

Table 8 - Predictors of African American Men's Perceived Health

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Session: Health Equity and Anti-Oppressive Public Health Social Work Practice

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Abstract

African American (AA) men continue to have poor health outcomes and the lowest life expectancy among their peers. While there has been a growing interest in improving AA men's health, much of the research has focused on social determinants of health; however, there has been scant research on the effects of holistic wellness on health outcomes. Perceived wellness, defined holistically, encompasses physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects of human functioning with the goal of achieving balance across domains. A holistic approach to wellness has been linked to increased psychological functioning as well as prevention and treatment of physical conditions. This study aimed to explore the relationship between wellness dimensions and health among AA men. An exploratory cross-sectional study was conducted to examine perceptions of wellness among a sample of 107 AA men. The Wellness Self-Perception Questionnaire (WSPQ), a 15-item scale, was used to assess physical emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual wellness. Overall health was assessed by a single item. Most of the participants were positive about their overall health. Multiple regression analysis showed that physical, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing were the most significant factors ($p<0.05$) relating to overall health even when controlling for age, education, and income. The research suggests that these wellness dimensions may be a critical component for understanding and improving AA men's health. Implications for improving AA men's health through holistic, strength-based wellness will be discussed.

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