

Abstract

Gender inequality is the root cause of the differences in mental disorders prevalence between men and women. The aim of this thesis was to examine social inequalities in mental health, focusing on gender as a critical determinant of mental health and mental illness. In the first chapter, the ways mental health is shaped by gender and other social determinants are discussed. Gender-based discrimination, traditional gender roles, unequal distribution of power and lack of control over life events are the most common risk factors for higher prevalence of mental disorders in women. In the empirical part of this thesis the European countries were grouped based on indicators related to women's mental health. The typology was developed using factor and cluster analyses. Subsequently, logistic regression analysis investigated associations between prevalence of depression and various social determinants of mental health in respondents of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). The results suggest that risk factors for common mental disorders are gender specific.