Stress of not being able to provide for family (anxiety from family responsibilities)	<i>“Yes, I needed support. I was stressed out because of fear of losing my apartment because I couldn’t afford rent”</i>
Is there any additional resource that could have been provided to support you?	Lack of access to authentic information addressing COVID-19	<i>“We needed a source of credible information on the vaccine and COVID-19”</i>

Table 2: Sociodemographic Characteristics of African Participants in Research Study, 2022

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	TOTAL COHORT (N=8) N (%)
Gender – Male	5 (62.5)
Female	3 (37.5)
Age (mean)	39.4
Length of Time as US Resident	4 (50)
1-5 years	2 (25)
6-10 years	2 (25)
10+ years	
Highest Grade Completed	
High school graduate	1 (12)
College graduate or higher	7 (88)
Household Income	3 (37.5)
<\$20,000	4 (50)
\$20,000 - \$35,999	1 (12.5)
\$76,000+	
Number of Family Members in Household	
1 to 2 members	3 (37.5)
3 to 5 members	3 (37.5)
6+ members	2 (24)
Marital Status	Marital Status
Married	1 (12.5)
Living with Partner	4 (50)
Single/Never Married	3 (37.5)

Discussion and Implications

- The results suggest that SDOH factors were worsened for the African community during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Respondents appear to experience anxiety and stress
- Lack of adequate healthcare provisions was associated with trauma for African patients
- There is correlation between immigrant and socio-economic status
- The research data can help public health officials implement policies that would bridge the gap in healthcare
- As we recover from the pandemic, it is important to allocate adequate resources to underserved communities like the African community
- It is also important to obtain feedback from the community on the specifics of needed resources

References

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