Mental Illness in East Asia

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Introduction

Mental illness is a problem that is common East Asia, that hasn’t been properly acknowledged, or taken care of. Most common mental illness are depression, anxiety, OCD, PTSD, and substance abuse. The common conception of mental illness is that the person is dangerous, and unpredictable. One of the most prevalent issues is depression, and a common symptom of depression is suicide. Depression can be interlinked with other mental illnesses which makes treatment more difficult.

Women in China

China is well known for having a higher rate of women killing themselves than men. Rural women in China are one of the most at risk group. Rural women under 35 face the most pressures from parents, marriage, in-laws, and common stress from rural life. The numbers have dropped significantly within the last 30 years, but that is only because many women have become migrant workers, and families are now much smaller than they were traditionally. Rural women are often trapped at home unable to leave the house where they may face criticism from their bad marriage, and in-laws. Divorce is less acceptable in rural areas so the women are often unable to escape a bad marriage. Women in China face many social pressures if they are not married by 30, and the marriage pool only gets smaller as time goes by.

South Korea’s Risk Group

Unemployment, being overworked and poverty are the top reasons that depression occurs for adults in South Korea. Adults above 60 are at a high risk of poverty. Older adults are at risk after retirement because the social security system, and the pension plans are insufficient. Less than half of the older adults receive such benefits. The plans put into place are based on the Confucian expectation that children will take care of their parents. It was put into place less than 30 years ago during the economic development with focus on improving the economy instead of livelihood. Young adults under 30 face high unemployment, and the job market is highly competitive. The number of people who completed higher education keeps getting higher and higher. Workers who are hired as temps get very little benefit, and pay. Being overworked contributes to stress, and stress is know to increase depression.

Rural China

China has an unusual problem of a higher rate of suicide in rural areas than urban areas. This can be attributed to poverty, access to pesticides, family tensions, and mental care. People in rural areas have easy access to pesticides which is the most common way people successfully commit suicide in China. People who live in rural areas are most likely in poverty because rural areas have less ways to earn money for a living. Poverty compounded with medical cost is a huge problem for people who live in these areas. People who suffer chronic illness carry the biggest cost because the medical coverage covers less and less the more serious the problem is. People are forced to take loans that they can’t pay back because all the money goes towards treatment. Family tensions are more common because people of different generations are forced to live with each other even if they don’t get along.

Website Proposal

The project is a website with a quick look up function and a diagram that helps determine who falls into what category of “common reasons to be depressed or commit suicide”. The webpage has a “What are common symptoms of depression where you live?”, and people click buttons that have country’s names, age group, and gender. Anything that can help separate the age groups will be used for selections. The result will show a textbox that says what are common symptoms a person suffering depression has.

Resources

Scan Here for more information