

A STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH AD SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN INDIA

Dr Tarun Tiwari

Senior Medical Officer,

Institute of Public Health - RUHS,

Jaipur.

Abstract

Substance abuse and mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety are closely linked, although one doesn't necessarily directly cause the other. Abusing substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine can cause prolonged psychotic reactions, while alcohol can make depression and anxiety symptoms worse. It is also true that having a mental disorder in childhood or adolescence can increase the risk of later drug use and the development of a substance use disorder. Some research has found that mental illness may precede a substance use disorder, suggesting that better diagnosis of youth mental illness may help reduce comorbidity. The article presents the causes and reason for mental health and substance abuse in people.

Keywords: causes, depression, mental health.

Introduction

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced

differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case.

Mental health is a term used to describe emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The quality of a person's mental health is often measured by how adaptively they can cope with everyday stressors.

Mental health allows people to use their abilities, be productive, make decisions, and play an active role in their communities.

Having poor mental health is often confused with having a mental illness. But mental health actually refers to a person's state of mental well-being whether or not they have a psychiatric condition.

History of Mental Health

A paper in the World Psychiatry journal states that mental health officially emerged

as its own field of study in 1946 during the International Health Conference.

It was during this conference that the World Health Organization (WHO) was founded. The WHO Constitutions stated that mental "well-being" is an integral part of overall health, even in the absence of psychiatric illness.

Before mental health, "mental hygiene" was a term used in the 19th and 20th centuries to refer to the impact that mental processes have on overall health.

A mental hygiene movement had formed in the United States in 1908. Its goal was to advocate for people who were "mentally sick," or people who had psychiatric conditions, in a more humane way as historically, people with mental illnesses were abused, neglected, and lacked adequate care.

Though stigma surrounding mental illness still exists, more and more people have realized the importance of receiving treatment—like psychotherapy—for maintenance of their mental well-being, regardless of whether they have a mental illness.

Additionally, an abundance of research has found that positive mental health is linked with improved quality of life, including better productivity, closer social connections, higher educational achievement, and improved relationships.

Characteristics

Mental health refers not only to emotional well-being but also to how people think and behave. There are a number of

different factors that have been found to influence mental health.

Life Satisfaction

A person's ability to enjoy life is frequently used as an indicator of mental health and wellness. It is often defined as the degree to which a person enjoys the most important aspects of their life.

Some factors that have been found to play an important role in life satisfaction include the absence of feeling ill, good relationships, a sense of belonging, being active in work and leisure, a sense of achievement and pride, positive self-perceptions, a sense of autonomy, and feelings of hope.

How to Make Yourself Happy

Resilience

The ability to bounce back from adversity has been referred to as resilience. People who are resilient also tend to have a positive view of their ability to cope with challenges and seek out social support when they need it. Those who are more resilient are better able to not only cope with stress but to thrive even in the face of it.

10 Ways to Improve Your Resilience Support

Social support is important for positive mental health. Loneliness is linked with both physical and mental health issues including cardiovascular disease, depression, memory problems, drug misuse, alcohol misuse, and altered brain function.

Decreases in social support caused by life changes such as going to college, facing social adversity, changing jobs, or getting divorced can have a negative impact on mental health.

Fortunately, research suggests that it is not necessarily the number of supportive connections you have that it is the most important but rather the quality of these relationships.

Flexibility

Having rigid expectations can sometimes create added stress. Emotional flexibility may be just as important as cognitive flexibility. Mentally healthy people experience a range of emotions and allow themselves to express these feelings. Some people shut off certain feelings, finding them to be unacceptable.

Lack of psychological flexibility has been linked to some types of psychopathology, while research suggests that increased flexibility is connected to better life balance and improved resilience.

Challenges to Mental Health

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) states that an estimated one in five U.S. adults experiences a mental health problem each year.⁹ There are a number of risk factors that can increase the likelihood that a person may experience poor mental health.

Discrimination

Being treated unfairly due to personal characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender

identity is linked with increased anxiety and depression.

Exposure to Trauma

Trauma is linked with anxiety, depression, changes in mood (increased anger and irritability), feelings of hopelessness, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Family History of Mental Illness

Research suggests that a variety of mental illnesses run in families such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder (MDD), and schizophrenia.

Low Income

Low income is linked with increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.¹⁴ Low income may also prevent someone from accessing necessary mental health services.

