A Silent Epidemic with No Voice: Alzheimer’s Education in an African American Community

Date: September 5, 2019  
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Place: WEB 101

Abstract
There is a growing Alzheimer’s disease crisis in this country, particularly in the African American community. Despite this awareness and programs available about the disease, there is a deficit in research assessing the effectiveness of these programs. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to analyze the perceived impact of the educational programs provided by local organizations to educate a Midwest African American community about Alzheimer’s disease.

Based on research about Alzheimer’s and the number of African Americans who continue to go undiagnosed and untreated, the literature review explores the synergy of three theoretical constructs: Critical Race Theory, Community Theory and the Theory of Culture. The three theories were used to determine what influence if any, the theories have on the perceived impact of the educational programs provided by the organizations participating in this study.

This intrinsic case study involves fieldwork, individual interviews, a focus group session and a survey/questionnaire. The case boundary is a Midwest African American community and participants include two organizations funded to provide educational programs about Alzheimer’s, two local agencies servicing older African Americans and ten (10) African American caregivers residing in the community.

The findings in this study suggest that the two organizations are consistent in efforts to provide educational programs about Alzheimer’s. However, barriers fostered by the African American culture, filial practices and the organizations’ deficient visibility in the community have adversely influenced the perceived impact of the educational programs provided to this Midwest African American community about Alzheimer’s disease. Consequently, additional research is recommended to determine strategies to address these adverse influences.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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