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Persistent taboo-understanding mental illness and stigma among Indonesian adults through grounded theory

Muhammad Arsyad Subu
Gulf Medical University, UAE

This study explored stigma associated with mental illness among Indonesian adults living in Indonesia. It investigated how mentally ill adults perceive mental illness and how they respond to stigmatization on a daily basis. Given the current state of knowledge with regards to the meaning and process of stigma and mental illness among adults in Indonesia, a constructivist grounded theory was considered to be the method of choice for this study. We recruited 15 nurses and 15 patients to participate in the study; all from a psychiatric hospital in Indonesia. Data collection methods involved semi-structured interviews with the 30 participants as well as mute evidence, field notes and memos. In keeping with the basic principles of a grounded theory method as well as Paille's structure for data analysis which are congruent with Charmaz's principles and include stages of codification, categorization, linking categories, integration, conceptualization, and theorization, 5 discrete but interrelated categories were produced: 1) treatment of mental illness; 2) violence; 3) fear; 4) constructing cursed citizens; and 5) stigmatization. Research results show that the experience of stigma for mentally ill patients in Indonesia is pervasive and impedes mental health services utilization. The stigmatization of mental illness is manifested by family members, members of the community, mental health professionals and staff, and also by governmental institutions and the media. Stigma affects patients at many levels. Until stigma associated with mental illness is addressed nationwide, those suffering from mental illness will continue to suffer and be prevented from accessing mental health services. As study results have shown, patients seeking treatment experience violence and fear. Families and their relatives have been expelled by their community, or have simply disappeared. Both physical and psychological abuse and humiliation have led to patients being avoided, rejected, and neglected, and thus isolated, hidden, or abandoned to the streets.

Biography

Muhammad Arsyad Subu is currently working as Head of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Program, Gulf Medical University in UAE. He has worked for more than 1 year in the related field and gained a plethora of knowledge in related field. His international experience includes various programs, contributions to reputed journals and participation in different international conferences in diverse fields of study.

arsyad@gmu.ac.ae

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