What Affects Community Mental Health?

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Abstract- Community mental h ealth i s a s ystem t hat p uts "human" before "patient."This system is ethically based on human rights, and in terms of effectiveness, it is based on concrete evidence. Patient participation is an significant aspect of this system as the patient is included in the process at e very stage o f t reatment. T he p urpose o f t his r eview i s t o describe the factors affecting community mental health. We can talk about three potential categories that affect community mental health: individual characteristics and behaviors, social and economic conditions, and environmental factors. Individual features and behaviors include low self-esteem, emotional and cognitive disability, lack of communication skills, medical illness, and substance use.

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Abstract- Community mental health is a system that puts "human" before "patient."This system is ethically based on human rights, and in terms of effectiveness, it is based on concrete evidence. Patient participation is an significant aspect of this system as the patient is included in the process at every stage of treatment. The purpose of this review is to describe the factors affecting community mental health. We can talk about three potential categories that affect community mental health: individual characteristics and behaviors, social and economic conditions, and environmental factors. Individual features and behaviors include low self-esteem, emotional and cognitive disability, lack of communication skills, medical illness, and substance use. Social and economic conditions include loneliness, loss of a relative, neglect and family conflicts, exposure to violence and abuse, low income and poverty, difficulties and failures at school, job stress, and unemployment. Environmental factors include weak access to fundamental services, injustice and discrimination, social inequalities and gender inequalities, and exposure to war, migration, and other disasters. Fights that force individuals to migrate, acts of violence, and coercive life events are the most important environmental factors that negatively affect mental health. In protecting community mental health, it is substantial that health care providers provide the necessary care, counseling, support and training to individuals and their families as individuals who have the opportunity to closely monitor this triangular relationship at the individual, family, and community level.

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I. Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, social, and spiritual well-being. In light of this definition, it is evident that for the individual to be fully healthy, the individual must have good mental health as well as good physical health [1]. On the other hand, Freud has made a simple definition of mental health as "the ability to work and love" [2].

Mental health is a dynamic state of internal equilibrium which enables individuals to use their abilities in harmony with universal values of society (respect and care for oneself and other living beings; recognition of connectedness between people; respect for the environment; respect for one's own and others' freedom) [3].

Community mental health is a system that puts "human" before "patient". This system is ethically based on human rights, and in terms of effectiveness it is based on concrete evidence. Patient participation is an

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important aspect of this system as the patient is included in the process at every stage of treatment [4]. We can talk about three potential categories that affect community mental health: individual characteristics and behaviors, social and economic conditions, and environmental factors [5]. The mental health of individuals affects community mental health.

II. What Affects Community Mental Health?

Individual characteristics and behaviors include low self-esteem, emotional and cognitive disability, lack of communication skills, medical illness, and substance use [5, 6].

Low self-esteem: When people perceive a threat to their self-esteem, they exhibit self-preventive behavior. There is a negative relationship between low self-esteem and self-prevention [7]. Low self-esteem can lead to isolation from others, and even to violence and anger if there is a threat to ego [8, 9]. Being a social entity, isolation from others adversely affects the mental health of humans. Furthermore, behaviors of violence and anger towards other people adversely affect the mental health of others.

Emotional and cognitive impairment: It is the inadequacy of interest and motivation, concepts, cognitive abilities, memory, reasoning, and various other internal mental functions. Emotional and cognitive deficiencies of people lead to negatory social effects. The lack of emotional self-awareness often makes individuals very sensitive. They overreact to any problem and always feel tired or overwhelmed in the face of any difficulty, be it large or small [10].

Lack of communication skills: While most people are unaware that they cannot make meaningful and useful speeches, they violently resist accepting the truth when this situation is explained to them. Those who waste their time and energy and that of others feed the negative emotions they have with their accusations, complaints, and criticisms on the one hand, and on the other hand create stress in their environment. Dökmen listed the causes of communication conflicts as cognitive, perceptual, emotional, unconscious processes of the people engaged in communication, individual needs, communication skills, personal factors, cultural factors, roles, social and physical environment, and the quality of the message [11]. From this point of view, it is seen that communication conflicts, especially stress and anger, negatively affect the mental health of individuals.

Substance use: Studies using the Minnesota Multidimensional Personality Inventory (MMPI) showed that in addition to psychotic deviation, the risk of depression, hysteria, and psychasthenic was high in alcohol addicts, whereas risk of psychotic deflection and hypomania were found to be especially higher in patients using narcotic drugs. The psychopathic deviation scores of heroin addicts were significantly higher [12].

Social and economic conditions include loneliness, loss of a relative, neglect and family conflicts, exposure to violence and abuse, low income and poverty, difficulties and failures at school, job stress, and unemployment [5].

Neglect and family conflicts: Negative effects of parents on physical and emotional neglect of children constitute an important risk factor. The most important of these negative effects are aggressive behavior exhibited by the parent. This is very important because, in the family, parents can easily direct aggressive behavior towards their children [13]. It is known that neglects and traumas experienced in childhood negatively affect the mental health of individuals.

