

Positive Mental Health for the Betterment of the Community

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No doubt now a days, mental health has become an international problem. Mental disorder, in some way is related with the modern competitive life style as well as various events. For the last four decades, Stress and it's Management has captured attention of Psychiatrists and Medical practitioners. Stress is the outcome of interaction of our body and mind function. The causes of stress are many. Some of them can be attributable to the environment and other are largely with us. Stress can affect an individual's physical and mental health.

People should be healthy as whole, both physically as well as mentally and emotionally. This can be achieved if the body and mind is well connected. The government and the media play an important role in an effort to enhance the awareness of psychotherapy as a means to achieve the harmony in the life. As the saying goes' "Prevention is better than cure", early detection of psychological problems/illness would help early recovery and will result in a better future. If we have to survive in this competitive world we must accept and face challenges of life.

Human history is witness that psychic-persons were treated badly and inhumanly and even boycotted socially in ancient and medieval period because such persons were termed as evil spirit. But later on in the 20th century it was termed as natural phenomena and society started behaving humanly with them. Several means have been suggested for managing stress and mental disorder, which are given below; as

Some ways of stress management :-

Regular exercise, Relaxation Techniques, sufficient sleep, The art of reforming, Develop a good support system, Live in the present, Develop a positive attitude, Accept and nourish themselves, Have realistic expectations Keep the principles of simple living.

Mental Health in India has been studied by Shweta Singh in her paper "Community Mental Health in India" A WHO perspective publishes in India Journal of Community

Psychology' Jan, 2004. Mental health problem in India is particularly acute. In India there are several issues which form a challenge to deal with mental illness.

Nearly 20-30 million people in India are in need of mental health services (NHRC, 1999). One-third of these need help to cope with disability resulting from various psychiatric disorders (WHR, 2001).

The epidemiological studies conducted in India indicates that:

- (i) Prevalence of several mental disorders is 10-20 / 1000 of the population and that of neurotic and psychosomatic disorders is about 2-3 time higher.
- (ii) Prevalence rate is same in Rural and Urban areas.
- (iii) About 1-2% of children have same underlying psychiatric problems and 0.5-1% have mental retardation.
- (iv) At least 15-20% of the people , who visit general health services like medical OPD, have underlying psychiatric problem, appearing bas physical symptoms.
- (v) Incidence in each year is approx 35 per lac population (Isaac 1987, G.O.I., 1982 and 1990).

Lacking of Trained Manpower -

As per data given by Shweta Singh in her paper on a "Community Mental Health in India", there is scarcity of trained manpower. There are nearly 3500 psychiatrists, 1000 clinical psychologists, 1000 psychiatric social workers, and 900 psychiatric nurses for 20-30 billion people in need of them (NHRC, 1999 and WHR, 2001).

Mental Health Facilities -

The Mental Health Facilities available in India are very meager. There are about 20,000 total psychiatric beds available in mental hospitals of India (NHRC, 1999).

1. The no. of psychiatric beds per 1000 population is less than 1 (WHR, 2001)
2. There are 37 Govt. mental hospitals and 40-50 private psychiatric institutes.
3. There are more than 200 general hospital psychiatry units amounting to 3000 beds (NHRC, 199).
4. Most of mental hospitals are poor in quality of mental health care.

Community Mental Health Services in India

After the pre-independence approach of custodial care the development of mental health care has gone through three phases (a) from 1947 to 1960, following the Shore Committee Report (1946), the number of mental hospital were increased and their condition

was improved (b) From 1960 to 1975, the General Hospital Psychiatric units, were set up (c) From 1970's initiatives were started for providing community mental health services:

The efforts at providing mental health care through available infrastructure of institutes and PHC centers helped India to be pioneer among other developing countries to launch the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in 1982. The three components of the programme have been treatment rehabilitation and prevention. NMHP was set up with the following objectives:

- (i) To ensure availability and accessibility of minimum mental health care for all in the foreseeable future, particularly to the most vulnerable and under privileged sections of population.
- (ii) To ensure application of mental health knowledge in general health care and in social development.
- (iii) To promote community participation in the mental health service development and to stimulate efforts towards self-help in the community.

Following NMHP, there was progress made in the development of training programmes and integration of mental health care with primary health care.

Involvement of Non-mental Health Professionals and Personnels

For more than 3 decades NIMHANS has been not only training but also involving PHC, doctors, and workers general practitioners, community leaders, traditional healers and indigenous systems of medicine, in community mental health care/ There efforts have shown positive results in terms of early identification and treatment rehabilitation and increasing general awareness about mental health.

Community Mental Health Programme

The community mental health programme were in various centre's at Chandigarh, Vellore and Ranchi till late 70's and Amritsar, Hameerpur, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Jaipur and many others till late 80's. At Present There are nearly 25 districts-mental-health-programmes are running in 22 states of India.

Role of Voluntary Organizations

- (a) The voluntary agencies have actively participated in the community mental health work in terms of rehabilitation prevention and promotion for example self help groups like AMEND (Bangalore) are organized, where the families of substance abusers, mentally retarded, physically disabled and mentally-ill meet together to solve their problems.

- (b) Crisis management is being conducted by the trained volunteers at Sanjvani Delf and so other agencies are working in these fields.

In this way for enhancing the development of community-mental health-services is needed to focus on mental health of community in addition to curative aspects of mental illness. To cope with the problems of mental health, WHR 2001 has made recommendations based on community-mental-health perspective for developing countries like India.

Psychologists are now concerned with enhancing the psychological functional effectiveness and well being of individual. Results from various studies show that psychological intervention help individuals to manage discomfort in a better way and improve their mental health for the betterment and development of community.

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