

Psychology



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Gender Differences & Psychology Psychological disorders can be defined as a collection of behavioral symptoms that generate high distress or impairment in work, relationships or other areas of life and can range from simple anxiety to paranoid schizophrenia. Research has indicated that there are several factors that control the severity of such disorders with gender differences being a key factor. From early adolescence throughout adulthood, women (18%) are twice as likely as men (7%) to experience unipolar depression, the most common psychological disorder. Similarly, significantly more women than men meet the diagnostic criteria for anxiety disorders (56% vs 35%). On the other hand, men (20%) are twice more prone to substance abuse disorders (eg. alcohol dependence) than women (8%) (WHO, 2007). Also, the incidence of antisocial personality disorder (psychopathy) is three times more in men than women. In cases of severe disorders as schizophrenia, it is observed that men have early onset of symptoms but women experience higher frequency of hallucinations or psychotic symptoms. The key reasons behind greater prevalence of such disorders in women are because of greater exposure to poverty, discrimination and socioeconomic disadvantage such as child/sex abuse, traditional gender based violence and overwork. Reasons why more men have antisocial personality disorders as women tend to be more empathic than men. Works Cited WHO. (2007). Gender Disparities in Mental Health. World Health Organization, Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence. Geneva: WHO.