Exposure to violence and abuse is caused by factors such as low socio-economic status, physical and sexual abuse, poverty, homelessness, child neglect, malnutrition, negative peer support, and exposure to social violence [14]. It is usually manifested in the form of humiliation, shouting, telling another person he/she is inadequate, he/she can amount to nothing, and intimidation. Exposure to violence and abuse in every period of life creates feelings of insecurity, insufficiency and adversely affects the mental health of individuals and families.

Low income and poverty: Poverty is defined in the simplest sense as the inability of people to meet their daily basic needs such as food, shelter, health, transportation, etc., which are essential for the survival of people, or not having sufficient financial income to meet these needs. While the world economy is growing, and global wealth is increasing, poverty has now become a serious problem that continues to grow at its usual pace and threatens the peace, tranquility and happiness of countries around the world. 14% of the world's population (880 million people) earns less than $1 per day, 22% (1 billion 400 million people) earns less than $1.25 per day, and 40% (2 billion 600 million people) earns less than $2 per day [15]. Every year, around one billion people in the world are struggling with hunger, not accessing basic food products, and more than ten million people die of malnutrition. Persons who cannot meet their daily basic human needs will have high levels of anxiety, high risk of stress, anxiety, depression, low life expectancy, and low satisfaction from life.

Work stress and unemployment: The social costs of unemployment include an increase in crime rates, dissolution in the social structure, unbalanced migration, and increase in suicide rates. Unemployment causes a decrease in the income that the individual expects for the future, a limitation in consumption habits, and social isolation. Theoretical approaches on this subject state that as a result of these negativities, the individual's suicidal tendencies will increase [16].

Lastly, *environmental factors* include thin access to elementary services, injustice, and discrimination, social inequalities, and gender inequalities, and exposure to war, migration, and other disasters [5].

Injustice and discrimination: Human rights are the rights that people have only because they are human. Some people are excluded from the social sphere because of their characteristics. Discrimination can be solely based on gender, but also on belonging to a different race, believing in distinct religions, or having different sexual orientations [17]. Discriminatory behaviors can lead to negation outcomes such as burnout, unhappiness, work stress, and cynicism. Discrimination, exclusion, injustice, and unethical behavior in community affect not only the individual but also the mental health of all individuals in the society. According to Lerner and Miller, if people are subjected to very traumatic experiences or successive unjust situations that make them believe the world is unstable, chaotic, and unfair, this may lead to a feeling of unsafety and worry, and even increase suicidal tendencies [18].

Social inequalities and gender disparities: Social inequalities have an important place among the determinants of community mental health. Regional, economic, gender-based, educational and racial/ethnic inequalities prevent access to the resources and fair distribution of services necessary to protect mental health in a society. As a result, the mental health of those exposed to one or more of these inequalities is negatively affected [19].

One of the most significant reflections of gender inequality is seen in the field of health care. Studies show that women live longer than men, but their quality of life is lower, and they suffer from more diseases. For example, according to a research conducted in the USA, limitation of activity due to health problems is 25% higher in women compared to men and the number of days spent in bed as a result of acute conditions is also 35% higher in women [20, 21]. In another study, it was observed that women were more exposed to the risks that would negatively affect their mental health compared to men, and prevalence of psychological diseases was higher in women [22].

War and migration: The number of immigrants is increasing due to the direct or indirect effects of globalization, regional conflicts, war, poverty, and improving transportation and communication opportunities. According to statistics, the number of international immigrants in the world is estimated to be 214 million today, compared to 150 million in 2000 [23].

The direction of migration around the world is generally from less developed countries to developing or developed countries, from rural areas to urban areas [24]. With the act of migration, individuals willingly or involuntarily leave the family environment in which they are raised and the social values they are accustomed to and move to a different primeter in terms of language and culture [25]. During this transition, individuals face many stressors such as social isolation, loneliness, language barrier, unemployment, and cultural differences. Due to the negative impact of stress on health and the inadequacy of coping mechanisms, immigrants face many health problems of physiological and psychological origin [26]. Battles, acts of violence and coercive life events that force people to migrate are the most important environmental factors that negatively affect mental health.

III. Conclusion and Recommendations

There are many factors affecting community mental health. Healthy individuals form healthy families and healthy families from healthy communities. Community mental health practices play an important role in preventing mental illnesses. The main purpose of these services is to protect mental health, to prevent the occurrence of mental illness and to bring practices studies to the public (primary prevention), to provide early diagnosis, treatment and care of mental illnesses (secondary prevention), to provide rehabilitation and maintenance of care and to create a system for this purpose (tertiary prevention) [27]. It is highly important that individuals with mental illness, suffering from neglect or abuse, who are in a crowded family, have had to migrate, have experienced death, separation or illness, or families with low-socio-economic status or exhibiting violent behavior are identified in the early period and supported for positive mental development [14].

The development of basic cognitive and social skills is important in protecting community health. Basic cognitive and social skills; ability to recognize, express and modulate one's own emotions, as well as empathize with others; flexibility and ability to cope with adverse life events and function in social roles; and harmonious relationship between body and mind represent important components of mental health which contribute, to varying degrees, to the state of internal equilibrium [3].

In protecting community mental health, it is important that health care providers provide the necessary care, counseling, support, and training to individuals and their families as they have the opportunity to closely monitor this triangular relationship at the individual, family, and community level.

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