



Mental Health First Aid Training Workshops Among Community Health Workers in South African Provinces: An Ethnographic Study from an African Perspective

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Abstract

Mental health issues are prevalent in South Africa, yet community health workers (CHWs) often lack the necessary training to address these challenges effectively. The study employed ethnographic methods, including participant observation, in-depth interviews with CHWs, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Data were collected from CHWs in four provinces over a six-month period. Participants reported increased confidence and competence in identifying mental health issues among community members, particularly in rural areas where access to professional help is limited. MHFA training workshops are seen as effective in enhancing the skills of CHWs but require ongoing support and resources to embed these practices effectively within their communities. Continued MHFA training should be integrated into existing health education programmes, with a focus on providing practical tools for early intervention and community engagement.

Keywords: *African, ethnography, qualitative, mental health, community, anthropology, methodology*

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