

Mental Depression and Anxiety Disorder in the Workplaces and among the People of Bangladesh

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About 7 million people of Bangladesh experience depression and anxiety disorders [WHO, 2020]. An estimated 10167 people committed suicide in 2012, suicide attempts were considered by 4% of boys and 6% of girls by youths aged 13-17 years [WHO 2020]. In Bangladesh, it is estimated that 15-35% of the population have a mental health problem.

Prevalence of depression among the medical students in 2013 was 38.9%. Another study in 2019 revealed that depression among varsity students was 22.5% and 27.1% had anxiety disorders.

Prevalence of mental disorders among the adult population of Bangladesh is 18.7%. This is among the women 21.5% and in case of males is 15.7%.

Between urban and rural, 18.9%: 18.7%.

According to WHO, these types of disorders are highest in the East-Asian countries, Depression 4.1%, anxiety disorders 4.4%.

There are more than 200 categories of mental health disorders globally. Some common types are:

i) Anxiety Disorders.

ii) **□ Dissociative Disorders:** Mental health conditions that involve experiencing a loss of connection between thoughts, memories, feelings, surroundings, behavior and identity. These conditions include escape from reality in ways that are not wanted and not healthy.

iii) **□ Mood Disorders:-** a. Depressive disorders b. Bipolar disorders.

iv) **□ Trauma and Stressor Related Disorders.**

v) **□ Sleep-Wake Disorders [Parasomnias]:** Examples include sleep terrors, sleepwalking, nightmare disorder, sleep-related eating disorder and sleep paralysis.

vi) **□ Neurocognitive Disorders:** Which include delirium, mild neurocognitive disorder and dementia. Delirium is a condition in which one becomes confused, disoriented and not able to think or remember clearly. On the other hand, dementia is a general term for loss of memory, language, problem-solving and other thinking abilities that are severe enough to interfere the daily life.

vii) **□ Substance Related and Addictive Disorders:** Develop usually from drug addiction from heroin, morphine, pethidine, marijuana, alcohol, sedatives etc.

Rare types of mental disorders are :

i) **Clinical Lycanthropy:** A rare condition in which the patient has the delusional belief of turning into an animal like wolf.

ii) **Depersonalization:** Feelings that one is observing thoughts, feelings, body or parts from the outside. Floating in the air, feeling like a robot, no control on talking, moving etc.

iii) **Diogenes Syndrome:** A behavioral disorder of the elderly, accompanied by a self-imposed isolation, the refusal of external help, a tendency to accumulate unusual objects.

iv) **Stendhal Syndrome:** Or Florence syndrome is a psychosomatic condition involving rapid heartbeat, fainting, confusion, even hallucinations, allegedly occurring when individuals become exposed to objects, art works or phenomena of great beauty.

v) **Apotemnophilia:** Body integrity identity disorder, defined by the uncontrollable desire to amputate one or more healthy limbs or to be paraplegic.

Global Scenario

About 300 million people had been suffering from different types of psychological problems.

Some other types are Schizophrenia and PTSD [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder], Disruptive behavior, Dissocial disorder, Neurodevelopmental disorders. Alien-hand syndrome, Capgras syndrome, Alice in wonderland syndrome. In schizophrenia, some people describe their thoughts as being controlled by someone else, their thoughts are not their own, planted in mind by someone else, confused conversation, hearing of abnormal sounds, objects etc. which are serious condition.

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PTSD is a mental health condition that is caused by an extremely stressful or terrifying event – either being part of it or witnessing it. In different occupational sites, these types of occurrences are not unusual. Especially in countries like Bangladesh. These shocking events may occur in Government and Non-government organizations, Private, semi-government establishments. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, uncontrollable thoughts about the event. It is more in females and curable.

In case of delirium, there develop mental confusion, difficulty in paying attention, listening or absorbing information, lack of interest in one's surroundings, difficulty in thinking or remembering, drowsiness or lethargy, feeling disoriented in time and place.

Bangladesh mental disorder rate varies from 6.5 – 31% among the adults. On the other hand, this is 13.4 – 22.9% among the children group. Some mental health disorders exist at community level.

Mental Health Stigma in Bangladesh

The negative social attitude attached to a characteristic of an individual that may be regarded as a mental, physical or social deficiency. A stigma implies social disapproval and can lead unfairly to discrimination against and exclusion of the individual. Access to mental health care is very inadequate and unequal in Bangladesh due to stigma, misconception around mental illness, lack of awareness.

Mental Health Policy in Bangladesh

In 2018, Bangladesh Parliament approved a new Mental Health Policy, approved by the Ministry of Health in 2019. This reflects a shift from a Medical to a psychosocial treatment model with emphasis on decentralization and community-based services, support for the persons living with mental illness,

People with mental health conditions often also experience stigma, discrimination and human rights violation. Mental health conditions include mental disorders, psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental stress associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning or risk of self-harm.

Factors considered are childhood abuse, trauma or neglect, social isolation or loneliness, experiencing discrimination and stigma, racism. Pervasive sense of fear, economic instability, forced physical distancing from loved ones, friends, relatives, communities have exacerbated the unprecedented stress young people already faced.

