

Book Reviews

Title of Book: Child Mental Health in India

Editors: Savita Malhotra, Anil Malhotra, Vijoy K Varma

Publisher and year of publication: Macmillan India Ltd. 1992

About the Book

Children represent the most important asset and wealth of a nation. This wealth needs to be protected, nurtured and harnessed through the provision of opportunities for healthy growth and development. Child Mental Health in India will provide inspiration and practical guidelines to all those who are concerned with the care of children. Although, in India, we can benefit from the experience of the developed countries, the theory and practice of child psychiatry need to be adapted to ground realities and priorities.

This book is based on the proceedings of the National Workshop on “Child Mental Health: Needs and Priorities in India”. The contributors to the book represent the national leadership in mental health, especially those with a special interest and commitment to child mental health. The editors have considerable recognition in professional circles both nationally and internationally. The book would be of interest to mental health professionals, educationists, administrators, policy makers and interested laypersons.

ISBN: 0333 92627 7

Price: Rs. 275.00

Book review

Mona Srivastava¹ & I. Sharma²

This book originates from the proceedings of a National Workshop on “Child Mental Health: Needs and Priorities in India.” Having drawn contributions from national stalwarts specially those committed to child mental health, the book is a literary genius. The editors of this book have considerable recognition in professional circles both in India and overseas. With child mental health gaining importance over the years, the book has its relevance. The needs and concerns of children have an important bearing on this book. For a reader it offers the goodness of the National Workshop without having attended it.

This book highlights the needs and advocates the formation of national level policies to safeguard child mental health. It has 13 chapters which cover important areas relating to Child Psychiatry in India such as Mental Health: Needs and Priorities, Epidemiology, Child Psychiatry as an Academic Superspeciality, Training and Service Facilities, Psychiatric Research, Policies, Treatment, Early Interventions for

At-high Risk and Handicapped Children, Training Parents in Managing their Mentally Handicapped Child, School Mental Health, Temperament, Developmental issues and Assessment Technology.

With superspecialisation in child psychiatry being offered the country there is need for more intense appraisal of child psychiatric problems and issues, hence the importance of this book.

About 1/3 of the world's population comprises children below 15 years and 5-15% of these have some kind of mental handicap. This book offers relevant guidelines and insightful material to students and experts interested in the field of child mental health.

Chapters on School Mental Health, Policies Relating to Children in India and Child Psychiatric research are wide in coverage, lucid in presentation and quite informative. The chapter on Training of Mentally Handicapped Children has been made simple and practical by line diagrams and tables. The quality of printing is satisfactory and the book is appropriately priced and affordable.

With so many experts under one roof contributing to a book, one can offer only a limited critical review. Addition of a chapter on ethnic and cross cultural practices would have been desirable. The section on Treatment of Child Psychiatric Disorders leaves one wanting more, since expectations have risen. A chapter on the recent advances in managing difficult children would have been welcome.

Notwithstanding some shortcomings, this book is highly recommended to postgraduate students of psychiatry, mental health professionals, educationists, administrators and policy makers. With books and information on child mental health being so scarce, this book would serve as a useful respite. The concise, straightforward manner in which complex data has been presented is the most important highlight of this book. Discussions and recommendations offered at the end of the book add to its value.

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Title of Book: Child Psychiatry in India: An Approach to Assessment and Management of Childhood Psychiatric Disorders

Editors: Savita Malhotra

Publisher and year of publication: Macmillan India Ltd. 2002

About the Book

In recent years there has been an increase in awareness and concern about psychological and behavioural problems of children. Though child psychiatry has existed as an independent discipline in the western world, it is a very young discipline in India. Experiences of Indian psychiatrists have showed that the knowledge derived from work done in western countries could not be directly applied to the Indian situation. The necessity for adaptation 'indianization' was, therefore, felt more acutely in child psychiatry than in most other branches of medicine as mental health of children is deeply rooted in the sociocultural milieu. This book aims to fill in this gap.

It has been written to help and guide clinicians such as the child and adult psychiatrist, pediatricians and psychologists to assess psychiatric problems in children and adolescents in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The author concentrates on the assessment and management of childhood psychiatric disorders which are the cornerstone of child psychiatry. A chapter on structured assessment describing the approaches, techniques and introduction to some well known scales has been included to help researchers in the field. Some of the well standardized and tested Indian scales have also been provided for easy access and usage.

Written in a very engaging style, this work will fill in a vast void in the field of child psychiatry.

