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Understanding Men's Mental Health in The Contemporary African Context

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Abstract

Mental health is a concept viewed differently in different societies. The understanding of the concept is fundamentally influenced by the societal construct and impacts how it is addressed. How mental health is addressed and promoted in the African context should be reimagined and aligned to the needs of African men. It begins with creating a psychologically safe environment supported by psychosocial support and empathy in societal structures. This manuscript intends to capture a synopsis of the need to highlight African men's mental health and rethink alternative strategies that effect psychological resilience and good health. The research methodological approach is qualitative in nature, making use of the interpretivist paradigm. In doing so, literature published between 2021 and 2025 will be reviewed to identify emerging concepts as contributory factors to men's mental health concerns in this context. Additionally, this literature will be used as advocacy towards identifying or realigning the strengths of alternative interventions for remedial and preventative measures of the mental health among African men. The aim of this manuscript is to echo the sentiment that mental health has no boundary. Instead, that relevant societal structures and stakeholders should recognise the transformative value of psychological support and well-being towards mental health and resilience.

Keywords: mental health; psychological safety; psychosocial support; ubuntu/botho; vulnerability