

Mental health, mental disorders and substance use disorders: Individual, social and structural challenges

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Mental health is a human right and, in this sense, it is fundamental for individual and socioeconomic development. The determinants of mental health and of mental disorders encompass personal attributes and economic, social, political, environmental and cultural aspects. The growing burden of mental disorders exerts significant impacts on people's health and demands integrated policies and actions for promotion, prevention and treatment, aiming to minimize possibilities of human rights violations.

Considering the plurality that characterizes the mental health field, the current volume of the *SMAD Revista Eletrônica Saúde Mental Álcool e Drogas* contemplates very relevant topics, stimulating discussion about the challenges faced by people with mental and substance use disorders, their family members and health professionals. In this perspective, the article entitled "**Autism Spectrum Disorder in Primary Health Care: Challenges for multidisciplinary care**" aimed at analyzing the care provided to users with Autism Spectrum Disorder in four Primary Health Care units in a municipality from Minas Gerais. The data were collected from twenty health professionals (physicians, nurses, nursing technicians and community health agents) by means of semi-structured interviews. The interviews were analyzed by resorting to content analysis, with the emergence of two thematic categories: 1. Multiprofessional assistance provided to users with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Primary Health Care units; and 2. Challenges faces by the multiprofessional team when caring for users with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The results showed that most of the professionals lacked knowledge about Autism Spectrum Disorder, facing challenges to assist users and family members. In this sense, the authors emphasize the importance of identifying Autism Spectrum Disorder to implement early interventions that promote improvements in children's cognition, affectivity, motricity and behavior. Therefore, the study contributes to identifying knowledge gaps that require interventions to strengthen

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continuing education of health professionals working in Primary Care Units and, thus, ensure articulation between the services to qualify the care provided to people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Also focusing on mental disorders, the article on **"Prevalence of the Common Mental Disorder and associated variables in a sample of Army soldiers"** aimed at estimating the prevalence of the probability of Common Mental Disorder and the relationship with sociodemographic and work-related variables in a sample of 229 soldiers from an Infantry Battalion in non-war times. The data were collected by applying the Self-Report Questionnaire 20 to screen Common Mental Disorder and analyze the lineal correlation with calculation of the prevalence ratios. Significant prevalence of chances for Common Mental Disorder was evidenced in the sample under study, although presenting no association with the sociodemographic and work-related variables. It was also verified that the military are a vulnerable population and susceptible to suffering psychological distress, as their daily work process requires a high degree of discipline, exposure to a scenario of constant risk, pressure, tension, 24-hour availability and institutional demand. In synthesis, the data reinforce the need for interventions to improve these professionals' mental health.

A significant set of articles included in this volume addressed disorders due to substance use. The study on **"Levels of self-compassion and gratitude in adults with substance use disorder"** aimed at identifying the self-compassion and gratitude levels in adults diagnosed with substance use disorders, correlating them with each other and with anxiety, depression and stress symptoms. Self-compassion is understood as the ability to recognize one's own suffering as a normal condition, accepting it without avoiding it or disconnecting; and gratitude is described as the life orientation to perceive and value the positive aspects in oneself and in others, related to feelings of gratitude, satisfaction and sense of life. The study participants were 65 adults with a previous diagnosis of substance use disorders, according to DSM-5. The following was used for data collection: a Sociodemographic and Health Data Questionnaire; the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST), the Self-Compassion Scale, the Gratitude Scale (G-20), and the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21). The results evidenced significant prevalence of comorbidities among the participants, as well as high gratitude levels, related to the fact that most of them were undergoing an abstinence period. A low self-compassion level was also identified and significant associations were observed between the self-compassion and gratitude levels, as well as an inverse relationship with the symptoms. Consequently, the article encourages conduction of studies related to interventions on Positive Psychology and their impacts on the prevention of relapses in patients with disorders due to substance use.

