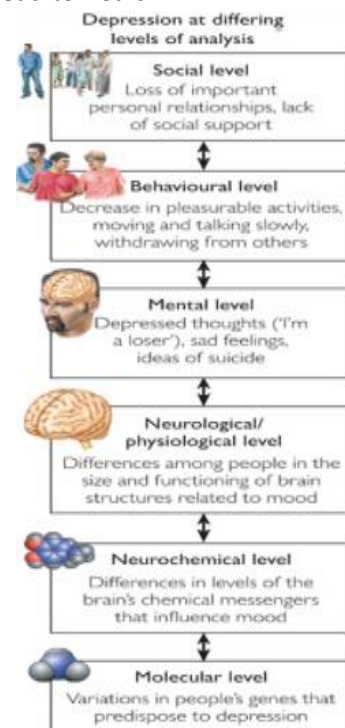


Week 1: Introductory to Psychology and Sociology for Health

(i) Psychology

- Definition:
 - The scientific study of the mind, brain, and behaviour.
- Influence on Health:
 - The mind (way of thinking) can impact on both our physical and mental health.
 - Thoughts can raise our blood pressure and pulse rate; which overtime can lead to health problems.
 - Frequent, negative thoughts are likely to result in a low mood and lethargy (lack of energy).
 - The brain (structure and function) can impact on our physical and mental health.
 - E.g. Injury to part of the brain, neurochemical imbalance in brain (depression).
 - Behaviour can impact on physical and mental health.
 - Exercise can improve the mood of someone who has depression.
 - Increased exposure to sunlight can lead to less depression.
- Levels of Health:
 - Psychology looks at the different levels of health, including: molecular, neurochemical, neurological, mental, behavioural, and social.
 - We have to look at the influence at both nature (born with) and nurture (social environment).



(ii) Sociology

- Definition:
 - The systematic study of humans in relation to society and social interactions.
 - Sociology studies society to understand patterns of behaviour and practices in order to uncover links between individual lives and social forces.
 - Sociology questions how social structures (e.g. government), dominant ideologies (way of thinking), and norms influence individual and community behaviour with regards to health.
 - What we consider to be 'real' in our lives and the lives of others is shaped by those around us (society).
- Social Construction Approach:
 - Our experiences are always understood and experienced through cultural and social processes.
 - Therefore, how we experience a situation is dependent on the culture we live in or the people we interact with throughout our lives.
 - *Example:* Between some social groups, smoking is normalised and therefore there is less reason to give up smoking.

(iii) Changes in Health Patterns:

- 1990 vs 2000:
 - 1990:
 - Lots of deaths due to infections.
 - 2000:
 - Fewer deaths due to infections, as a result of improved conditions, technology, and understanding of microbes.
 - More chronic “lifestyle diseases”
- Global Patterns:
 - Relationship between good health and:
 - Inequality (social distribution of health), in terms of access to health services.
 - Annual income (social class).
 - Countries and geographic regions.
 - Population size.
 - Social marginalisation and exclusion.
 - Power- E.g. government prioritising different programs.

Week 2: Introducing Sociology

(i) Sociological Approach to Health Issues.

- Sociology is a perspective on the social world that values critical thinking.
- Sociologists question the common sense and popular explanations of social life, and look at the dynamics of power and inequality in everyday life.
- Sociology provides insights into the ways factors, such as: class (socioeconomic status), wealth, Aboriginality, gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality, and religion, shape people's lives.
- Sociology and Health:
 - Offers a 'second opinion' about ideas regarding health and illness.
 - *Patterns of Health and Illness:*
 - Develops theories about society, based on observing, studying, and analysing scientific data.
 - Societal trends and behaviours.
 - Challenges the idea that health and illness experiences are simply 'bad luck' or solely the responsibility of the individual (victim blaming).
- Sociological Exploration of History and Culture:
 - Health and functioning are not just biological, but also historically and culturally shaped.
 - The image of 'healthiness' or 'illness' changes between and within generations, and across and within culture.
 - Sociology of Knowledge: Critiques what is meant by truth, or examines 'multiple truths' held by people in different positions.
- Sociological Exploration of Health:
 - Social/cultural group and individual experiences.
 - Unique, historical factors of health/illness but also shared environments (shared factors that influence service access).

(ii) Social Imagination:

- Definition:
 - The sociological imagination "requires the capacity to look beyond the common sense or seemingly obvious to critically examine the ideas, practices, and structures that may be contributory factors".
 - This requires us to make a link between "private problems" and "public issues".
 - This allows us to develop an awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society.
- Parts of the Social Imagination:
 - The four parts include- historical factors, cultural factors, structural factors, critical factors.
 - Sociological analysis involves applying these four aspects to certain issues.