

The Intersectional Impact of Race, Gender, Substance Use, and Trauma on Housing Services Vulnerability Scores: An Expanded Study Designed Through the Lens of Intersectionality

The *Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)* is a widely used assessment instrument that assists housing providers in making decisions about housing services for unhoused persons. Inspired by research that reveals how race and gender impact triage assessment, we examined the VI-SPDAT through the lens of intersectionality theory to identify comparable biases. Working in partnership with a local non-profit, data were obtained and archival analysis was implemented. We expand upon this sparse literature by including a sample of unhoused Latines and analyzing factors not previously examined. We hypothesized that race and gender moderates the relationship between trauma and VI-SPDAT scores, such that white males will score highest on the VI-SPDAT. We posed a similar hypothesis with respect to substance use and VI-SPDAT scores. Moderation effects were found in the trauma-based, but not substance use-based, model. Results support the claim that racial and gender biases exist in the VI-SPDAT. Implications, limitations, future directions, and alternatives to the VI-SPDAT are discussed.