

Sociocultural aspects of therapy choice

Globalization

There are many ways of defining, describing globalization but the aspects in our focus were: the mass production of information, as well as the global exchange of information, beliefs, traditions, and medical systems. An important effect of this global exchange is “cultural creolization,” the hybridization or mixing of cultures.

Post-truth

“Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” (Oxford dictionary).

Attention

The concentration of awareness on some phenomena while excluding other stimuli; a condition of selective awareness which governs the extent and quality of one’s interactions with the environment.

Bias

A disproportionate weight in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another. A bias is a particular mode of filtering, organizing, and interpreting information. Although bias (to some degree) is unavoidable, it can be reduced. Many cognitive biases exist; one of the most common ones is the confirmation bias: the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms one's preexisting beliefs or hypotheses.

Filter bubble and echo chamber

A filter bubble is a set of online information, which is the result of algorithms that choose content based on previous online behavior, as with search histories or online shopping activity. An echo chamber is an environment in which a person encounters only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own, so that their existing views are reinforced and alternative ideas are not considered.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)

This is an umbrella term for any medical system, procedure, or product that is not considered conventional treatment in a given country. Conventional treatment usually signifies western medicine (biomedicine) but can be different if the country’s dominant medical system is not biomedicine. In the West, complementary treatments are employed in parallel with biomedicine, while alternative treatments are used instead of biomedicine.

Push and Pull factors of therapy choice

In this dichotomous model, push factors are phenomena that push the patient away from biomedicine (such as not receiving a diagnosis or a cure for their illness), while pull factors (philosophical congruence) are phenomena that attract the patient toward alternative treatments.

Philosophical congruence

When a patient feels that the alternative medicine they are attracted to retains the same worldview as they do, i.e. the patient thinks the alternative medicine or healer believes the same things or values the same things as the patient does. Philosophical congruence is the main pull factor that causes a patient to use an alternative treatment.

Modern Health Worries (MHW)

MHWs are a constellation of attitudes connected to the assumed harmful consequences of modern technologies and urbanized life (e.g.: food additives, "electrosmog" – radiation coming from devices, “chemtrail”, and other forms of pollution)

