

Ivanova T. Biomedical and sociological approaches to mental health

Psychiatric epidemiological studies provide us with useful information about the prevalence of specific mental health problems in various countries and societies, but their biomedical attitude toward mental health does not allow us to focus on the study of the social factors of mental health. The biomedical direction is gradually changing and becoming more socially oriented, in particular, the psychiatric concept of mental disorders is changing to understanding them as dysfunctions, which already involves taking into account the discrepancy between man and the environment.

Theories of social discontent explore various social, including value and economic, factors that give rise to mental health problems in modern societies. It should be noted that the problem of these theories lies in the fact that they consider discontent and social risks as a fundamental condition of modern life, and do not analyze them as a behavioral state or certain social variations. In addition, social theories ignore diversity in the manifestations of the mental health of people in different countries.

Obviously, there is a need to form an independent direction of sociology – the sociology of health, which would not be reduced to epidemiological psychiatric studies, but would form its own system of terms and categories.

First, the sociology of mental health requires the development of theories of specific mental disorders. Because of its orientation to biomedical ideas about health and disease, sociology is reluctant to develop specific theories of mental health.

Secondly, the sociology of mental health should use a multi-level analysis of health factors and build macrosociological models of mental health.

Key words: mental disorder, mental health, biomedical direction, modernization, social anxiety.