This group of articles includes the study entitled **"Alcoholism among hypertensive patients assisted by Primary Health Care and its implications: Notes for health care"**, which aimed at describing the profile of alcohol consumption and its implications for the health of Primary Health Care hypertensive users. This is a qualitative research study conducted with 40 hypertensive patients registered at a Basic Health Unit from the South region of Minas Gerais. The data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews a field diary and analyzed with the aid of the SPSS, version 26, and IRaMuTeQ software programs. The participants were mostly aged women, married, with children and mild drinkers, with beer as the most consumed beverage. From content analysis, six discursive categories describing the drinking habit emerged, its influence on the participants' life and health, as well as reasons for their social habit. In this perspective, the authors emphasize that, in the Nursing consultation, there is a real possibility for correcting ineffective approaches related to alcohol consumption, focusing on the individual and their needs as a focus for care planning.

Another article on the topic that highlights the growing vulnerability of people with substance use disorders is entitled **"Use of alcohol and other drugs: interfaces with homeless people's vulnerabilities"** and aimed at knowing the interfaces of the use of alcohol and other drugs in street people's vulnerabilities. It was developed in Santa Catarina and included 16 street people as participants. Collection took place by means of semi-structured interviews about everyday life on the street, problems faced, feelings experiences and support means. The data were interpreted based on Thematic Content Analysis. The results were organized in the following categories: 1. Use of alcohol and illicit drugs among street people: everyday experiences and challenges faced; and 2. Individual, social and programmatic vulnerabilities of street people. In summary, the results reinforced the complexity of street people's everyday life, especially due to the condition of extreme poverty and dehumanization. In addition, the main reason that led the participants to live on the street was alcohol consumption, whose social representation is associated with joy and pleasure. The participants also stated various situations of violence and the difficulty finding support for psychosocial rehabilitation. In this context, the situations of individual and social vulnerabilities exert impacts on their survival, especially considering their basic needs. Therefore, the importance of Primary Care as a gateway for the care to be provided to this population stands out, with the possibility of longitudinally monitoring these users' health.

Also focusing on substance use disorders, the study on **"Alcohol consumption by health professionals from a reference hospital in COVID-19 care"** aimed at evaluating the alcohol consumption pattern among health professionals. Developed in a public hospital from the state of Minas Gerais, the data were collected through interviews with 129 health professionals, using the following instruments: sociodemographic questionnaire and the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) to verify the alcohol consumption pattern. Descriptive analyses of the sociodemographic and occupational variables were performed, as well as of those related to alcohol consumption and to the pandemic period. The study participants were nursing technicians, nurses, physicians, pharmacy technicians, a social worker, a nutritionist, a physiotherapist and a psychologist. Alcohol consumption was 59.7% among the participants, and beer was the most frequently consumed beverage. Among those that started drinking after the pandemic, 11.5% reported an increase in consumption. Risk consumption was more frequent among the professionals that have family members with the habit of alcohol consumption and in those that already drank before the pandemic. It is important to note that alcohol consumption screening allows implementing educational actions and aims at promoting healthy habits.

This issue also presents two studies centered on the topic of suicide. Suicide prevention is a global priority and is included in the World Health Organization (WHO) 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Therefore, it is indispensable to disseminate the results of studies on the topic. Thus, the first study, entitled **"Suicidal ideation in patients with substance-related disorders"**, aimed at characterizing suicidal ideation throughout life in patients with substance-related disorders. This is an observational and cross-sectional study conducted in three Psychosocial Care Centers for Alcohol and other Drugs III and developed with 137 participants who use the services. The data were collected by applying the following instruments: Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale and Addiction Severity Index – Version 6, and submitted to descriptive analysis. Among the participants, 112 reported suicidal ideation at least once in their life and 55 had plans and intentions to materialize it. In addition, 78 participants considered suicidal ideation as a way to put an end to suffering. There was predominance of suicidal ideation among participants with financial difficulties, chronic physical health conditions and depressed mood, in addition to predominance of suicidal ideation among those who attempted suicide once in their lives. On the other hand, family, religion and pain of death were impeding factors for the development of suicidal behaviors. Finally, the results can support the professional practice in mental health by highlighting aspects of suicidal ideation and characteristics of patients with substance-related disorders, which enables understanding and identifying suicide risk, considering the users and their social context.