Some Demographics of Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country of 147570 sq.km, with a population of 163 million. Population density is

1102/sq.km. Among the population, 89% are Muslim, 10% are followers of Hinduism, 1% belong to other communities. Urban population is 38.2%, population of only Dhaka city is 21 million. GDP per capita \$4200. Life expectancy has increased in Bangladesh. Average life span is now 74.2 years, MMR 173/100000 live births, IMR 28.3/1000 live birth [BBS2023].

The dark side of our health sector denotes that registered physicians are 0.53/1000 population, 0.8 hospital beds/1000 population.

Village doctors in rural area provide 65% of health care. It is interesting to know, only 220 psychiatrists, 50 trained clinical psychologists serve the whole nation.

Recent Perspectives in Bangladesh

Discrimination for job seeking, education chances, political chaos etc. lead the students to participate in mass movement of July-August 2024. Anxiety, depression compelled the people sacrifice their lives for the hope of a new revolution. They were fearless in front of the bullets, tortures. Martyrs sacrifice compelled the whole nation developing psychological trauma. PTSD [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder]. Violence manifested through nightmares, severe anxiety, uncontrollable thoughts. Law-enforcers of Bangladesh showed no mercy to anyone to stop the movement. The police force due to their heinous activities to support the fascist government totally lost their faith by the general people. There were about 900 deaths and more than 11000 people injured in the July-August 2024 revolution in Bangladesh, origin of which developed from depression sparked from indiscriminate, social injustice, torture, fascism, killing and missing.

This disillusionment can foster cynicism [seeking all of faults], lack of respect for the governance and law, which can lead to a cycle of unrest and dissatisfaction. Mental toll of harboring such feelings can lead to alienation, isolation—further impacting students mental health and their perceptions of their role within the society.

Varsity campuses turned into battleground, facing physical harm and psychological stress. Quota movement changed as a catalyst for the Government change.

Academic pressure, pressure for better future among the students, failure to achieve the expected results sometimes lead to suicidal tendencies or suicidal events among the innocent students. There are higher suicidal rates observed among the women in Bangladesh. Lower social status, social inferiority can lead to sense of hopelessness and despair, pushing some women towards suicide.

Stalking [Crime by power application] is another deadly issue that often results in societal shame. Victims of stalking frequently face blame, injustice. Misconceptions pressurize the victims, develop feelings of isolation, vulnerability. Link between stalking, societal shame and suicide -creates a vicious cycle of emotional turmoil.

Some Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder

Restlessness, panic, feeling fatigued, difficulty to focus, difficulty to control fear, racing heart.

Remedial Measures for Mental Illness

- i) ☐ Staying positive
- ii) ☐ Practicing gratitude, which means being thankful for the good things in life
- iii) ☐ Taking care of physical health
- iv) ☐ Good communication with the others
- v) ☐ Developing a sense of meaning and purpose in life
- vi) ☐ Change of environment
- vii) ☐ Proper psychotherapy.

Depression is a common mental health condition that can happen to anyone. It is characterized by a low mood or loss of pleasure or interest in activities for long periods of time. It is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest.

Rohingya Refugees and Others Who had Lost Their Country Shelter

Near about one million people from Rakhine Province had taken shelters in different refugee camps in Bangladesh. Anxiety, depression, torture, rape, fear of the displaced persons that they will experience trauma again, uncertainty of future, worry obsessively about their home, motherland or children see danger all around every corner. Anxiety interferes daily activities, make the life challenging.

Global COVID-19 pandemic caused death of 7010681 people worldwide. Recent natural calamities which affected about 5.7 million people of central, eastern, southeastern zone people of Bangladesh, death of 71 lives has immense sufferings. There was scarcity of food, shortage of clean water, medicine, shelter, clothing, financial support, disruption of sanitations system.

On the other hand, Middle-East tragedy, Russia Ukraine war, racial conflicts in different countries of Africa, all are leading to anxiety, tension among the sufferer people.

During COVID-19, there were 29118 death occurrences, case fatality rate was 1.49% in Bangladesh.

Current research suggests, one in five people could develop anxiety disorder, trouble in sleeping, feeling anxiety or nervous, employment/unemployment problem, decreased financial security, decreased job security, increased cost of products/living expenditures.

Around 10% of the people who experience traumatic events will have serious mental health problems and another 10% will develop behavior that will hinder their ability to function effectively. These include PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, rarely precipitation of psychosis, deaths, injuries, population displacement, the disruption of assets, disruption of social and economic systems. Gender discrimination, racism, favoritism, personal fascination, autocratic attitude, regional attractiveness, injustice, personal hatred etc. all are playing obstacles for smooth functioning of the workers, employees in an organization. So, the authority should pay proper attention, considerate thinking, logical watchfulness among the workers to flourish the progress of the organization. At the same time, the employees and staff should also have devotion, sincerity, responsibility, heartfelt love for the betterment of the organization which he or she belongs!

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