

# MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY - DEFINITION, IMPORTANCE, ASSOCIATIONS WITH SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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## INTRODUCTION

Many persons with mental illnesses do not seek treatment [1]. Current definitions of mental health literacy (MHL) are perceived as: an understanding of how to acquire and maintain positive mental health; understanding mental disorders and their treatment; reducing stigma associated with mental disorders; and increasing the efficiency of seeking help [2]. Furthermore, we discover that MHL has age, gender, educational, urban-rural, and cross-cultural disparities, which may effect rates of help-seeking differently in various circumstances [3].

## METHODS

Data search was conducted using PubMed database. Keywords used for the research: mental health literacy, sociodemographic factors, mental disorder. Of the 2100 results, only those which specifically identified the definition of MHL, its importance and its relationship to certain sociodemographic factors were collected.

## CONCLUSIONS

According to research, age, gender, race, level of education, general cognitive functioning are related to human MHL. The ultimate goal of MHL education is a modern society in which people with mental disorders take urgent action to seek professional help from appropriate professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, etc.) to obtain and adhere to evidence-based treatment, take the necessary preventive actions to prevent mental illness.

## AIM

The aim of this review is to determine the importance and definition of mental health literacy. Also to evaluate the associations between MHL and sociodemographic factors from available literature.

## RESULTS

Mental health literacy research to date has shown that many people do not seek help due to a variety of personal and structural barriers, such as fear of stigma related to depression or other mental illness or inability to recognize symptoms [3]. Since the definition of MHL was first proposed, researchers have drawn considerable public attention to the latter's low levels of MHL and there is growing evidence that recognition of widespread mental disorders is low in various developed and developing countries. There is also evidence to suggest that gender, race, age, education, and overall cognitive functioning at the beginning are significantly related to MHL levels [5].