




Mental disease and/or mental disorders

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What is health?

- The WHO defines health as
 - ... A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity

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- Is there health without mental health?
 - Does mental health means only absence of mental illness?
 - Is mental health only business of health professionals?

Mental health is described by WHO as...

- ... A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community

Mental illness is...

- ... *“any illness experienced by a person which affects their emotions, thoughts or behaviour, which is out of keeping with their cultural beliefs and personality, and is producing a negative effect on their lives or the lives of their families”.*

Terminology

- Mental illness is an umbrella term that refers to many different illnesses that affect the mind

Mental illness/mental disorders?!



Mental illnesses

... can be divided into two main groups:

- Non-psychotic illness
- Psychotic illness



Non-psychotic illness

- Symptoms include overwhelming feelings of sadness, tension or anxiety, and difficulties coping with everyday life.



Psychotic illness

- Symptoms include delusions, hallucinations and a distorted view of reality.

Mental disorders

- **Organic brain disorders** – damage to brain caused by other diseases
- **Personality disorders** – refers to enduring disturbances in the way in which a person interact to each other
- **Intellectual disability** – caused by problems with brain development



Five major types of symptoms:

- ***Physical***-somatic symptoms
- ***Feeling***-emotional symptoms
- ***Thinking***-cognitive symptoms
- ***Behaving***-behavioral symptoms
- ***Imagining***-perceptual symptoms



Indicators for mental health distress

- Demographic determinants
- Stressful life events
- Social support
- Heredity or genes
- Medical problems

Demographic determinants:

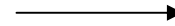
- **Age**
- **Sex**
- **Level of education**
- **Income**
- **Current employment**



Essential to characterise populations and to provide descriptive context of mental health

Stressful life events

- Unemployment
- The death of a loved one
- Economic problems (being in debt)
- Loneliness
- Infertility
- Marital conflict
- Violence
- Trauma



Are associated with
poor mental health



Social support

- ...is often conceptualized as environmental variable correlated with genetic factors and personality



Social support cover 3 domains

- The extent to which the individuals are attached to others
- The individuals cognitive appraisal of the support
- The response of others in the provision of support



Genetic factors

- Heredity is an important factor for severe mental disorders



Medical problems

- Physical illnesses
- Some medicines

Sociological model of mental disorders

- Attempt to explain mental disorders (the process of structuring) in a sociological context
- Deviant phenomena:
.... Any behaviour that is out of society expectations

Being Mentally ill: A Sociological Theory (Scheff, 1966.)

- Residual rule breaking




- Reaction of society



- Labeled as deviant behaviour



- Stigma



Why should we be concerned about mental illness?

- They affect us all
- They are a major public health burden
- They are very disabling
- Mental health services are very inadequate
- Societies are rapidly changing
- Mental illness leads to stigma
- Mental illness can be treated



Is mental health only business of health professionals?

Thank you!

