

Major Depressive Disorder

Major depressive disorder is a mental condition that is manifested in form of depression, disinterest and displeasure in all activities (Kau-Nu, 2009). The depressed person displays a sad and irritable mood which is in excess of normal sadness or grief (Medicinenet, 2009). When it affects children and adolescents they also display high level of irritability. The symptoms are so severe that they interfere significantly with an individual's behavior and character. It causes the victim long periods of gloom and hopelessness to such an extent that it denies them the ability to enjoy or take part in previously thrilling activities or relationships.

Research Hypothesis

Major depressive disorder is as a result of lengthy painful events that results to a sense of hopelessness (Long, 2005). This disorder may be triggered by a single depressive experience or exposure to long periods or several episodes of painful events that result to depression. Sometimes the pain and the associated depressive suffering become so severe that it becomes unendurable to the victim resulting to suicide. Hence the disorder is the leading cause of mortality rates among all the mental disorders.

Variables

The major variables in this research are painful life experiences which include biological, environmental and intrapsychic factors or external factors. The paper seeks to establish the relationship between the disorder and experiences or factors that increase the probability of developing a major depressive disorder.

Literature Review

Research into major depressive disorder by American Psychiatric Association has revealed that, 4.9% of the United States populations suffer from major depressive disorder throughout their life time while 17.1% are found to experience at least one depressive episode in their lifetime. A person's interpretation of an experience was found to be the main causative agent of the disorder rather than the event itself according to cognitive behavior models as advanced by Sigmund Freud.

Research methodology

Experimental research backed by sample survey was employed to investigate the causes of major depressive disorder. Laboratory experiments were carried out using a sample of patients from various hospitals. These patients suffered from various mental conditions and were admitted in hospitals for treatment. A control experiment was also set to check redundancy of the experiment. The results from the two experiments were compared and the results recorded.

Summary of the findings

Intrapsychic factors were found to be the largest contributing factors to the occurrence of major depressive disorder. These occur inside ones mind as a result of conflicting experiences that one undergoes during his childhood. Various theorists have suggested that the disorder is triggered by internalization of negative or painful events by the child as he grew up. Some of the children have blamed the experience on themselves hence developing a sense of guilt which eventually results to depression.

Environmental factors were also found to lead to Major depressive disorder. These external factors are such that they place the victims in position that he feels completely helplessness and incapable of handling situation around himself. The person becomes depressed when he is faced with circumstances that he deems difficult to change to an extent that he gives up any effort to improve his welfare amidst the events. These circumstances may include personal losses, fall of status in the society as a result of income loss, gender or racial oppression and abusive or stressing relationships.

Biological factors also play a huge role in propagating the disorder in the individual. Researches have discovered genetic abnormalities among the depressive disorder patients (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2007). This shows that abnormal genetic conditions are partly to blame for the many cases of depressive disorder in people. The large prevalence noted in the study points out to significant relationship between abnormal genetic conditions to the increased probability of developing major depressive disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

Limitation of the study

The major limitation of the study was the lack of comprehensive medical histories of the patients sampled for the study. Due to their conditions, some of the patients failed to cooperate while others refused to revisit their experiences due to trauma visited on them. Others gave biased information due to their opinion of the circumstances. Another challenge faced was error in sampling and measurements leading to discrepancies in data. This tended to reduce validity of the findings and reliability due to inadequate representativeness of the sample.

About the Author

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