

A review of mental illness among adolescents in Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

- According to World Health Organisation (WHO), mental illness is the lack of subjective well-being, competence perceived self-efficacy, and autonomy.
- It also stressed on the absence of intergenerational dependence and recognition of the ability to realise one's intellectual and emotional potential. (World Health Organization (WHO), 2003).
- Clinically, mental illness is a mental disorder that has a significant relationship with the individual's behaviour or psychological state in which the individual is unable to control his or her mental health which may cause various risks such as illness, infirmity and death (Maisel, 2013).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- A lot of numbers of the following cases in adolescence
 - Suicide– jump from building (31 Dec 2017),
 - Bully –T. Nhaveen
 - Depression
- 4 out of 10 adolescents are at risk of having mental illness (Utusan Online, April 2017)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To explore the mental illness cases among adolescents in Malaysia
- To investigate the factors that contribute to mental illness
- To explore the signs and symptoms of mental illness


METHOD OF STUDY

- Qualitative method: Document analysis of various resources – electronic; newspapers, journal and research articles; printing materials: books and newspapers.
- Data analysis: The data collected was analysed through thematic coding which when the data was coded based on emerging themes.

FINDINGS: Cases of mental illness

- The Social Welfare Department's statistics report shows that the number of new mental illness cases of young patients (18-21 years old) in 2014 and 2015 is alarming at 1627 and 1446 people (Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat, 2015; Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat, Laporan Statistik, 2014).
- Most of them were involved with drug offenses, damaging of property and gambling.
- These adolescents were sentenced to prison, fines, and well-behaved bonds, sent to a moral rehabilitation centre and community service order.

- Based on the newspaper reports, it was found adolescent involved in
 - i. murdered his grandmother which is believed to have a serious mental disorder namely 'schizophrenia paranoid' (Awani (b), 2016),
 - ii. hitting grandmother (Awani (a), 2016) c), 2017),
 - iii. school students involved in drug abuse (Awani, 2017),
 - iv. dangerous driving (Astro Awani (a), 2017),
 - v. victims of sexual crimes (Astro Awani (b), 2017; Astro Awani (c), 2017) ,
 - vi. rape charges (Astro Awani (d), 2017) and
 - vii. murder (Astro Awani (e), 2017).

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- A study found that when teenagers have seriously thought to commit suicide, 4.6% of them had committed suicide attempts at least once in 12 months
 - The NSRM-National Suicide Registry Malaysia (NSRM-National Suicide Registry Malaysia) data collection finds that at least two people commit suicide each day with an average rate of 60 people a month (Harian Metro, 2016).

FINDINGS: Factors that lead to mental illness

- Abusive parents/caregivers
- Growth Crisis – transition in life
- Environmental Factor – neighbourhood, peers, drugs abuse
- Family Crisis – family member involves in crimes, parents' conflict etc
- Parenting Styles –authoritarian and permissive
- Genetic and Hereditary Factors

FINDINGS: Signs and symptoms of mental illness

- Deteriorating health and functioning: Early onset mental disorders may be episodic at first, but tend to increase in severity, duration, and level of disruption over time.
- The psychological symptoms cause major emotional distress, or interfere substantially with daily life and social interactions over a period of time.
- Social withdrawal, dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits, strong feelings of anger, growing inability to cope with daily problems and activities, suicidal thoughts, numerous unexplained physical ailments, substance use.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

- Field study which involved observation can be employed to understand the issue better.
- Interviews can be made to mental health specialists as well as parents or teachers who have experienced handling mental illness adolescents.
- Research on the strategies for prevention and overcome such cases and intervention programs can also be conducted in order to help increase adolescents' mental health in the future



thank you

