

Oral Fri. Sep 26, 2025 10:40 AM - 12:10 PM JST | Fri. Sep 26, 2025 1:40 AM - 3:10 AM UTC  Session Room 8
(Meeting Room 1)

Oral 10

[O-10-04] Critical Issues in Men's Mental Health: Cross-Cultural Comparisons Between Japan and the West

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Keywords : Cross-Cultural Psychiatry、Men's Mental Health、Masculinity and Mental Health、Japan、Mental Health Disparities

Over the past two decades, research on men's mental health has expanded considerably. Interdisciplinary scholars have increasingly examined persistent disparities affecting men's mental health and well-being and have debated how best to address these challenges in clinical and public health contexts. Many such studies seek to foster men's mental health while avoiding the tendency to blame men for their mental health challenges, a perspective notably absent from much research on the topic. However, the overwhelming majority of this research has been conducted in Western settings, particularly in North America, the UK, and Australia. There are thus significant gaps in our understanding of men's mental health issues in non-Western contexts. To better understand men's mental health from a cross-cultural perspective, this presentation draws on key findings from authoritative reviews of Western literature and compares them with relevant clinical and psychological studies from Japan. Using a selective literature review, the presentation highlights five recurring themes in Western studies: men's disproportionately high suicide rates, reluctance to seek psychological help, higher rates of substance abuse, underdiagnosis of depression, and the role of masculinity in shaping mental health outcomes. The prevalence of these critical issues in the Japanese context suggests their transnational and transcultural relevance. In addition, the review identifies culturally specific mental health issues unique to Japan, further expanding our understanding of how societal norms shape male psychological distress. By contextualizing these issues within both Western and Japanese frameworks, this presentation discusses the implications of these issues for men's mental health research in cross-cultural and global contexts. The presentation concludes by considering how recognizing both these commonalities and culturally distinct issues can inform future public mental health interventions and policy approaches to men's mental health.