



A Comparative Exploratory Study on Mental Health Policies and Initiatives in the Gulf States

Immanuel Azaad Moonesar R D, Hameedah Sayani, Mona Mostafa, and Lama Zakzak

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, Dubai, UAE

Abstract

The aim of this exploratory study is to provide a comparative analysis of various aspects of mental health in six Gulf Cooperation Council states and five developed countries. The study evaluates definitions and legislations pertaining to mental health in the region, assimilate various facts and figures relating to mental health, highlight various government initiatives and identify the challenges associated with provision of mental healthcare in the region. Lastly, it will provide some policy recommendations based on examples from other countries that have successfully developed mechanisms to provide appropriate care to patients with mental health issues.

A significant proportion of the world's population suffers from mental and psychological disorders. Depression is ranked third in the global burden of diseases, and it is projected to be ranked first by 2030. Recent estimates indicate that nearly 5 percent of the global population suffers from depression. Furthermore, suicide is the third leading cause of deaths annually, as approximately one million people commit suicide every year. The social stigma surrounding mental illness makes it difficult for people with such conditions to seek help or cope with it, leaving many of them feeling isolated, discriminated and in despair. The social and economic costs of mental health conditions are extremely high, which may lead to impediment of sustainable human development.

Under the umbrella of Sustainable Development Goals 2030, SDG3 in particular, target 3.4 and 3.5 related to mental health and subsequent indicators have been identified to measure the performance of countries over a period. The Gulf Corporation Council countries have joined the global efforts for promoting mental health which resulted in new policies, strategies, and plans to redefine and expand mental health services.

Biography

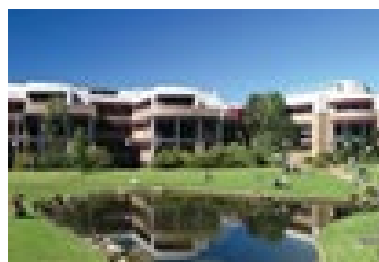
Immanuel Azaad Moonesar is an Associate Professor of Health Administration & Policy at MBRSG with research interest is in public policy, international business policy, healthcare management & leadership, maternal & child health, nutrition and quality management. He is the President of the Academy of International Business — Middle East North Africa Chapter (AIB-MENA). He has a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Health Services: Leadership (Superior Distinction) from Walden University, USA. He is also a Registered Dietitian and holds a Master of Quality Management (Distinction) from the University of Wollongong Australia (UOW), a Postgraduate Diploma in Institutional Community Nutrition & Dietetics (Distinction) & a Bachelor of Science in Human Ecology: Nutrition and Dietetics from the University of West Indies (UWI), Trinidad & Tobago. He has published over 95 publications in peer-reviewed journal articles, peer-reviewed international conferences, co-authored books and book chapters and policy briefs to date.

Publications

Immanuel Azaad Moonesar, Fatima Mohamed AlMarzooqi and Jawahitha Sarabdeen, Before and After: Healthcare Users and Professional Perceptions on Implementation of eHealth Privacy Protection Laws in United Arab Emirates (2020)

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