

## Concept Of Mental Health and Indian Criteria

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**Abstract** - Mental Health is the balanced development of the individual's personality and emotional attitudes which enable him to live harmoniously with his/her fellow men/women. The Indian concept of mental health is available in 'Atharva Veda' which provide detailed information on mental disorders and their treatment. Poor mental health is also associated with rapid social change, stressful work conditions, gender discrimination, social exclusion, unhealthy lifestyle, risks of violence and physical ill-health and human rights violations. Multiple social, psychological, and biological factors determine the level of mental health of a person at any point of time.

**Introduction** -Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. The world Health organisation (2007) defines mental health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to *her* or *his* community.

According to Keyes (2007) mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. Beardslee (1989) stated that good mental health involves positive psychosocial skills, qualities that are present in resilient people as well. Someone who is able to think logically and seriously and who copes effectively in stressful situations is considered mentally healthy. Emotional stability and the ability to adjust to new situations that arise over the life course is also part of mental health (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). Freeman and Ziovennani (1969) have distributed the different parameters of mental health into three segments and have said that mental

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health can be defined in right perspective only when these three parameters can be consolidated. These parameters are as follows:

1. Mental health has been accepted as a medical concept.
2. It has been accepted as a psychological concept.
3. In third parameter importance social base of mental health .

Mental health can be defined as a state or condition on which an individual feels a sense of wellbeing. This gives them the capacity to live life in fulfillment of what they want to achieve in accordance to the available resources. This condition also provides an individual the capacity to be resilient to the stresses of life and to respond to these challenges without having to compromise their health or wellness. This also makes the person productive and fruitful to themselves and the community. Mental wellness could also be defined as the lack of mental problems or disorders. People who do not present diagnosable Behaviours that could qualify as a mental disorder are seen as mentally healthy. For example, someone who has an obsession on things may not necessarily have a mental disorder like obsession.

Thus they are said to have mental wellness. But when this obsession is combined with unrelenting compulsion to do the object of obsession, the person may already be diagnosed with a mental disorder called Obsessive-compulsive Disorder or OCD. It could also be seen as a positive element in an individual's personality which makes it possible to enhance mental wellness regardless of a diagnosable mental disorder. Kasl (1973) has provided four different criteria to judge the mental health:

- Functional effectiveness
- Wellbeing
- Mastery and competence and
- Psychiatric Symptoms.

Thus we can say that mental health is person's capacity to:

- Live life to the fullest.
- Be responsible for their own happiness, health and wellness.
- Respond well to the environment through conscious or unconscious use of coping mechanisms.
- Be able to balance emotional and psychological wellbeing in relation to a constant flow of new experiences.

**Mental Health:- Indian Criteria** - The Indian concept of mental health is available in 'Atharva Veda' which provide detailed information

on mental disorders and their treatment.

According to ‘Atharva Veda’ human personality on the physical side have three components or guns as Vata, Pitta and Cough. These three gunas are universal in nature and are found in every human body from birth in different degrees but maintaining certain equilibrium. So far as the equilibrium in present it indicates physical normality and disease in ant these, it gives rise to different disease. In the similar way mental personality also constitutes three gunas Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. Atharvaveda says the imbalance of these gunas cause mental disorders. There are in Manas (mind) sense birth but they keep certain equilibrium in normal person.

The Charak Samhita and Sushrut have also given the concept of mental health but they do not differ significantly from the Atharvrdic concept of mental health.

**Sushrut while defining the health of body laid the following characteristic.**

Sumdasa	The equilibrium of body humors
Samagni	Uniform health digester
Samdhatu	Normal in body tissue
Mala kriva	Normal process of excretion
Prasantmendryamana	Whose organic functions of mind and soul are healthy and happy.

The last characteristic has been included in the Ayurveda in which the mental and spiritual happiness have bean made part and parcel of health.