ISBN: 033 93741 4

Price: Rs. 188

Book Review

Pallab Mazumder¹

For the past many years there had been almost a vacuum in the field of child psychiatry so far as the Indian scene was concerned. Despite the availability of foreign books the knowledge seemed to be incomplete especially with respect to clinical material. Most practicing psychiatrists and students of psychiatry were somewhat confused and misguided when they dealt with paediatric psychiatric problems. This was because, psychiatry in general, and child psychiatry in particular, has been greatly influenced by society and culture. This book, Child Psychiatry in India: An Approach to Assessment and Management of Childhood Psychiatric

Disorders was long over due. The author of his book has vast experience in psychiatry, including child psychiatry, and is well acclaimed both nationally and internationally.

The book has 11 chapters, a Glossary of Terms and 6 appendices. The chapters span from introductory chapters like Child Psychiatry: Origins and Development, The Role of Family and School in Child Development; to Interview techniques, Assessment (Neurodevelopmental, Psychological and Structured) and Indian Scales; to Diagnosis and Classification, Management Strategies, Special Issues in Adolescence and Psychiatric and Behavioral Emergencies.

The first 2 chapters have very aptly described in a systematic and comprehensive manner the essentials of interview techniques and various assessment methods. The author has done well to describe the subjective and objective aspects of assessment. While doing so, introduction to various Indian scales and common psychological tests have been included. These will prove useful to both clinicians and researchers.

Equally valuable is the chapter on Diagnosis and Classification. It gives a comparative description of diagnostic entities enlisted in DSM & ICD and guidelines for differential diagnosis. The diagnostic algorithm is very nicely depicted on pages 146-149.

The chapter on Management Strategies, though included as an after thought, is loaded with important information and very practical tips which fit into the Indian cultural context. 10 psychiatric and behavioral emergencies (fits, aggression and violence, acute pain, non-accidental injuries etc.), commonly encountered in clinical practice in our country, have been dealt with in detail in the last chapter.

Last, but not the least, as one goes through the book, one finds the glossary of terms and appendices which are also useful additions.

This book, being very appropriately priced, is affordable to one and all. The printing and paper quality does, however, require some improvement.

This book has been written in very lucid and simple language. It starts with the basics and proceeds gradually to the finer aspects of the subject. It is very difficult to stop reading the book in the middle. Throughout the book an effort has been made to keep the emphasis on the Indian experience. Above all, this book being first of its kind, has lived up to its expectation. It can be a very useful aid to most psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and postgraduate students and researchers of psychiatry and clinical psychology, who have interest in child psychiatry.

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Title of Book: Brain Culture & Development: Tradition and Innovation in Child and Adolescent Mental Health

**Editors: J. Gerald Young, Pierre Ferrari,
Savita Malhotra & Samuel Tyano, Ernesto Caffo**

Publisher and year of publication: Macmillan India Ltd. 2003

About the Book:

This book highlights the importance of integrating biological and socio-cultural themes to understand child development.

Having originated from social sciences and being deeply rooted in psychodynamic and cognitive behavioural theories, the discipline of child and adolescent psychiatry has undergone tremendous shifts in theoretical and practical conceptualizations. Advances in biological sciences in general and developmental and social neuroscience in particular have added a whole new dimension to the field. There have been changes in methods of study and the scope of discipline has also expanded to include new areas. Due to the development of cutting edge technology rapid progress has been made in understanding the neurobiological concepts like empathy, shyness and perception of beauty.

ISBN Number: 1403 90925 3

Price: Rs. 320

Book Review

I. Sharma¹ & Mona Srivasava²

This book is one of the series of books brought out by the International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (IACAPAP). The book aptly highlights the importance of integrating biological and sociocultural themes to understand child development. This book is dedicated to those children who have changed cultures and have endured the confused excitement, the emotional turmoil, the loss of their familiar cultural structures and the longing for home. It offers many insights into the ethno-cultural influences on the development of children. The editors of his book are internationally acclaimed psychiatrists from different parts of the world (USA, France, India, Israel and Italy).

The book has been divided into 4 parts (Conceptual Foundations: Children and Culture; Cultural Influences on the Developing Children; Cross-Cultural Contrasts: Epidemiology, Vulnerability and Stress; and Integrating Cultural Perspectives into Clinical and Social Policy Planning) comprising 14 chapters. These chapters have been authored by stalwarts from different corners of the globe.

