



Depression Across Cultures: Exploring Cultural Variations in the Experience, Expression and Treatment of Depression

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This abstract aims to critically examine the impact of cultural and cross-cultural variations on the prevalence, presentation, and treatment of depression to identify the cultural factors that contribute to diverse experiences of depression.

Keywords: Depression; Cultural variations; Mental health; Stigma; Ethnicity; Global perspectives

INTRODUCTION

Depression is a complex mental health condition with variations across cultures and societies [1]. Cultural and cross-cultural factors significantly influence how depression is experienced, expressed, and understood by individuals [2]. Understanding these cultural variations is essential for providing culturally sensitive and effective interventions to address the diverse needs of individuals experiencing depression worldwide.

DESCRIPTION

To gather data, relevant keywords such as “depression,” “culture,” and “cross-cultural variations” were searched on Google Scholar, and 25 research papers were thoroughly reviewed for valuable insights. The research findings comparing older adults in the United States with elderly individuals in Oriental societies reveal intriguing differences. The former tends to exhibit higher mean depressive symptom scores, indicating potential variations in depression experiences across cultures. The prevalence of significant depression also differs based on living situations. It ranges from 0.9% to 9.4% in private households, 14% to 42% in institutional living, and 1% to 16% among elderly residing in either private households or institutions. Clinically significant depressive symptom cases were found to vary from 7.2% to 49% [3]. Several factors have been identified as predictors of depressive disorders and symptom cases. These factors

include female gender, somatic illness, cognitive impairment, functional impairment, lack or loss of close social contacts, and a history of depression. Moreover, racial discrimination, bias, and stigma in Afro-American populations may contribute to the under-diagnosis of depression, affecting help-seeking, referral pathways, and the diagnostic process. On the contrary, White Western populations may experience potential over-diagnosis of depression due to expectations and cultural norms that lower the threshold for reporting depressive symptoms. These findings emphasize the significance of considering cultural factors and addressing potential biases in diagnosing and treating depression among diverse populations [4].

This abstract highlights the critical importance of considering cultural and cross-cultural variations when understanding depression. Cultural factors significantly shape an individual's experiences, expressions, and perceptions of depression, ultimately influencing its prevalence, manifestation, and treatment outcomes [2,5]. By recognizing and respecting cultural diversity, we can develop more effective and culturally sensitive approaches to address depression [6].

CONCLUSION

Furthermore, this research underscores the need for further investigation into the intricate interplay between cultural contexts, individual beliefs, and social norms to ensure the devel-

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opment of comprehensive and inclusive mental health interventions [4]. Embracing these cultural variations is crucial to improving mental health outcomes on a global scale, as it allows for tailored interventions that acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of diverse populations. In conclusion, this abstract sheds light on the significant role of cultural variations in shaping the experience of depression. By acknowledging these differences and designing culturally sensitive interventions, mental health professionals can offer better support and treatment to individuals across different cultural backgrounds. A deeper understanding of cultural influences on depression can lead to a more inclusive and effective approach to address this complex mental health condition on a global level.

DECLARATIONS

Availability of Data and Material

Not applicable.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Authors' Contributions

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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