**Determinants of Mental Health** -Multiple social, psychological, and biological factors determine the level of mental health of a person at any point of time. For example, persistent socio-economic pressures are recognized risks to mental health for individuals and communities. The clearest evidence is associated with indicators of poverty, including low levels of education.

Poor mental health is also associated with rapid social change, stressful work conditions, gender discrimination, social exclusion, unhealthy lifestyle, risks of violence and physical ill-health and human rights violations.

There are also specific psychological and personality factors that make people vulnerable to mental disorders. Lastly, there are some biological causes of mental disorders including genetic factors and imbalances in chemicals in the brain.

**Important Factors affecting Mental Health** - It is not possible to imagine harmonious development of human beings without sound mental health. These are various factors which may influence the mental health of human beings. It is very difficult to list all the factors that affect mental health because there are wide individual differences among human beings which may create variations in causal factors; however an effect is being made to describe some common factors which affect the mental health of working woman and housewives.

**Psychosocial Factors** - Psychosocial factors affecting mental health are numerous. The following are the major ones – Mental deprivation, Institutionalizations (Foster Homes), Deprivation in home, pathogenic family pattern including faulty parent-child relationship or maladaptive family structures pathogenic relationships.

1. **Severe Stress** - There are many sources of stress in our modern societies which are directly relevant to the understanding of maladaptive Behaviour. In our developing society, there are a number of frustrations that lead to self-devaluation.

The important sources of stress are as follows:-

- (a) Failure
- (b) Losses
- (c) Personal Limitations
- (d) Guilt Consciousness
- (e) Loneliness
- (f) Conformity Vs. Non – Conformity
- (g) Avoiding Vs. Facing – Reality

2. **Pressures of Modern Living**

The various pressures of modern living are responsible for affecting mental health:-

- (a) Competition
- (b) Educational, vocational and family demands
- (c) Complexity and pace of modern living

3. **Economic and Employment Problems**

Inflation, unemployment and job – dissatisfaction are sources of mental stress for many women in society. Unemployment has placed a burden on a sizeable segment of our population bring with it financial hardship and self – devaluation of educated young ones. Depression, suicide and crime increases due to unemployment.

Job-dissatisfaction for those who are employed creates stress and anxiety, tension and a wide range of psychosomatic disorders.

Accelerating technological and social changes have also placed new responsibilities to which adjustment is becoming a bit difficult for society which is traditional and conservative in its outlook to change.

4. **Socio-Cultural Factors** -In addition to the above biological and psychosocial factors that have been listed, there are other conditions which affect mental health.

5. **War and Violence**-War and violence have been the unavoidable evils of Indian society from time immemorial. The conditions of war and violence have place great stress on a large number of people. Privation, mutilations, death, grief and social disorganization have been inevitable accompaniments of war and violence. We live in the shadow of the new and incredibly destructive nuclear instruments of modern war- fare which are becoming available to an increasing number of nations. It creates constant fear in the minds of people. The partition of Indian and subsequent violence in the country created fear and anxiety in people. Hindu-Muslim riots create a constant fear in people of both the communities. The Hindu-Sikh conflict of 1983-84 is bound to leave permanent scars on the minds of the people. The people of Punjab have been put under great stress and strain due to the state-wide movement by terrorists and extremists.

**Conclusion**-Mental Health is a condition of psychological maturity-are relatively constant and enduring function of personality. It is a condition of personal and social functioning with a maximum of effectiveness and satisfaction. Mental Health involves positive feelings and attitudes toward the self and toward others. Saul has described the mentally healthy individual as 'The mature adult is both with little need to regress and also is giving and productive, although still able to relax and to receive normally, he is comparative rather than egotistical and competitive; he is in relative harmony with his conscience which easily integrated with mating and responsible productive activity both sexual and social; his hostility toward others and toward himself is minimal but is freely available for defences and constructive use he is discriminating and highly adaptable, his anxiety is at a minimum.

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