Some chapters, like the first two chapters (“Sociocultural Diversity and Ethnocentrism in Child Mental Health” and “The Social World: Experiences that

Shape Brain and Mind”) are concise, crisp and relevant. The chapter on “Concept of Culture” is a treasure for its wide references and multiple diverse quotations.

The chapter on Ancient Indian practices relating to child care throws some useful light. However, it could have been better with the mention of the practice of baby massage, taboos, stigma and gender-specific practices. The chapter on “Children and Moving Image” needs more input for clarity.

The chapters on “Poverty of Children” and “Rehabilitation of Street Children” are very useful and give some common sense tips which can be borrowed by policy planners. Some more description of the repercussions of poverty and factors leading to delinquency, including the biological aspects, would have made the chapters more holistic, as the book aims to be a reference material for mental health professionals including psychiatrists.

The book does become heavy in parts, especially the chapters on Culture and the chapter on “Brain Mechanisms for the Representation and Transmission Culture in Childhood”, which are detailed, comprehensive and scientific.

The highlight of this book is the detailed coverage of the subject and the influences in the developing world. The cultural influences, factors and practices in the third world have been dealt with succinctly. Notwithstanding the positive points of this book, a chapter or two could have been added about the developed world. A contrast could have been more insightful in shaping the policies and giving some pointers into remedial aspects of culture and its influence on brain development.

The printing quality is satisfactory and it is also appropriately priced.

The positive highlights of this book are its relevance, wide coverage, recent research and in-depth references. Lucid flow of language has been nicely interwoven with scientific facts. The book can serve as an important referral book for mental health professionals and students of sociology and anthropology. People interested in cross-cultural bearings are especially recommended this book.

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Title of Book: Mental Disorders in Children and Adolescents: Need and Strategies for Intervention

**Editors: Savita Malhotra, Pratap Sharan, Nitin Gupta,
Anil Malhotra & Sapna Gill**

Publisher and year of publication: **CBS Publishers & Distributors 2005**

About the Book:

This book provides a framework for understanding mental distress and disorders of childhood and adolescence in the developmental context; reviews some of the known clinical disorders in terms of the epidemiology, psychopathology, natural history, course and outcome, discusses pharmacotherapy of mental disorders of childhood and provides guidelines for psychotherapeutic and preventive interventions that are well known and have proven efficacy. Theoretical and practical understanding as well as treatment of the disorders incorporates a fine balance of biological and psychosocial viewpoints. This book also includes discussion on child mental health policy at the global and regional levels with bearing on services and systems of care in different countries. The book is a major resource for information on the subject useful for psychiatrists, psychologists, pediatricians, health planners and policy makers, as well as clinicians who are concerned with the lives of children.

ISBN: 81-239-1216-1

Price:Rs 350

Book Review

Rabi Shakya¹

This book "Mental Disorders in Children And Adolescents: Needs and Strategies for Intervention is to profile some of the commonly seen mental disorders in childhood and adolescence; put these into a perspective of implications for overall future health: provide guidance about some of the known therapeutic and preventive interventions, and stimulate thinking about future policies and services that are needed.

The editors of this book are eminent psychiatrists and clinical psychological well acclaimed nationally and internationally.

The book is divided into 5 parts (Mental Health in Children and Adolescents: Global Agenda, Mental Distress and Disorders, Pharmacotherapy, Psychological Therapies, Preventive and Promotive Interventions, and Child And Adolescent Mental Health Policy, Services and research) comprising 25 chapters. The chapters have been authored by very eminent internationally professionals (psychiatrists and clinical psychologists / psychologists) from India and abroad (Sweden, USA, Switzerland, South Africa and UK).

The first chapter describes the global scene in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

The 2nd to 11th chapters describe some of the common mental disorders in terms of their epidemiology, psychopathology, natural history, course and outcome and provide understanding of mental distress and disorders in their developmental context.

The 12th to 22nd chapters give details on pharmacotherapy and guidelines for psychotherapeutic and preventive interventions that have proven efficacy.

The last 3 chapters deliberate on global and regional mental health policies for promoting child mental Health. Special emphasis has been placed on discussion about the needs of children in low- and middle-income countries. Lastly, the importance of research in child psychiatry in the understanding of adult psychiatric disorders has been highlighted. The book has made a good attempt to stimulate thinking about the future priorities, needs and policies in the area of child mental health.

Both the price of his book and printing quality are satisfactory, making it affordable to one and all.

This book is recommended for reading to mental health professionals worldwide, but especially in the Asian countries. It is highly recommended to all students of psychiatry and clinical psychology.

The authors need to be congratulated for his major accomplishment.

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