

Health psychology

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Many scientific models and theories of health have been developed by researchers for treatment of mental and physical fitness over the years. In health psychology, health is defined by distinct models - two of which are the biomedical model and the biopsychosocial model, both of which look at health from a different perspective. In this paper, we shall discuss these models, bringing to light their pros and cons and comparing them with each other.

Biomedical model of health

The biomedical model, which was introduced in the 19th century, is based on the concept that every disease is caused by a physical harm. According to this model, every illness is the result of abnormal bodily processes such as biochemical disorders or neurophysiologic anomalies. This system is completely based on the western concept of medicine and is being used by health practitioners since the last 300 years. The discovery of antibiotics for treatment of chronic disease has been a major breakthrough in medical science and is the primary advantage of this system of treatment. Moreover, this model helps doctors to design treatment for patients efficiently, allowing them to reveal the current situation of the patient, the required appropriate situation, and thereby develop a course of action to make that happen.

However, the model has been widely criticized since it views the human body as parts of a machine which needs to be fixed or repaired if something goes wrong. Secondly, it is a single factor model which reveals a reductionist view of illness deducting it to merely low-level processes such as disordered cells and mechanical disparities (Taylor & Sirios, 2012, 6).

Biopsychosocial model of health

The biopsychosocial model is an interdisciplinary model that assumes that health and illness are caused by a multiple interaction of biological, psychosocial, and socio-cultural factors. According to this model, ecological systems, social system, psychological system, biological system, and physical system, all together play a crucial role in determining health and illness. The major advantage is that it involves multiple factors in treatment which allows it cover both the macro-level processes (social, psychological, biological) and micro-level processes (physical) related to health. Secondly, it involves developing an effective relationship between the patient and the practitioner thereby, leading to a speedy recovery (Taylor & Sirios, 2012, 7). However, according to some researchers, this model fails to guide on how to prioritize one factor over the other since it covers various factors. As a result, prioritization eventually happens on the basis of individual preferences, and the model decentralizes into mere eclecticism. In fact, some researchers have even claimed that this model is not truly scientific rather a mere theory as it fails to exhibit the internal mechanism of a scientific model and cannot be assessed properly (Ghaemi, 2009).

Comparison

The biomedical model is just a single factor model considering physical causes as the only reason behind illness. On the other hand, the biopsychosocial model covers a larger aspect including the social, psychological and biological factors along with the physical factor. The biomedical model reveals illness through micro-level processes such as anarchic cells and chemical discrepancies but the biopsychosocial model considers that illness is caused by the interaction of both micro-level

processes and macro-level processes. The biomedical model assumes that the mind and body are two separate entities whereas the biopsychosocial model considers the mind and body as a mutual entity playing an equal role in influencing an individual's health. In the biomedical model, the health practitioner prescribes medicines and treatment after discovering the illness through bodily examination. However, the biopsychosocial model requires the practitioner to develop an effective relationship with the patient as this will contribute significantly towards improving the patient's use of services, the effectiveness of treatment and the swiftness of eliminating the illness (Taylor & Sirios, 2012, 7).

Conclusion

Both the models of health follow a distinct path of treatment and have their respective pros and cons. Although the biopsychosocial model has proved to be superior over the biomedical model, the former too requires further research and improvement in order to prove itself as a truly efficient model of health.

References

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