

Trans-cultural research on depression

Abstract:

Transcultural psychiatry, whose scientific founder Emil Kraepelin is considered as, in its 100 years of tradition has not only developed a varied range of methods but has also brought about a change in the respective scientific questions as well as in related research and clinical applications. Whereas transcultural research on the psychopathology of depression contributed to the further development of psychiatric nosology, transcultural psychiatry has recently been increasingly faced with issues concerning phenomena of social change and globalization. One region, where such conditions can be observed in particular is Africa, where the dissolving of traditional standards and support systems and growing economic insecurity causes a considerable burden especially on women. As an example, results from a cross-sectional study on East African women using a two step design as well as qualitative and quantitative, standardized psychiatric methods are discussed concerning the association of social change, psycho-social risk factors and the development of depressive disorders. Efficient clinical methods towards diagnosis and treatment of new risk groups will have to be developed, of which an important aspect will be crisis intervention