

SOUTH HAS HIGHER PREVALENCE OF MENTAL DISORDERS: STUDY

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh account for a higher prevalence of mental disorders that manifest primarily during adulthood in depression and anxiety, according to the first comprehensive estimates of disease burden attributable to mental health from 1990 prepared by the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative and published in the *Lancet Psychiatry*.

The study finds that roughly one in seven Indians, or 197 million persons, suffered from mental disorders of varying severity in 2017.

These include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, idiopathic developmental intellectual disability, conduct disorders, and autism. Importantly, the contribution of mental disorders to the disability adjusted life year (DALY) — the sum of total years of life lost and years lived with disability — has doubled between 1990 and 2017 increasing from 2.5% to 4.7%. Mental disorders were the second leading cause of disease burden in terms of years lived with disability (YLDs) and the sixth leading cause of disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs) in the world in 2017.

In total, 45.7 million people had depressive disorders, as one in three years lost due to a mental disorder was due to depression. This was followed by anxiety — a total of 44.9 million people suffered from it and it accounted for the loss of 1 in 5 years.

Three categories

In its State-wise analysis, the study divides different States into three categories on the basis of their socio-demographic index (SDI), i.e low, medium and high SDI States. The SDI is a composite measure of per-capita income, mean education, and fertility rate in women younger than 25 years and is calculated on a scale of one.

Prevalence of depressive disorders was highest in Tamil Nadu (loss of 836 years per 1 lakh population), Kerala (loss of 641 years), Goa (loss of 626 years) and Telangana (loss of 756 years) in the high SDI State group and Andhra Pradesh (loss of 793 years) in the middle SDI State group.

Similarly, anxiety disorders were found to be more common in Kerala (loss of 383 years per 1 lakh population), Himachal Pradesh (loss of 329 years), Tamil Nadu (loss of 325 years), Karnataka (loss of 324 years), Telangana (loss of 324 years), and Maharashtra (loss of 324 years) in the high SDI State group and Andhra Pradesh (loss of 328 years), Manipur (loss of 360 years), and West Bengal (loss of 331 years) in the middle SDI State group.

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