

Health and Illness narratives: A scoping review from anthropological perspectives

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Background and objectives

- ✓ Human health is largely anchored in **socio-cultural contexts** in human history and civilization.
- ✓ Health and illness narratives are **socially produced** and **locally grounded** within and across cultures.
- ✓ To explore the **anthropological evidence** and deepen our understanding on how **health and illness narratives** are **socially embedded** within and across cultures from **critical medical anthropology perspectives** at large.

Methodology

- ✓ Scoping review of both published and grey literatures on *health and illness narratives* in the anthropological scholarship
- ✓ This anthropological scholarship primarily aims to *explore the larger socio-cultural, political, economic and historical contexts of health and illness narratives in the local context*

Results

- ✓ Understanding illness requires attention not only to **biomedical models** but also to the **subjective experiences** of individuals who are ill.
- ✓ **Embodied experiences** - **culturally interpreted subjective experience of health and illness**
 - Influenced and sharpened by **gender, age, social status, and access to healthcare**.
- ✓ The indigenous knowledge, beliefs and narratives of health and illness are shaped by differential dimensions of **ecological, economic, social, cultural and symbolic frameworks** contributing to **epidemiological transition**.

Results

- ✓ Interplay between culture, society and health - ***cultural norms and values, social relationships, and societal structures, power dynamics and inequality***
 - *cultural norms and values, social relationships, and societal structures*
- ✓ Local health care systems intersect with ***social, cultural, political and economic conditions.***
- ✓ Connecting ***local healing practices*** to ***global health policies.***
- ✓ CMA offers a comprehensive framework that ***explores how social, economic, and political structures*** influence ***health outcomes.***
- ✓ ***Medical pluralism*** can define and redefine the health and illness narratives ***within and across different social groups.***

Conclusions

- ✓ There needs *a holistic study of the human condition* as it relates to health and illness in *social, cultural, behavioral, biological, psychological, and historical contexts.*
- ✓ Health and illness relies *on social differences, borders and boundaries of any kind*
- ✓ Local understanding and narratives of health and illness, social sufferings and healings are *historically nurtured, patterned and influenced by differences in social position* within a society, thereby determining *people's access to health care in communities.*
- ✓ Need to explore the scope and relevance of CMA in terms of significant contributions in *health systems governance research.*

Thank you for your time and attention !

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