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# The Role of Genetics in Mental Health

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#### The Role of Genetics in Mental Health

Mental health has a great impact on an individual's life. It impacts their ability to cope with daily events and activities and their ability to relate with others. Research from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) shows that mental health can be affected by a combination of several factors, including environmental, biological, genetic, and psychological factors. In addition, a growing body of research shows specific gene variations are associated with mental health conditions. As such, genetics has a notable role in mental health.

Scientists and researchers have long recognized that most psychiatric conditions tend to run in families, showing possible genetic roots. The conditions include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and major depression (Stoewen, 2022). The symptoms tend to overlap, making it hard to distinguish between the five syndromes. In the same manner, they share symptoms; they also have probable similarities in their biological level. Recent studies show limited evidence of common genetic risk factors amid bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, schizophrenia and autism, bipolar disorder, and depression. Therefore, researches indicate a probable relationship between family roots and mental health conditions.

An individual's family history is among the best ways of determining the risk of a mental disorder. Various conditions run in families. Having a close relative with such illnesses could mean the person is at higher risk of developing it. However, this does not necessarily mean that if a family member has a condition, all related parties will develop it. It only shows there to be a likelihood but not certainty. Doctors recommend that knowing the family's mental health history

plays a role in identifying the risk of mental health challenges. As such, it helps individuals identify actions that will help reduce the risks and how to identify early warning signs.

Consequently, family history shows a likelihood of developing mental health disorders.

To identify whether an individual is at risk of experiencing mental health diseases, clinicians tend to order a diagnostic genetic test, among other tests. The tests are done on specific genes known to be the source of the illness. During the test, a search on several or a single gene strongly associated with the illness is identified. The findings enable the making of an informed healthcare decision. For example, among the most inherited mental condition is bipolar disorder. The disorder affects 1 to 4% of the general population. It is estimated that 70 to 90% of all cases relate to genetic factors (Navarro-Mateu et al., 2019). Genetic candidates that show the risk of developing the condition include gene mutations within ODZ4, GNG2, ITPR2, NCAN, *CACNA1C, TRANK1*, and ANK3. The mutations are inherited directly from parents. Therefore, it is evident that genetics has notable relation to mental health.

Despite the relationship between genetics and mental health, no mental disorder is 100% heritable on a genetic basis (Navarro-Mateu et al., 2019). Various factors create a likelihood of developing a specific disorder despite the absence or presence of genetic elements. Most disorders have multifactorial origins; some are environmental, while others are genetic.

Therefore, mental health illnesses are caused by various factors, none of which results from 100% genetic roots.

In summary, genetics has a notable role in mental health. Scientists and researchers have long recognized a probable relationship between family roots and mental health conditions.

Family history is among the best ways of determining the risk of mental disorders. Various

mutations directly inherited from parents closely relate to genetic factors. However, despite the relation between genetics and mental health, no mental disorder has 100% heritability or genetic basis.



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