

EDITORIAL

Dear Colleagues,

In this editorial, I would like to emphasize as part of our publication principles that researchers who intend to submit studies to our journal should choose a research topic that will contribute to the resolution of current and primary problems in society and raise our colleagues' consciousness and awareness of these problems in addition to choosing them based on their availability in the literature. For this purpose, the previous editorial was about COVID-19. Although the COVID-19 is still dominating the global agenda these days, women's mental health, a serious concern in the society, is another issue that never falls off the agenda in the background. There are two indicators proving that this issue is a priority. First, female gender is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a risk factor for mental health. Second, there are inadequate number of studies in the literature regarding women's mental health.

Is being a woman really a risk factor for mental health? The gender factor is generally a very important determinant of mental health, and being a woman or a man (the third gender should also be considered) directly affects the mental health and the life.^[1] This is because gender determines whether or not to have the power to take advantage of socio-economic determinants such as education, work, wages, social status, etc., which affect mental health and the quality of life. A wide range of resources, especially the World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2020 show that women are at a disadvantaged position in terms of socioeconomic determinants.^[2] This disadvantaged position is relied upon to commit economic, political, social or psychological violence against them. Physical and sexual violence against women, which is common in society, can also be assumed to be a result of this disadvantage. As reported by Kerman and Betrus (2020), various studies show that 14–96% of the women in Turkey have experienced violence at some time in their lives, and that femicide cases have an endemic nature.^[3] The WHO also states that this disadvantaged position of women is associated with mental problems such as depression, anxiety disorders, somatic symptoms and eating disorders, and the prevalence of these problems is 2–3 times higher in women than in men.^[1] Therefore, women's mental health is a priority issue that needs to be handled in every aspect.

Are there adequate number of studies regarding women's mental health in the literature? A previous study reviewed various international articles that were published between the years 1973 and 1997 and found that only 9.8 % of them (n=2.178) were related to women, 4% were related to discrimination against women, and 3% were related to feminism.^[4] The same study found an increase in the number of relevant articles after 1990 but emphasized that this increase was not at a level to indicate a growing sensitivity to women's mental health. Similarly, a systematic review conducted in Turkey on women's mental health and nursing care examined the articles published between 2006 and 2016 and found that there were only five studies on this subject, four of which were conducted in the field of psychiatric nursing.^[5] This finding suggests that as a field of study, greater focus should be placed on women's mental health. Similar to other scientific journals, our journal receives a highly limited number of studies on this topic, and therefore the number of relevant studies published in our journal is limited. To determine the number of articles published in the Journal of Psychiatric Nursing on women's mental health, searches were done with specific keywords on August 27, 2020. A keyword search for "woman" retrieved seven articles and a search for "mother" retrieved three articles while the keyword "pregnant" brought five articles and the keyword "violence" brought 12 articles. Of these articles, only one included violence against women, and no articles were found with the keyword searches for "feminist" and "feminism". In addition, a keyword search for "woman" in the title and the Abstract section retrieved only eight articles. Our journal has put out 34 issues and published an average of nine articles in each issue with a total of 2102 pages so far. Although all these studies are very valuable, a total of eight articles with 53 pages in total included the word "woman" in the title, which means only 2.5% of the total number of pages included articles on women.

Almost half of both the global population and the population of Turkey are comprised of women. Moreover, the field of women's mental health includes many problems due to sexist psychiatric approaches shaped with patriarchal values.^[6] For this reason, women's mental health requires the capabilities to consider an individual to be a biopsychosocial being integrated with their environment, their past and present life as a whole, and to perceive individuals of all genders as equal. Psychiatric nursing should take into consideration these capabilities, and there is a lot of evidence and justification in the literature to consider women's mental health to be a primary research topic in the psychiatric nursing field. Below are a number points that have top priority for the studies to be conducted in this field.

- Studies should include all women—those who live in a city, town or a village, who work outside of home or at home (called housewives), who are educated or not—so that there is no group of women who are discriminated. For example, there is almost no study in Turkey on housewives.
- Instead of focusing just on a problem (like a mental illness), treatment, drug compliance, etc., or the pathology of a disorder, studies should definitely determine women's strengths and ways of coping. This approach may be useful for an individual to see that there are not only disorders, but also hope for improving mental health and turn to developing strategies.
- Instead of conducting quantitative studies in which women are completely overshadowed by statistics and numbers, qualitative studies that highlight women's experience and world but meet the scientific criteria should be carried out, which can be a guide for the resolution of problems and strengthening strategies.
- Instead of handling women within the frame of just biological medicine, reproductive periods, and psychiatric approaches based on patriarchal values, studies should be planned to handle them also within the frame of social ecological models. This is the only way to examine the relationship between the socio-economic determinants and the spiritual exposure as well as risks and also to determine protective strategies.

Wishing you healthy days ahead.

Best regards,

Prof. Gülsüm Ançel

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3. Kerman KT, Betrus P. Violence against women in Turkey: A social ecological framework of determinants and prevention strategies. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 2020;21:510–26.
4. Angelique HL, Culley MR. Searching for feminism: an analysis of community psychology literature relevant to women's concerns. *Am J Community Psychol* 2000;28:793–813.
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