Medical Illness

Illnesses, particularly those that are chronic and force a person to adjust their lifestyle, can create psychological distress (especially depression).¹⁵

Poor Access to Health Services

Access to health services is linked to positive long-term health outcomes. However, when people can't get access to the health care they need, their physical and mental health may suffer as a result.

Poor Self-Esteem

Having low self-esteem often means you don't believe you're worthy of being happy

or having positive relationships. People with low self-esteem are at higher risk of developing substance use disorders, anxiety, and depression.

Poor Social Skills

Having poor social skills is linked with loneliness and increased stress levels, as well as worsened physical health.

Social Inequalities

Lacking access to goods and services in society based on personal characteristics like your age, gender, religion, race, disability, or another social category can increase the risk of depression.

Substance Use

Substance use is linked with high rates of anxiety, depression, and insomnia.

An Overview of Stress Management

Impact of Mental Health

The state of a person's mental health has a significant impact on their quality of life. Taking care of your mental health allows you to contribute to your community, cope with stress, have quality relationships, and maintain physical health.²¹

Mental health can help you to work toward your full potential in all aspects of your life. Improved mental health is also linked with better physical health. Research has found that positive mental health can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes.²²

Poor mental health, on the other hand, is linked with issues like increased stress,

sleep problems, smoking, and substance use. If your mental health is suffering, you might feel overwhelmed more easily, have trouble maintaining relationships, and experience low self-esteem.

How to Stay Mentally Healthy

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services suggests that some of the ways that you can promote and maintain mental health include the below.

Physical Exercise

Physical exercise can reduce stress and even improve the symptoms of anxiety disorders and depression. It reduces the body's levels of stress hormones and elevates levels of endorphins, which promote mood regulation and feelings of well-being.

Your workout doesn't need to be strenuous either. Try taking a 20-minute walk and you might just notice the effect it has on clearing and relaxing your mind.

Adequate Sleep

Not getting enough sleep can worsen mental health and cause mental distress, especially in people with existing mental health conditions. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends getting at least seven hours per night.

Mental health conditions can make it extra challenging to fulfill your sleep requirements, but there are ways you can improve your sleeping habits.

Try adhering to a consistent sleep schedule (going to bed and waking up at the same times each night), limiting distractions like

using your phone before bed, and making sure you get some exercise during the day. Be sure to consult a healthcare provider if your lack of sleep is causing mental distress.

How to Sleep Better

Help Others

One study found that helping behavior and other kinds of social interactions were linked with reduced stress and even longer lifespans.

Try volunteering in your community or even lending a hand to people in your everyday life. Performing small acts of kindness can make you and the recipient of your generosity feel a boost in mood and well-being.

How Acts of Kindness Can Boost Your Health

Learn Coping Skills

Learning healthy coping mechanisms for managing stress can go a long way in improving mental health.

Some productive coping mechanisms include getting emotional support from loved ones, finding humor in your everyday life, and taking action to better your situation.²⁷ It's all about finding what works best for you.

In cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), a therapist works with patients to find the best coping skills for their unique circumstances.

Stay Connected to Others

Social interaction can reduce our stress levels, improve the symptoms of depression, and even benefit our physical health.

Research has found that social connection has positive impacts on health categories like cancer, weight management, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.²⁸

Having social interactions in a setting such as group therapy, for instance, might be especially helpful if you are coping with a specific mental health condition like post-traumatic stress disorder or an eating disorder.

Keep a Positive Outlook

There are many health benefits to using optimism and positive thinking in your everyday life.

One study found that participants with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) who practiced replacing thoughts of negative outcomes with thoughts of positive ones experienced less worry over time than participants who didn't imagine positive outcomes.

Mental health care and treatment

In the context of national efforts to strengthen mental health, it is vital to not only protect and promote the mental well-being of all, but also to address the needs of people with mental health conditions.

This should be done through community-based mental health care, which is more accessible and acceptable than institutional care, helps prevent human rights violations and delivers better recovery outcomes for people with mental health conditions.

Community-based mental health care should be provided through a network of interrelated services that comprise:

- mental health services that are integrated in general health care, typically in general hospitals and through task-sharing with non-specialist care providers in primary health care;
- community mental health services that may involve community mental health centers and teams, psychosocial rehabilitation, peer support services and supported living services; and
- services that deliver mental health care in social services and non-health settings, such as child protection, school health services, and prisons.

The vast care gap for common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety means countries must also find innovative ways to diversify and scale up care for these conditions, for example through non-specialist psychological counselling or digital self-help.

