



EXPLORING THE PREVALENCE AND CLASSIFICATION OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

Prasad M K¹, Prof. (Dr.) Poonam Devdutt²

¹Research Scholar, Centre for Psychology and Human Behavior, Shobhit Institute of Engineering & Technology,
Deemed to be University, Meerut

²Professor, Centre for Psychology and Human Behavior, Shobhit Institute of Engineering & Technology,
Deemed to be University, Meerut

ABSTRACT

This study examines the prevalence and classification of mental health disorders in India, highlighting their growing public health significance and wide-ranging impact on individuals and society. Using an exploratory research design, the study is based on secondary data collected from existing literature and epidemiological reports to understand the burden and types of mental health conditions in the country. Findings indicate that mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and substance use disorders are highly prevalent and contribute significantly to emotional, cognitive, social, and occupational impairments. The review further emphasizes that these conditions lead to reduced quality of life, increased healthcare burden, and broader socioeconomic challenges. The study concludes that there is an urgent need to strengthen mental healthcare systems, promote early diagnosis, and implement effective intervention and rehabilitation strategies to address the rising mental health concerns in India.

KEYWORDS: Mental health, Mental Health conditions, Depression, Anxiety disorder, Bipolar disorder.

INTRODUCTION

Mental disorders affect people across all age groups, socioeconomic classes, and geographic locations, making mental health a universal concern. These conditions lead to significant personal distress, reduced ability to perform daily activities, and substantial social and economic burdens on society (Sagar, 2020). In India, the incidence of mental health disorders has increased considerably over the years, emerging as a major public health challenge. It is estimated that approximately 15% of the population experiences one or more mental health conditions. These include a wide range of disorders such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, substance use disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders (Hossain & Purohit, 2019).

India has consistently emphasized the importance of promoting both physical and mental well-being to ensure a healthy society. However, changing health trends and lifestyles have led to a growing prominence of mental, behavioral, and substance use disorders within the healthcare system. These conditions contribute significantly to illness, disability, and, in some cases, premature death among affected individuals. Due to the persistent stigma associated with mental health issues, many people conceal their conditions, which often results in a diminished quality of life. Furthermore, the prevalence of mental disorders is shaped by numerous factors, including socioeconomic conditions, environmental influences, individual perceptions of stress, differences in assessment methods, variations in diagnostic criteria, and the interpretation of research findings.

The impact of mental health challenges extends beyond affected individuals and influences society as a whole. People experiencing mental health problems often endure considerable

emotional suffering and psychological distress, which can limit their ability to live satisfying and productive lives. These difficulties may hinder their capacity to maintain healthy relationships, achieve educational and career goals, and actively engage in social and community activities. At the broader societal level, mental health disorders can significantly affect community well-being and national development. One of the major economic implications is the decline in productivity within workplaces and households. Individuals dealing with mental health issues frequently experience absenteeism, reduced job performance, and prolonged periods of disability, all of which contribute to lower workforce efficiency and can impede overall economic progress.

The economic impact of mental health disorders is substantial and cannot be underestimated. Significant healthcare costs arise from the provision of mental health services, including assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medication, and therapeutic interventions (Agboola et al., 2018). In addition to these direct expenses, indirect costs such as reduced productivity, loss of income, and the increased responsibilities placed on family members and caregivers further intensify the financial burden on society. Apart from the economic consequences, mental health disorders in India also carry profound social repercussions. Persistent stigma and discrimination associated with mental illnesses remain prevalent in many communities, discouraging affected individuals from seeking timely professional assistance and social support. As a result, diagnosis and treatment are often delayed, prolonging suffering and increasing the risk of adverse long-term outcomes (Srivastava et al., 2016).

The increasing prevalence of mental health disorders in India and their wide-ranging consequences highlight the need for a thorough understanding of the issues involved. Effectively addressing mental health concerns is essential not only for



improving the quality of life of affected individuals but also for promoting the nation's social and economic development. In this context, examining the role of mental asylums and mental healthcare institutions can provide valuable insights into potential approaches for managing mental health challenges. This review seeks to explore such strategies and contribute to the development of measures aimed at enhancing the well-being and rehabilitation of individuals living with mental health disorders in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nair & Babu (2018) examined burnout among IT employees in Kerala. Their findings showed that emotional exhaustion and mental fatigue were widely experienced by employees working in technology-driven occupational settings. The researchers observed that prolonged cognitive involvement and constant organizational pressure played a major role in increasing burnout symptoms and psychological stress.

George and Mathew (2020) investigated emotional exhaustion and interpersonal functioning among IT employees in Kerala. The study found that technology-mediated communication limited opportunities for meaningful social interaction and emotional support in the workplace. Employees who experienced emotional loneliness were also found to report higher levels of stress and psychological fatigue.

Abraham (2021) examined the psychosocial impact of remote work among IT professionals during the post-pandemic period. The study revealed that remote working conditions contributed to greater social isolation, unclear work-life boundaries, and extended digital engagement. Employees commonly experienced emotional exhaustion, lower motivation, attentional overload, and reduced interpersonal connectedness.

Chen et al. (2022) reported that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, as a major emergency event, significantly affected employees' psychological well-being and negatively influenced their work performance. The study focused on understanding the relationship between work stress, mental health, and employee performance, while also exploring strategies to reduce the adverse effects of occupational stress.