The volume also offers a relevant contribution about researchers in the mental health area in Brazil. The article entitled **"Profile of productivity scholarship researchers in the field of Mental Health"** aimed at analyzing the profile of productivity in research scholarship holders in the Mental Health area, of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), represented by Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing. The data were collected through a search in the Lattes Platform based on the lists of current scholarships in CNPq during the first half of 2020. The results indicated 85 scholarship holders: 71 from Psychiatry and 14 from Mental Health Nursing. In Mental Health Nursing there is higher female representativeness and, in contrast, Psychiatry displays a majority of the male gender. Also in the period analyzed, 30% and 7% of the researchers in Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing, respectively, did not guide scientific initiation students, which shows an important deficit in the contribution of these scholarship holders in fostering teaching to research in the Mental Health area in Brazilian undergraduate courses. Concentration of researchers and publications in the Southeast region was also evidenced, which reinforces the existing regional disparities in the country. In summary, although productivity in the Mental Health area is increasing, it is still necessary to enhance investment in order to reduce regional inequalities and train qualified professionals who produce knowledge in all regions of the country.

Returning to the theme of substance use disorders, the integrative review entitled **"The use of psychedelic agents in the treatment of alcohol and tobacco dependence: An integrative review"** aimed at analyzing studies that address use of psychedelic agents in the treatment of alcohol and tobacco dependence in the national and international context. The final sample consisted of 14 articles, with predominance of quantitative research studies. Among the articles selected there were eight from the United States, one from Canada, one from the United Kingdom, two from Brazil, one from Spain and a last one with no identification of its locus. In general, the articles emphasize that the use of psychotropic drugs in the treatment of alcohol and tobacco dependence is not conclusive for the effective treatment of such addiction; however, use of these agents explains a window of possibility for innovation in the current treatments. In summary, the experience provided by psychedelic agents is broad, and their therapeutic management should include integration activities that contribute to innovation in the treatment of alcohol and tobacco dependence.

The last article that comprises the set of studies on substance use disorders is entitled **"Fetal alcohol exposure through biomarker ethyl esters of fatty acids in meconium"** and aimed at identifying the diverse evidence in the literature on methods that quantify the biomarkers of fetal exposure to alcohol in the meconium biological matrix: Fatty Acids Ethyl Esters (FAEEs). The sample consisted of 27 articles published up to July 2018 and whose participants were pregnant women who used alcohol or not and had meconium samples collected from their newborns. The data extracted from the articles selected were the following: trial method, extraction method, biomarkers analyzed, cutoff point, internal standard, and amount of meconium used. Considering variability of the FAEE biomarkers, thyl linoleate, ethyl palmitate, ethyl stearate and ethyl oleate were the most prevalent and in higher concentrations.


Finally, the second study focused on the theme of suicide, the review entitled **"Epidemiological profile of suicide attempt cases: An integrative review"**, aimed at analyzing the epidemiological profile of suicide attempt cases through studies published in scientific databases. The final sample consisted of 31 articles published between 2015 and 2020. The studies were conducted in several loci, with hospitals and services for the treatment of psychoactive substance abuse standing out. Among the studies, 11 are national and 20 are international, being developed in Spain, Canada, India, Colombia and Uruguay. There was predominance of women in attempted suicide, and poisoning was listed as predominant in 22 studies. Mental disorders are found in a significant percentage of the individuals who attempt suicide, with emphasis for depression, followed by personality disorders and by use of psychoactive substances. In addition to that, impulsiveness, neuroticism, irritability and aggressiveness increase the chances for people to attempt against their own life. In general, the studies selected showed recurrent characteristics that can be used to identify at-risk populations or groups and assist in the planning of policies for suicide prevention.

Therefore, the studies published in this SMAD volume reflect multiple phenomena related to emotional, psychological and social well-being. The importance of promotion, prevention and treatment interventions stands out, through the identification of individual, social and structural determinants of mental health. In this sense, we invite our readers to explore and reflect on their content! May you all enjoy your reading!

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