Literature review:

 The stigma of mental healthcare and the indifference towards asylums

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Abstract

Without a doubt one of the factors for a successful life comes accompanied with an individual’s capacity for positive mental health. In this literature review I seek to explore the subject of mental health and the stigma that shrouds it. Preventive psychological assistance can deter many mental illnesses. This should be fundamentally primordial in all developed societies. Without proper care of our mental state it inhibits a person from evolving in every aspect: professionally, socially, spiritually, and individually. It is time that awareness on mental health is spread in a grand-scale. Vast amounts of people have been subjected to social isolation and feelings of inadequacy because the masses don’t understand the paradigm of mental health and that it is a normal part of life. The prime time to bring light into this darkened spectrum of the human brain is now. Globally all the societies are in these times living a period in which topics that were uncoveted and hushed are now being thrust into the spotlight.

*Keywords: mental health, asylums, awareness*

Literature Review On: The Stigma of Mental Health Care

And The Indifference Towards Asylums

With so many mental illnesses that have been discovered and those yet to be uncovered, every individual has faced some sort of psychological impediment. Depression is commonly referred to as a “flu” because it occurs at least once within a person’s lifespan. The notion that mental health awareness and asylums equate weakness than less people will seek out any sort of psychological assistance. Imagine how many people have be wrongly accused of a mental disturbance because of prejudice. If mental health becomes a priority it will steer away so many of the current issues in modern society: depression, suicide, and bullying. It is high time matter’s such as this are not swept under the rug.

Many members of this society can still not grasp the complexity of the mind which therefore leads to social stagnation. A very interesting point was brought up in the scholarly journal, *Revisiting the Puzzle Factory: Cultural Representations of Psychiatric Asylums.* According to Harpin (2013):

“Psychiatry is ghosted by its own innumerable failures that cumulatively point to the fact that a major gap still remains in our understanding of both the causes of mental distress and effective responses to it. Historians of psychiatry traverse the cold baths, insulin comas, chlorpromazine, and leucotomies with care and anxiety, identifying the then contemporary thinking that skulked beneath such interventions” ( pg 337).

These barbaric methodologies for treating mental illness refrain from true understanding. All the realms of psychology can unite because of one common element: it is a science studied by humans for humans. Women can suffer from post-partum depression, a soldier from PTSD, and a child from bipolarity. It cannot be undermined the relevance of mental health care. As history has shown the oppressed only stay oppressed until they unite and overthrow their oppressors. Many movements have demonstrated as such:

Women’s Right’s, #metoo, the labor movement, black lives matter, amongst many more. It has reached a point in which a movement is slowly churning for a matter that encompasses everyone, mental health. An excerpt from a scholarly article by WHO (2005) further develops my point: “…Although mental health problems occur in almost every family at some point, people who experience them still meet fear and prejudice from others and are made to feel ashamed and excluded. The stigma and discrimination associated with having a mental illness are often so devastating that they prevent people from seeking help for fear of being labelled. Effectively reducing stigma and discrimination requires concerted action by all interested parties – service users, carers, professional groups and civil society – with strong government back-up” (pg 41).

This stigma has prevailed for so long because of a fear to seem vulnerable or incomplete. If one thing history can highlight is that it may take centuries and unfathomable sacrifice but justice does prevail. Those who suffer a mental disturbance will have the same equality and respect as any other human being. Perhaps it’s not just one societal concept that needs to be changed but a whole division of society itself. This could be a vicious cycle instilled within our conscious since the commencement. Normal vs. abnormal. The former praised while the latter is shunned. The following article by Roof (2017) resonates with my prior statements:

“The circumstances that allowed the asylum to operate were instrumental in the development of public schools ([Burdett, 1891](http://journals.sagepub.com.db19.linccweb.org/doi/10.1177/1478210317715795)). Intellectual abnormality is often associated with asylums yet conceptions of intellect preceded the public-school movement. As noted, feeblemindedness functioned in the structuring of public schools. From the outset, schools were viewed organizationally, as a means to extend the scope of psychiatry into areas of the social body previously inaccessible.”

Roof proposes a notion that if amplified towards the masses could revolutionize current academic principles. The stigmas we see are only the superficial evidences of a deeper underlying societal problem.

When a plant does not receive adequate sun and nourishment it cannot thrive, same can be said of how well and often mental health mindfulness is practiced. Both men and women cannot fall prey to the false view surrounding psychological assistance. Women who make up more than half of the global population can be plummeted by so much pressure. Meeting the needs to be a “perfect” women in societies standards, birthing a child, and hormonal imbalances all play a part in potentially overthrowing the homeostasis of a women’s mental stability. According to Becker et al. (2010):

“Women with mental disorders not only have higher morbidity and mortality rates but are also more at risk for the underdiagnosis of major physical illnesses (McCabe and Leas [2008](https://link-springer-com.db19.linccweb.org/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4419-1526-9_1#CR7)). In response to current epidemiologic data, the principle that “there is no health without mental health” is gaining ground. Efforts to transform America’s public mental health delivery systems to ones that are more person-centered, recovery-focused, evidenced-based, and quality-driven are intensifying (Power [2009](https://link-springer-com.db19.linccweb.org/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4419-1526-9_1#CR9)).”

