World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology International Journal of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences Vol:19, No:04, 2025

(Re)Assessing Clinical Spaces: How Do We Critically Provide Mental Health and Disability Support and Effective Care for Young People Who Are Impacted by Structural Violence and Structural Racism?

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Abstract: The medical and mental health field have been organized as reactive systems to respond to symptoms of mental health problems and disability. This becomes problematic particularly for those harmed by structural violence and racism, typically pushing us in the direction of alleviating symptoms and personalizing structural problems. The current paper examines how we assess, diagnose, and treat mental health and disability challenges in clinical spaces. We provide the readers with some context to think about the problem of racism and mental health/disability, ways to deconstruct the problem through the lens of structural violence, and recommendations to critically engage in clinical assessments, diagnosis, and treatment for young people impacted by structural violence and racism.

Keywords: mental health, disability, race and ethnicity, structural violence, structural racism, young people

 $\textbf{Conference Title:} \ \text{ICMHW 2025:} \ \text{International Conference on Mental Health and Wellness}$

Conference Location : Chengdu, China **Conference Dates :** April 15-16, 2025