

Common mental disorders in a rural district of Kenya, and socio-demographic risk factors

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Abstract:

Association between common mental disorders (CMDs), equity, poverty and socio-economic functioning are relatively well explored in high income countries, but there have been fewer studies in low and middle income countries, despite the considerable burden posed by mental disorders, especially in Africa, and their potential impact on development. This paper reports a population-based epidemiological survey of a rural area in Kenya. A random sample of 2% of all adults living in private households in Maseno, Kisumu District of Nyanza Province, Kenya (50,000 population), were studied. The Clinical Interview Schedule-Revised (CIS-R) was used to determine the prevalence of common mental disorders (CMDs). Associations with socio-demographic and economic characteristics were explored. A CMD prevalence of 10.8% was found, with no gender difference. Higher rates of illness were found in those who were of older age and those in poor physical health. We conclude that CMDs are common in Kenya and rates are elevated among people who are older, and those in poor health.