WHO response

All WHO Member States are committed to implementing the “**Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013–2030**”, which aims to improve mental health by strengthening effective leadership and governance, providing comprehensive, integrated and responsive community-based care, implementing promotion and prevention strategies, and strengthening information systems, evidence and research. In 2020, WHO’s “**Mental health atlas 2020**” analysis of country

performance against the action plan showed insufficient advances against the targets of the agreed action plan.

WHO’s “**World mental health report: transforming mental health for all**” calls on all countries to accelerate implementation of the action plan. It argues that all countries can achieve meaningful progress towards better mental health for their populations by focusing on three “paths to transformation”:

- deepen the value given to mental health by individuals, communities and governments; and matching that value with commitment, engagement and investment by all stakeholders, across all sectors;
- reshape the physical, social and economic characteristics of environments – in homes, schools, workplaces and the wider community – to better protect mental health and prevent mental health conditions; and
- strengthen mental health care so that the full spectrum of mental health needs is met through a community-based network of accessible, affordable and quality services and supports.

WHO gives particular emphasis to protecting and promoting human rights, empowering people with lived experience and ensuring a multisectoral and multistakeholder approach.

WHO continues to work nationally and internationally – including in humanitarian settings – to provide governments and partners with the strategic leadership, evidence, tools and technical support to

strengthen a collective response to mental health and enable a transformation towards better mental health for all.

Conclusion

The term “mental health” refers to a person’s cognitive, behavioral, and emotional well-being. It affects how people react to stressors, engage with others, and make choices. According to the WHO, peak mental health is more than the absence of mental health problems. It is the ability to manage existing conditions and stressors while maintaining ongoing wellness and happiness. Factors such as stress, depression, and anxiety can negatively affect a person’s mental health and disrupt their routine. A healthcare professional may help someone with a mental health condition to manage their well-being through a program of therapy or medications.

References

- Santucci K. *Psychiatric disease and drug abuse. Curr Opin Pediatr.* 2012;24(2):233-237. doi:10.1097/MOP.0b013e3283504fbf.
- Ross S, Peselow E. *Co-occurring psychotic and addictive disorders: neurobiology and diagnosis. Clin Neuropharmacol.* 2012;35(5):235-243. doi:10.1097/WNF.0b013e318261e193.
- Kelly TM, Daley DC. *Integrated Treatment of Substance Use and Psychiatric Disorders. Soc Work Public Health.* 2013;28(0):388-406. doi:10.1080/19371918.2013.774673.
- Hser YI, Grella CE, Hubbard RL, et al. *An evaluation of drug treatments for adolescents in 4 US cities. Arch Gen Psychiatry.* 2001;58(7):689-695.
- Magidson JF, Liu S-M, Lejuez CW, Blanco C. *Comparison of the Course of Substance Use Disorders among Individuals With and Without Generalized Anxiety Disorder in a Nationally Representative Sample. J Psychiatr Res.* 2012;46(5):659-666. doi:10.1016/j.jpsychires.2012.02.011.
- Conway KP, Compton W, Stinson FS, Grant BF. *Lifetime comorbidity of DSM-IV mood and anxiety disorders and specific drug use disorders: results from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions. J Clin Psychiatry.* 2006;67(2):247-257.
- Brady KT, Haynes LF, Hartwell KJ, Killeen TK. *Substance use disorders and anxiety: a treatment challenge for social workers. Soc Work Public Health.* 2013;28(3-4):407-423. doi:10.1080/19371918.2013.774675.
- Wolitzky-Taylor K, Operskalski JT, Ries R, Craske MG, Roy-Byrne P. *Understanding and treating comorbid anxiety disorders in substance users: review and future directions. J Addict Med.* 2011;5(4):233-247. doi:10.1097/ADM.0b013e31823276d7.
- Torrens M, Gilchrist G, Domingo-Salvany A, psyCoBarcelona Group. *Psychiatric comorbidity in illicit drug users: substance-induced versus independent disorders. Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2011;113(2-3):147-156. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2010.07.013.
- Compton WM, Thomas YF, Stinson FS, Grant BF. *Prevalence, correlates, disability, and comorbidity of DSM-IV drug abuse and dependence in the United States: results from the national epidemiologic survey on alcohol and related conditions. Arch Gen Psychiatry.* 2007;64(5):566-576. doi:10.1001/archpsyc.64.5.566.