



Opinion

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The Position of Persian Medicine Knowledge in Psychiatry Development

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Abstract

Psychiatry is known as a new science, but the human psyche is not limited to psychiatry. In the past, as today, the human psyche has been as important, and many efforts have been made to ensure mental health, which we believe can be effective today. With a holistic approach to health, Persian medicine presents a wide range of recommendations for maintaining mental health and psychiatry. Studying the relationship between ancient methods and modern medicine can help find more effective psychiatry practice methods.

Opinion

In ancient Greece, Plato promoted the mental definition of mental illness, was the first to coin the term “mental health,” which was thought of as the intellect by means of temperament and the rule of passion [1]. The nature of mental illness has been the subject of heated debate throughout history because its treatment is associated with many challenges and is highly prevalent [2]. Mental and addictive disorders affected more than 1 billion people worldwide in 2016. These disorders accounted for 7% of the total disease burden measured in DALYs and 19% of all years of living with a disability. Depression was associated with the majority of DALYs for both sexes, with higher rates in women than other internal disorders, while other disorders, such as substance use disorders, had higher rates in men [3]. Mental health is always

seen less than its true value due to its association with the soul and lack of the same vision in different cultures. And it is always a big challenge in health and medicine.

The World Health Organization published a statement in 1978 and introduced traditional medicine as “A set of all theoretical and practical sciences used in medical diagnosis, prevention and treatment of physical illnesses, minds, or social anomalies and transmitted from generation to another in a speech or written form” [4]. The history of the Persian medicine school refers to more than three thousand years ago [5].

Despite the bold presence of the current medicine in the current community, traditional medicine is still trusted by a wide range of people in the treatment of some diseases [6]. Since the basic task of

physicians is to maintain the health and treatment of the disease, Persian medicine scientific evaluations can be one of the sources of inspiration in today's studies, especially about diseases that medical knowledge is now unable to offer the way to cure and the experiences of old doctors can illuminate the first light in a long and reasoned research way [7]. In many cases, the role of Iranian medicine has not been studied in detail, and little information is available about this knowledge. For example, one study found that following lifestyle recommendations of Persian medicine decreases the gastrointestinal symptoms of vitiligo patients [8]. Also, one study on blepharitis patients showed the effectiveness of a Persian medicine formulation on blepharitis [9]. Also, different studies have evaluated the role of Persian medicine in depression [10], Insomnia [11], anorexia [12], etc.

One of the good features of ancient Persian medicine was paying attention to patients' psychological status while treating their physical illnesses, and even in acute infectious and microbial diseases, psychotherapy was performed [13]. They believed that the body affects the soul just as the soul affects the body. How words are selected for neurological and mental illnesses in sources, and their use in valid medical texts in the distant past show the medical familiarity with these diseases. Words like "Melancholia or melancholy" which is characterized by pessimism, the thought of ruin, fear and lack of relaxation, "Qotrob" which is another name for seasonal affective disorder and is a type of melancholia disease that is most likely to occur in the second month of winter, "Fesad takhaiol" which is another name for Psychosis, and the patient imagines objects that do not exist and thinks he has seen objects never seen. Good sleeping is one of the six essential principles of Persian medicine, so "insomnia" is one of the most important problems mentioned [14].

Anxiety that its concept is taken from different words such as "hamm" which is the thought and effort to fix the unpleasant issues and to make something pleasant, "khof" which is Fear of an unpleasant problem that is likely to occur in the future, "faza" is another term and is a more severe step than fear and one is unable to eliminate the risk agent and becomes restless and agitated, "qalaq" is a more severe stage than the faza that the patient is extremely restless, "Jobn" is a state that one is afraid of things that others are not afraid of, and the most extreme condition is called "vasvas" which is the Persian term for OCD [15].

We do not intend to review all diseases and concepts related to mental health in Persian medicine because it is a very broad discussion that needs to be thoroughly and comprehensively examined. One of the limitations in this field is the many books that

have not been adapted to today scientific literature. The treatments used in psychiatry today are very wide and range from medication to counseling. Many of these methods have a low response rate. Patients generally show little desire to use psychiatric drugs because they have many side effects in many cases.

One good example of treatment of mental disease is trying to treat melancholia. In Persian medicine, Sleep is the best treatment for melancholia. Occupational therapy can also be helpful. Patients must Avoid anger, sadness, and loneliness. The patient must reside in a temperate climate. Bathing with lukewarm water before eating is beneficial. The patient should only eat sweet and oily foods and avoid salty and sour foods [14]. Insomnia is another example, the first step in the treatment of Insomnia, in Persian medicine, is to use appropriate food. The second step is to use sleeping medications (mostly herbal). Other steps are Massage of the foot, Bathing, light exercise, and listening to mild sounds such as the sound of trees and waterfalls [16].

In Iranian medicine, mental illness is seen as a combination of physical, spiritual, mental, and social problems. To treat these diseases, the doctor (Hakim) treats it with a holistic view. As shown in the example above, in the treatment of these diseases, the use of substances instead drugs have been one of the last lines of treatment and patients were first treated with methods such as lifestyle changes. This lifestyle change has been from a change in diet to a person's relationship with those around the patient. The precision in changing the environment was so precise that they even paid attention to the sounds that the person was listening to. We think that in the recent medicine this overview can be very useful in the treatment of diseases, especially mental illnesses. In medicine today, it is a disease that can be treated, but in Iranian medicine, it is the patient who is the focus of attention and is treated, and this view is expected to prevail today.

Iranian medicine, like Greece medicine, considers human and his health as a holistic view. Pathophysiology and reason for using many methods used in Iranian medicine unknown or unclear for us. There are many differences in the logic of their use. These methods have been very effective and have been used by Iranians for several centuries. Even today, due to the social stigma of going to a psychiatrist and not hoping that many new methods will be useful, many of the methods that have been used in the past are still useful. However, it is necessary to study these interventions and treatment methods in today's method and to determine the effect of these methods through animal, in vitro, in vivo, and human studies.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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