However, men also face a grave calamity because the less in touch with their emotions they appear the more society applauds them for their manliness. A concept which is undoubtedly unproductive.

Methodology

To further investigate for this second part of the paper I elected that the best method for me to achieve the most results from my research was through an in-person survey. To me it seemed that the best way to get honest feedback was by talking to a people with all sorts of different backgrounds yet keeping one thing concise: where my questions are leading up to. Whether people are aware or not, the “psyche” plays a fundamental role in the foundation of our lives. By using survey’s I was able to extract all sorts of answers from my interviewees. My first step was to come up with a few questions: What culture do you consider yourself to be a part of? How often do you consider your feelings? In the past have you ever consulted with a psychologist? Do you mind seeking help or prefer to handle it on your own? How old are you? What do you think about asylums?. Then I used both Instagram and people around me to conduct my survey. Instagram is easy, simply shooting a few question and seeing the replies is instantaneous. The tricky part of this investigation was smoothly driving the conversation towards my predetermined questions. In an attempt to receive the most varied responses possible, I brought these questions up with a few family members, patients where I work, and doctors I work for. I would usually start off the conversation saying I’m considering seeking out a psychologist input so I can better deal with x,y,z. Immediately after I would get some sort of response or opinion where I was then able to bring up my questions to get each person’s take. The respondents ages range from 12-64 years of age. The ethnic backgrounds include: Cuban, Italian, American, Argentinian, and African American. After observing the results from my survey I was able to do a lot of comparing and contrasting from the aforementioned research done in paper 1.

Discussion

Coincidently, what I read in the research articles I chose and my findings had many similitudes. One concise factor is that to some degree a vast majority of people in this society can understand the utmost importance of proper cognitive and emotional functioning. Awareness of preventive psychological methods should be implemented in all arrays in a person’s life. From grade school to family discussion’s. One of the articles I read through brought up the point that to a certain degree we try to achieve one specific cookie cutter form yet diversity exists in each and every nook and cranny of the United States. The subliminal and sometimes shockingly blatant way in which this society tries to construe each of its people into a certain type wreaks havoc on an individual’s mental health. My findings showed that for numerous reasons people are willing to seek help. Whether it’s an unwillingness to accept oneself, divorce, depression, etc. Numerous of my interviewees shared the same mindset on this topic. However, there were a few who completely neglect any interest in mental health and prefer to go about with giving that topic much afterthought.

“….Depression is the common cold of mental illnesses.” – Participant A, male

“Asking for help is never the problem, doing the self-work afterwards is the hard part.” – Participant B, male

“I don’t think I could’ve been the somewhat sane person I am today without my weekly psychologist appointment.” – Participant C, female

“I only count on myself .” (originally said in Spanish) – Participant D, male



Limitations

I for one strongly believe in the benefits of habitual psychological help. This doesn’t entail ritually visiting a psychologist. It does include awareness of how one is feeling, consciously taking action to improve one’s mental state, knowing certain methods that could help to disperse and qualm feeling at any given moment, and understanding when to seek help. Perhaps my personal preference was shown in some comment or mannerisms made during my survey. Yet I was diligent about maintaining a poker face during those moments.

Future Research Possibilities

After revising the answer’s I got back and the steps I took, I think there were a few things I could’ve done additionally. I’m in intrigued in having known what particular upbringing every persons had. In psychology, there’s a big focus on nature vs. nurture. What we learn in the environment we step into compared to what we inherit from our homes. I would have liked to have perhaps gained some supplemental knowledge into each interviewees upbringing. How far did that seep into the person they are currently? I very strongly believe that it takes extensive self-work to stray away from the ideals, mannerisms, etc. That we were constantly swarmed by since such a tender age. Economic factors surely have influence in regards to an individual’s likelihood of seeking help. One can only judge by a person’s exterior and take a guess as to whether or not they’re affluent. How does someone whose been financially well-off since birth compare to a person’s who has always had to struggle. I can see how linking all these factors in a proper research could bring my research to the next level.

Conclusions and Future Study

For years, my field of interest has been psychology and all of which it pertains. Destigmatizing mental ailments can lead to a vast array of societal progress. It takes the right time and unity to bring forth change. History has highlighted that if the same wrong doings are enacted repeatedly for a certain timespan inevitably it will come to its end. With all the articles and clinical researches I have looked through I fully believe that when we liberate ourselves from close mindedness we can achieve greater advancement as race. I have concluded that I accept my initial hypothesis and it cannot be rejected. The less people see the normalcy in psychological help, the more adults there will be who are not properly functional. Not only can mental health awareness posts be seen more commonly on social media this has also lead to more comradery in regards to this topic among society.

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