

Psychiatric diagnoses scientifically meaningless? Why that criticism 'seems meaningless'

In this opinion piece, psychiatrist Samei Huda responds to a recent journal article published in Psychiatry Research that labeled psychiatric diagnoses as “scientifically meaningless”.

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The DSM-5 (and DSM -IV) states that it recognises that mental health problems do not necessarily exist in discrete categories but that categories are used for practical reasons. In fact, in general/ internal medicine many [conditions](#) are not clearly separate from each other, such as myeloproliferative diseases, autoimmune diseases, metabolic syndrome conditions and connective tissue disorders.

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The description of psychiatric diagnoses as “scientifically meaningless” seems meaningless – the criticisms in this paper can be applied to many general medical diagnoses and I doubt people regard them as “scientifically meaningless”. Psychiatric diagnoses are often heterogenous and descriptive rather than referring to a distinct type of disease process, but they can still be used in scientific research to give us information on treatment and prognosis. They are also interim, and we are waiting for superior diagnoses. They may not be suitable for other professionals in the way they work and other classification systems may be better for research on causes and mechanisms in certain scenarios. Nevertheless, they are still useful and similar in nature to many general medical diagnoses.

Read full, original post: [Are Psychiatric Diagnoses “Scientifically Meaningless” as Claimed?](#)