• individualistic cultures → affective symptoms are typical → symptoms of loneliness, isolation, and sadness
• collectivistic cultures → somatic symptoms are more common → headache

- Depression is expressed differently → lead to reporting bias → affect diagnosis and prevalence rate

➢ Sociocultural factors
  o Provided a new way of looking at depression because it showed that social and cultural factors → not only personal factors → contributed to the development of depression
  o Pointed out → how self-reporting of depressive episodes → affected the diagnosis and prevalence of abnormal behavior

➢ Conclusion
  o Fully understand how depression is caused → consider different aspects of the influences → including biological, cognitive and sociocultural factors → reliable and valid diagnosis + provide insight for professionals to treat the disorder

42. Discuss gender variations in prevalence of disorders.
➢ Prevalence: the measure of the total number of cases of the disorder in each population
➢ Affective disorder → Major depressive disorder (MDD)
  o Experiences of two weeks of either a depressed mood a loss of interest and pleasure
  o Diagnosis required 4 additional symptoms → insomnia, appetite disturbances, loss of energy, thoughts of suicide, difficulty concentrating

➢ It is often suggested that women are diagnosed as having depressive disorder significantly more frequently than men are

➢ Williams and Hargreaves (1995)
  o Statistical evidence → women are 2-3 times more likely to become clinically depressed than men
  o Therefore → this essay will discuss gender variations in prevalence of depression

➢ Difference in prevalence rates → socioeconomic and income differences
  o Economic status: women lower than men → the rates of depression causes by income differences instead of gender itself

➢ Brown and Harris (1978)
  o Found that low social status leads to increased exposure to vulnerability factors and provoking agents, whereas high social status was associated with increased exposure to protective factors and decreased exposure to provoking agents
    ▪ investigate how depression could be linked to social factors and stressful life-events in a sample of women
    ▪ 458 women in South London were surveyed on their daily life and depressive episodes
    ▪ The researcher focused on particular life events or particular difficulties faced by the women → rated in severity by researchers
  o Results
    ▪ 8% of women had become clinically depressed in the previous year
    ▪ Of these, 90% had experienced a serious life stress
  o Researchers identified three major factors that affected the development of depression.
    ▪ Provoking agents and vulnerability factors → provoked depression
    ▪ Lack of confiding relationship
    ▪ Loss of mother before 11
    ▪ More than three children under 14 at home
    ▪ Unemployment
    ▪ Provoking agents
      ▪ result in grief and hopelessness in vulnerable women with no social support
    ▪ Protective factors →
      ▪ A friend to confide → less likely to become depressed → lead to higher levels of self-esteem
  o However → Ensel (1982)
Compared the mean scores of men and women on a depression scale.
Controlled income level, education level and occupation.
Both studies → women more depressed mean scores than men when socioeconomic status indicators were taken into account.
Explain that → income differences are not the only cause for gender variations in prevalence of depression.

**Difference in prevalence rates → Reporting bias**
- Men are unwilling to admit and seek help for depressive symptoms.
- Men and women experience same → however depressive symptoms are perceived as feminine → men are less likely to admit.
- Barisky, Peekna & Borus (2001)
  - Argued that women and men seem to differ in their thresholds for judging and considering a given sensation to be unpleasant or bothersome → for labelling and describing the sensation as a symptom.
- King & Buchwald (1986)
  - Found men no less willing to disclose symptoms than women.
  - However → criticized for only using college students for participants → not representative.
- The argument on that gender variations in prevalence rates → remains controversial → need to seek support from studies.

**Difference in prevalence rates → different kinds of symptoms for both genders**
- Argued that men and women are equally susceptible to depression.
  - Men: acting out behaviors.
  - Women: sadness, passivity and crying.
- Cadoret & Winnower (1974)
  - Patients suffering from both depression and alcoholism → more often reported becoming depressed → at least 10 years after the start of alcoholism.
  - Showed that men showed more drinking behaviors → more linked with depression.
- Supported by → Egeland & Hostetter (1983).
  - Found that cultures where it is strictly prohibited alcohol consumption → no sex differences in depression.
- Justification for gender difference in prevalence of depression → due to their different symptoms shown.

**Many researches argue that biological caused > social influences in depression**

**Difference in prevalence rates → due to biological reasons in women**
- Argued that hormonal fluctuations strongly affect moods in women.
- Failed to support → Kessler (2001)
  - Gender difference first emerges in puberty.
  - Other experiences related to changes in sex hormones (pregnancy) → do not significantly influence major depression.
  - However → findings did not provide explanations for gender difference in prevalence rates.
- This argument may be refuted → such that environmental influences may play a larger role in such depression rate differences.

**Brings up the argument → Difference in prevalence rates → due to gender roles in relationships**
- Argued that women are more concerned with relationships → more vulnerable to despair and depression.
- Their self-assessment & sense of self-worth → based on the success in love relationships.
- Claim supported by → Gilligan (1982)
  - Large amount of evidence → a moral dilemma → women are more likely to worry about how the problem presented would affect relationships → whereas men are more likely to invoke rules of justice in solving problems.
  - However → criticized for using small samples → not representative → need to seek further support from studies using larger samples to make valid explanations on gender variations in depression rates.