Symposium OSPI-Europe

Public attitudes toward depression & seeking professional help:
Baseline survey prior to OSPI intervention

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Method

• **Survey method**
  – representative general population survey
    • by means of phone interviews
    • stratified sample: gender & quota ~ population distribution
    • adult population (18+)
  – in 4 OSPI intervention countries
    • Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal
    • intervention and control regions (n=500 each)
    • Total sample: N=4011
  – baseline assessment before intervention period
    • same survey repeated after intervention
    => assess effects of intervention in controlled design
OSPI intervention regions

Ireland

Control region: County Galway
Population: 237,035

Intervention region: County Limerick
Population: 193,863

Hungary

Miskolc, intervention

Szécsény, control

Germany

Control region: Magdeburg
Population: 230,140

Intervention region: Leipzig
Population: 511,252

Portugal

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Method

- **Survey instrument**
  - **Sociodemographics**
    - gender, age, education, marital status, occupational status
  - **Mental health**
    - self-reported depression, core symptoms, MHI-5, DSH
    - experience mental ill-health relatives, alcohol abuse, social support
  - **Mental health care use**
    - ever discussed psychological problems (GP or MH professional)
    - ever received treatment (in case of depression / DSH)
    - intention to seek professional help (in case of)
  - **Attitudes toward mental health**
    - Depression Stigma Scale (DSS)
      - 2 scales: personal stigma < > perceived stigma (social norm)
    - Attitude toward seeking profess. psychological help (ATSPPH-SF)
      - 2 scales: openness to help < > value of help
Results

- **Sociodemographics**
  - gender and age quota fairly achieved
    - 52% females - 48% males
    - mean age: 47.8 years old
  - education
    - 13,0 years of schooling (mean)
    - country differences (Hungary 14,9 – Portugal 11,7)
  - marital status
    - 41% living alone (mean)
    - slightly elevated in intervention regions
  - occupational status
    - 8,1% unemployment (mean)
    - country differences (Ireland 12.0% - Hungary 5.6%)
• **Experienced mental ill-health in relatives** (ever)
  – depression: 43%
  – deliberate self-harm: 17%
  – suicide: 13%
    • large country differences (Germany 24% < > Portugal 65%)

• **Alcohol abuse** (last year)
  – 7% „yes“ *any* alcohol abuse item
    • higher rate (10%) in Germany

• **Social support** (currently)
  – 85% reports „great deal“ of social support from *any* source
% depression in close family or friends

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Intervention Region</th>
<th>Control Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>63.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mental health

- Self-reported depression: 19.8%

- Symptoms of depression („sad“ „lost interest“)
  - 35% *any* symptom
  - 20% *both* symptoms

- Deliberate self-harm: 3.1%

- For all measures:
  - high rates in Portugal
  - elevated rates in intervention regions (esp. Germany)
% Self-reported depression (ever)

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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
<td>12.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
% Deliberate self-harm (ever)

- Germany: Intervention region 1.8, Control region 1.4
- Hungary: Intervention region 3.6, Control region 1.6
- Ireland: Intervention region 0.8, Control region 0.6
- Portugal: Intervention region 9.7, Control region 5.4

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% ever discussed psychological problems

- Germany: 30.5%
- Hungary: 19.8% (Intervention region), 20.2% (Control region)
- Ireland: 17.2% (Intervention region), 17.4% (Control region)
- Portugal: 42.6% (Intervention region), 40.9% (Control region)

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Attitudes toward mental health

- **Attitude toward depression (DSS)**
  - **Personal stigma scale**
    - about 30% agrees with stigmatising items
      - personal weakness, not real illness, better avoid, better not tell, ...
    - higher personal stigma in **Hungary**
      - 60% “snap out”
      - 46% “personal weakness”
    - some signs of lower personal stigma in **Ireland**
    - strange pattern in **Portugal**
      - higher score (42%) for “snap out” (although higher care use)
“People with depression could snap out if they wanted” (% agree)
Attitudes toward mental health

- **Attitude toward seeking professional help** *(ATSPPH-SF)*
  
  - **Openness to professional help scale**
    
    - about **70%** agrees with openness items
      - e.g. “I would want … if upset for long time”
    
    - large country differences
      - less openness in **Hungary**
      - more openness in **Portugal**

  
  - **Value of professional help scale**
    
    - about **45%** agrees with (low) value items
      - e.g. “doubtful value”, “poor way”, “last resort”, …
    
    - large country differences
      - lower perceived value in **Hungary**
      - more favourable attitudes in **Ireland**
“People should work out themselves; counselling is last resort” (% agree)

- Germany: 51.7%
- Hungary: 79.5%
- Ireland: 35.9%
- Portugal: 48.9%
Conclusions

• **Clear baseline results**
  – Mental health & care use
    • relatively high rates of mental ill-health, esp. in Portugal
    • low degree of past care use in cases of depression / DSH
    • important country differences
    • differences intervention - control region
  – Attitudes toward mental health
    • moderate degree of personal stigma, but high social stigma
    • moderate degree of care use intention
    • relatively open to treatment, but lower perceived value
    • important country differences
    • strong relation between mental health - care use - attitudes

• **Scope for improvement by campaign**

• **Interesting results for further in-depth investigation**