Cultural Psychiatry: A Promising Area for Research and Practice

Wei Wang* and Hongying Fan
Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry, Zhejiang University School of Public Health and School of Medicine, Hangzhou, China

Editorial

Understanding the cultural backgrounds of mental health and illness, in relation to language, religion and spirituality, family structures, life-cycle stages, ceremonial rituals, and customs, along with moral and legal systems, is essential in the field of cultural psychiatry [1]. There have been many important discoveries addressing the association between culture and classification, diagnosis, and treatment of psychiatric disorders [2].

Definitely, culture provides positive social support and resources to individuals from their family or community, all of which promote health, resilience, and well-being for mental state. For instance, in China, one traditional Confucius interpersonal style emphasizing on interpersonal harmony and connection, the Zhongyong thinking (Doctrine of the Mean), was negatively associated with anxiety and depressive symptoms [3]. Moreover, scholars have assessed the cross-cultural, positive constructs by comparing more than 20,000 university students from Germany, Russia, and China. Their results indicated that German students experienced significantly more social support and life satisfaction than Russian and Chinese students did; Russian were more resilient, and Chinese more mentally positive and healthy. This study indicates significant differences in universal happiness variances across cultures [4].

On the other hand, by creating identities and social positions that individuals experience differentially and specifically, including discrimination, racism, and forms of structural violence, culture is a predominant influence in the causation of psychiatric disorders [5]. The cultural influence is emic, and can be traced back to documents or fictions written many years ago. Bearing this in mind, a group of investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-investigators have studied culture and its related psychiatric disorders in the late imperial China [6]. They selected and voted on the personality-