Pangarkar et al. (2023) examined the complex relationship between job stress and mental health among individuals working in high-stress occupations. Recognizing that workplace demands have a significant influence on employees' health and well-being, the study adopted a comprehensive approach to understand how occupational pressures affect mental health over time.

Karakitsiou et al. (2025) highlighted that remote work is continuously reshaping organizational structures as well as employees' work experiences, creating conditions that may either support or negatively affect mental health and overall well-being. These changing work environments influence stress levels, resilience, and burnout within increasingly digital and flexible occupational settings.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the prevalence and classification of mental health disorders.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In the present study exploratory research designs were employed to effectively achieve the research objective.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Secondary Data: In the present study, data were collected to find the prevalence and classification of mental health disorders.

Prevalence and Types of Mental Health Disorders

Mental health disorders are highly prevalent in India, affecting a substantial segment of the population. Epidemiological research has reported that the prevalence of psychiatric disorders ranges from 9.5 to 370 per 1,000 individuals, indicating a significant burden of mental illness across the country (Math & Srinivasaraju, 2010). These figures reflect the wide variety of mental health conditions experienced by individuals and underscore the complexity of mental health challenges in India. The high prevalence of mental disorders emphasizes the urgent need for effective mental healthcare services, preventive measures, and support systems to promote psychological well-being. Among the most commonly reported mental health conditions in India are depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and substance use disorders. Addressing these conditions through timely diagnosis, treatment, and community-based interventions is essential for improving overall public health and quality of life.

Depression: Depression is one of the most prevalent mental health disorders and is marked by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a diminished interest or enjoyment in daily activities. It affects an individual's emotional state, cognitive functioning, behavior, and physical health. At the population level, anxiety and depression together account for approximately 3.5% of all deaths. Common symptoms of depression include low energy levels, changes in appetite, sleep-related problems, difficulties with concentration and decision-making, and, in severe cases, thoughts of self-harm or suicide. The disorder can have a profound impact on an individual's ability to perform daily tasks, maintain social and personal relationships, and sustain an overall satisfactory quality of life.

Anxiety disorders: Anxiety disorders comprise a group of mental health conditions characterized by excessive, persistent, and often uncontrollable feelings of fear, worry, or apprehension that interfere with an individual's daily activities and overall functioning. Among these, generalized anxiety disorder is marked by ongoing and excessive concern about various life situations and events. Panic disorder involves recurrent episodes of intense fear, known as panic attacks, which are often accompanied by physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, chest discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath. Phobias are characterized by an irrational and overwhelming fear of specific objects, situations, or activities, leading individuals to avoid the feared stimuli. Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) involves recurring intrusive thoughts or urges (obsessions) and repetitive actions or rituals (compulsions) performed to reduce anxiety. Collectively,



anxiety disorders can lead to considerable emotional distress, avoidance of everyday situations, and significant impairments in personal, social, and occupational functioning.

Bipolar disorder: Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder characterized by recurring episodes of elevated mood, known as mania or hypomania, alternating with periods of depression. During manic or hypomanic phases, individuals may exhibit increased energy and activity levels, reduced need for sleep, rapid thinking, heightened self-confidence, impulsive decision-making, and an exaggerated sense of personal ability or importance. In contrast, depressive episodes are typically associated with persistent sadness, diminished interest in activities, low energy, and disturbances in appetite and sleep. These fluctuations in mood can significantly affect an individual's emotional stability, behavior, interpersonal relationships, and ability to function effectively in daily life (Jain & Mitra).

Schizophrenia: Schizophrenia is a long-term and serious mental health disorder that affects an individual's perception of reality, thought processes, emotions, and behavior. The condition is commonly associated with symptoms such as hallucinations, which involve sensing things that are not actually present, and delusions, which are strongly held false beliefs. Other characteristic features include disorganized thinking and speech, abnormal or unpredictable behavior, diminished emotional expression, and social isolation. Individuals with schizophrenia often experience cognitive impairments, including difficulties with memory, attention, problem-solving, and decision-making. These symptoms can severely disrupt a person's ability to think clearly, maintain social relationships, perform daily activities, and participate effectively in society.

Substance use disorders: Substance use disorders are characterized by the compulsive and harmful consumption of substances such as alcohol or drugs, even when such use results in adverse consequences. These conditions can severely affect an individual's mental well-being and may lead to the development of dependence, addiction, and withdrawal symptoms when the substance is reduced or unavailable. Substance use disorders are often associated with a range of psychological problems, including mood disturbances, anxiety disorders, psychotic symptoms, cognitive decline, and impairments in social and occupational functioning. In addition, they can contribute to broader difficulties such as financial strain, legal complications, interpersonal conflicts, and various physical health problems (Jahan & Burgess).

CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the high prevalence and diverse classification of mental health disorders in India, emphasizing the growing public health significance of this issue.

The exploratory research design and secondary data analysis reveal that conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and substance use disorders collectively contribute to a substantial burden on individuals and society. These disorders not only affect emotional, cognitive, and behavioral functioning but also lead to significant impairments in social relationships, occupational performance, and overall quality of life. The findings underscore the urgent need for strengthened mental healthcare systems, early identification, effective treatment strategies, and community-based interventions to address the rising mental health challenges and improve overall well-being.

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