

# PSYCHIATRY DISORDERS, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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## UBUNTU: A MODEL OF POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

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The examination of mental health in accordance to laws of social relations provides an important background for examining mental health. While the scholarship within sociological perspective offers little insight into mental wellness the need to develop a significant construct from which to assess the trajectory of mental health within the context of culture is warranted. While theories in sociological research discuss the direct implications of sociocultural connections to a people's way of functioning stronger connections are in order for defining their mental health implication, grounded in a specific cultural reality, is required in conceptualizing positive mental health from a cultural sociological perspective. This discussion focuses on the relevance for developing positive mental health model that reflect on the interest and image of the culture which the individual represents; including the cultural traditions and practices that are unique to their particular way of being. This model of positive mental health to be presented is known as Ubuntu: Connectedness, competence, and consciousness. Author as an African philosophical ethos is the fundamental interdependence or orientation describing human beingness in accordance to one's relationship with others. For example the Akan people value the responsibility to others as the supreme moral principle/episteme. While he helps to define the function of humaneness, it also espouses a system of principles or central themes of connectedness, competency and consciousness. It is proposed that the term connectedness be used as a fundamental principle or theme of mental health for all individuals. Connectedness as a concept refers to an individual's attitude and need to form social bonds; it serves as a psychological construct of belonging. Competency is a general repertoire of skills required for effective human functioning. Social competence is the relationship skills, flexibility and the ability to navigate between primary culture and dominant culture (cultural competence). Consciousness– the state of awareness of internal and external activities– at its basic level features the interplay between perception and conception. Perceptual consciousness is the process of attaining awareness or understanding as experienced through the senses; revealing of one's conscious understanding.



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