

Rethinking Idioms of Distress and Resilience in Public health in a Post-Pandemic World: Delving into the intricate interplay amidst stress, resilience, and stroke.

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Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on global mental health, with an increase in stress, anxiety, and depression reported worldwide. The pandemic has brought about many changes and challenges, such as social isolation, uncertainty, and fear, and these can all contribute to emotional and mental distress. In addition to it there is emerging evidence suggesting a relationship between COVID-19 related stress and the incidence of stroke. Psychological factors such as stress can escalate the risk of a stroke by modulating sympathomimetic activity, affecting coagulation or heart rhythm.(1) While more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between COVID-19 related stress and stroke, it is important for individuals to manage their stress levels and prioritize their physical and mental health during this challenging time. In order to effectively address the mental health needs of individuals and communities in a post-pandemic world, it is important to rethink traditional approaches to idioms of distress and resilience in public health.

The concept of "idioms of distress" in public health

The concept of "idioms of distress" in anthropology and global mental health refers to the ways that people in a particular culture understand, experience, and express emotional or mental distress. This concept has been used to highlight the cultural and social factors that shape how people express and cope with mental health problems, and to call attention to the importance of understanding these idioms in order to provide effective and culturally sensitive mental health care. In a post-pandemic world, idioms of distress may change and evolve, reflecting the unique experiences and challenges of the pandemic. For example, people may use different ways to express and cope with the emotional and mental effects of the pandemic, such as social media, online support groups, or traditional healing practices. It is important for public health

professionals to be aware of these idioms of distress and to work with communities to understand how they are being used and how they may change in the future.

The concept of Resilience in Public health

The ability to cope with adversity and bounce back is an important concept in anthropology and global mental health. The pandemic has posed numerous challenges and strains, but it has also highlighted the resilience of individuals and communities. In a post-pandemic world, it is important to focus on building resilience and promoting well-being, rather than just addressing mental health problems.

Resilience can be understood as a multidimensional construct, including the ability to recover from adversity, to adapt to new circumstances, to maintain positive relationships and to have a positive sense of self. Public health professionals should work with communities to identify and support the factors that contribute to resilience, such as social support, community engagement, and access to resources.

Post-pandemic era and its implications in mental health

The post-pandemic era is likely to bring new challenges and stresses, such as economic insecurity, uncertainty about the future, and lingering fears about the virus. It is important for public health professionals to anticipate and address these challenges, and to work with communities to promote mental health and well-being in the post-pandemic world. Studies show that when it comes to doctors and other health care professionals, more than half are non resilient after the COVID19 pandemic.(2)

Not only the healthcare workers but the world's frontline workers, such as doctors, nurses, community health workers, sanitation workers, police officers, and other volunteers, are forced to make tough decisions and operate under intense pressure. In addition to negatively affecting their personal and familial lives, working at stressful environments with few resources puts them in danger of moral harm, which can lead to mental health issues. These signs and symptoms can contribute to the emergence of mental health issues like depression, PTSD, and even suicidal thoughts.(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8)

Also it is observed that frontline healthcare personnel, especially doctors, are vulnerable to stigma by the community and neighbourhoods in addition to being at high risk of infection. (9) Additionally, the pandemic has highlighted existing inequalities and disparities in access to healthcare, education, and other resources. It is important for public health professionals to address these inequalities and to work with communities to ensure that everyone has access to the resources and support they need to cope with the emotional and mental effects of the pandemic.

Relationship between stress, resilience and stroke

According to one study, the stroke incidence in COVID-19 patients was close to 5%, with the youngest patient diagnosed with a stroke being 55 years old.(10) Also it is recognised that the younger generation is more prone to psychological stress.(11) As a result, we believe that resilience, financial instability, fear and anxiety caused by the pandemic can cause stress, which can contribute to incidents of stroke in the younger population. In April 2020, the United States alone lost 20 million jobs, resulting in a 15% increase in the unemployment rate. We in India too are not in a better state as it is reported that more than 10 million people lost the job during the second wave.(12)(13)

Although stress has previously been overlooked as a cause of stroke in the younger population, the COVID19 pandemic allows us to investigate its relationship with cerebrovascular disease in COVID19 patients. The inclusion of a control group can help future study. It also urges medical health practitioners to give conservative stress management throughout the COVID19 pandemic in order to avert unnecessary complications such as stroke.

Rethinking Idioms of Distress and Resilience

In order to effectively address the mental health needs of individuals and communities in a post-pandemic world, it is important to rethink traditional approaches to idioms of distress and resilience in public health. This means shifting from a pathologizing view of mental health to a more holistic view that recognizes the cultural and social factors that shape mental health and well-being.

Public health professionals should work closely with communities and involve them in the design, implementation, and evaluation of mental health interventions. This includes taking into account indigenous or traditional healing practices as alternative or complementary forms of care. Additionally, it means recognizing and understanding the idioms of distress specific to a particular culture and community and working with them to develop culturally sensitive and appropriate approaches to mental health care.

It also means recognizing and promoting resilience as an important aspect of mental health, rather than just focusing on addressing mental health problems. This means identifying and supporting the factors that contribute to resilience, such as social support, community engagement, and access to resources and working with communities to promote mental health and well-being in the post-pandemic world.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought attention to the importance of understanding the cultural and social factors that shape how people express and cope with mental health problems. The concept of "idioms of distress" in anthropology and global mental health refers to the ways that people in a particular culture understand, experience, and express emotional or mental distress. The concept of resilience, the ability to cope with adversity and bounce back, is also an important concept in anthropology and global mental health.

The pandemic has revealed the need for more flexible and culturally sensitive approaches to mental health care and has highlighted the importance of rethinking idioms of distress and resilience in anthropology and global mental health. This means moving away from a pathologizing view of mental health and focusing on the strengths and resources that individuals and communities have to deal with stress and adversity.

In the post-pandemic era, it is important to continue to consider the long-term implications for mental health and to ensure that mental health care is effective, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of individuals and communities. This can be achieved by involving communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of mental health interventions and by considering indigenous or traditional healing practices as an alternative or complementary forms of care.

In conclusion, rethinking idioms of distress and resilience in anthropology and global mental health can help to ensure that mental health care is effective and culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of individuals and communities in a post-pandemic context.

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