Abstract

Barriers and Facilitators of Self-Care Among Vulnerable Migrants Living in Reception Centers

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Introduction. Vulnerable migrants (VM) face multiple health challenges before, during, and after migration, including violence, precarious living conditions, and barriers to healthcare. VM living in reception centers experience additional stressors such as legal uncertainty and limited autonomy. In this context, self-care is an important resource for well-being, but evidence on factors influencing self-care among VM in reception settings remains limited. This study explored barriers and facilitators of self-care among VM in an Italian reception center.

Methods. A qualitative study using inductive content analysis following Elo and Kyngäs' approach was conducted. Adult VM were recruited from a community-based reception project in Southern Italy. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in July 2024, audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed.

Results. Twenty-eight participants were interviewed. Two categories emerged: hindering factors and supporting resources. Barriers included emotional distress linked to family concerns and uncertainty, social isolation, and communication and cultural barriers limiting integration and access to care. Facilitators included supportive relationships, family motivation, and daily structure, which promoted stability and psychological balance.

Discussion. Self-care is shaped by the interplay between personal resources and contextual constraints. Culturally responsive, relational nursing interventions are needed to strengthen support, communication, and stable routines within reception systems.

Keywords: Qualitative Research, Cultural Diversity, Multicultural Healthcare

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