An Analysis on Influencing Factors of Mental Heath

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Abstract: The mental health of an individual would be influenced by a lot of variables: the genetics, external environment, inherent make up etc. Therefore, when a person experiences mental breakdown, it's not their fault entirely. Sure, ensuring that we are always in a stable state of mind is majorly our responsibility, but that doesn't mean other factors don't come into play. In this paper, I will discuss how and why different situations have effects on our mental well-being and what we can do to make sure they don't get the better of us.

1. Introduction

The Office of National Statistics reported that one UK student commits suicide every four day. The number, as startling as it may sound, is certainly true. A report covered by Guardian further reveals that the suicide rates among students in England and Wales has seen a slight rise over 10 years. Most of them are undergraduates. Majority of these cases come from top UK universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. Bristol reported 11 deaths by suicide earlier this year, which has called into question the university's ability to provide mental health support to students [1]. Parents are demanding more to be done to ensure the well-being of their children. But, does the onus of the pupil's mental health fall only on the university? Who is responsible for the individual's mental health? Is it they themselves? The people they depend on? The circumstances surrounding them? Or all? This passage takes a closer look at the influence of different social factors' on mental health and in turn, proves why there is no one person or body solely responsible for one's mental health. In different social systems, a myriad of people determine a human's psychological growth and resilience.

2. Social Physical Satisfaction

Since the beginning of time, people expect hard work to be rewarded with something in return. The reward is a positive stimulus that encourages them to do better and assures them that whatever they are doing is right. It creates an environment of growth and optimism in the individual's head. However, when the individual is not rewarded sufficiently for their work or is frequently criticized, it leads to a drop in productivity and an increase in pressure, leading to what we call as workplace anxiety. When punishment and flak outweighs rewards and motivation, it leads to a disequilibrium in the psychological balance of trade-offs.

Studies have shown that when faced with a negative response to their own achievements from the top, people's mental health rates plummet. The youth is particularly vulnerable to mental illnesses. "We have a success-oriented culture that puts a lot of strain on young people," says Layard, psychology professor at London University. At least 10 percent of those between the ages of 5 to 18 in the United States and Britain are diagnosed with mental health issues from neglect and child abuse [2]. Students often look up to the elders in their family for adulation and encouragement. A lack thereof can wreak havoc on the student's overall well-being. However, many from the younger generations miss out on the praise and support of their parents. As the two ends of the balance of expectation and reality are stretched longer, the pressure on the younger generation will eventually increase. Parents should be more tolerant and understanding to students, and become guiding lights for the younger generations, instead of piling psychological pressure on their children.

Additionally, more blows to mental health come from social competition. The strong competition among many young people in contemporary social workplaces also indicates that a good deal of employees who have mental health due to unemployment or unpaid overtime will emerge in society. As an example, according to a survey on overtime in China, 96% of respondents work overtime on weekdays just to keep their jobs. About 20% of the respondents have gradually suffered from mild depression since they started working, and for the rest 5%, there is a moderate tendency to depression [3].

3. Personality Factors

The current social atmosphere is highly demanding. Students and youngsters are finding it hard to face the reality and are becoming psychologically unstable. This leads to uncertainty. Moreover, the pressure put on children by their social environment may make matters worse [4]. It may force them to take up things that they aren't inclined to, while simultaneously suppressing their actual desires. As we've seen many times before: when facing the family, children are expected to be at their best behavior. When facing school, children are expected to learn and develop socially. When facing society, children are expected to have the opportunity to participate in the economy and contribution. When facing themselves, children are told to aspire to be independent thinking and innovative people. These have given rise to a common phenomenon of self-denialism, where the child is more focused on satisfying the demands of the environment, while overlooking his/her own desires and wants. This eventually leads to burn outs where the individual is at the end of his mental rope and can't keep up with the unrealistic aims of the society.

4. Conclusion

Essentially, I demonstrate that in different social systems of a society, a diversity of people determines a human's psychological well-being. Although we cannot get rid of the disruptions in mental health caused by various inherent factors, we can try and control the effect the outside world has on us. An important step to detaching yourself from any kind of pressure exerted by society, is to get rid of the notion of 'what others may think of you'. Less weightage should be attached to public opinion, especially on the internet. Those who know someone suffering from mental health issues should become more empathetic and tolerant towards them. Because it's only we who are responsible for each other's mental health. Once we have realized this, it creates an environment of positivity, therefore making the world a better place for all.

References

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