Original Research Paper

Psychiatry

A STUDY TO EXPLORE THE FACTORS AFFECTING NON COMPLIANCE TO PSYCHOTROPHIC DRUGS OF PATIENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AS PERCEIVED BY THE FAMILY MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT   **BACKGROUND:** In any society, treatment for illness is part of a larger social and cultural universe that includes beliefs about the body, about other people and about the nature and usefulness of substances. Adherence to drug regimen is a very important factor for improvement. Non-compliance is a significant problem in all patient populations, from children to the elderly. It applies to nearly all chronic disease states and settings, and tends to worsen the longer a patient continues on drug therapy. Non-compliance is considered to be the major problem in the health services of both developed and developing countries. **OBJECTIVES:** Explore the factors affecting noncompliance of patients to psychotropic drugs among patients with mental illness as perceived by the family members .Materials and methods: Qualitative approach was used for the study. Study design selected was true experimental design. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select 20 family members in psychiatric OPD at Cardinal Psychiatric Centre, KOTTAYAM. Result :The study proved that various dimensions have major role in patient with non compliance.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION
Adherence to medication regimens has been monitored since the time of Hippocrates. It has become a focus of increasing concern in the treatment of psychiatric disorders in recent years Adherence to a medication regimen is generally defined as the extent to which patients take medications as prescribed by their health care providers. It includes data on dose taking (taking the prescribed number of pills each day) and the timing of doses (taking pills within a prescribed period). Non-adherence to treatment is the degree to which a patient does not carry out the clinical recommendations of a treating physician; Non-adherence is a significant problem in all patient populations, from children to elderly. Adherence rates are typically higher among patients with acute conditions, as compared to those with chronic conditions. This tends to worsen the longer a patient continues on drug therapy.

Medication noncompliance is thought to be a major factor in psychiatric hospitalizations. Many individuals with psychiatric disorders are hospitalized for an exacerbation of their mental illness, stabilized with medications, and then discharged home. At home, a large number fail to take their medications properly, if at all. Relapse often occurs and re-hospitalization follows**.** Therefore, patient noncompliance is an important issue due to its consistent association with severe ratings of psychopathology **.**

Patient education is clearly the favored way to promote compliance among mentally ill individuals **.** According to Falvo, patient education can be a key component in enabling patients to accurately follow the recommendations of the health professional. Patients cannot follow treatments and recommendations if they do not understand or accept them. Patient education also has been identified as an important preventive intervention to help break the cycle of multiple psychiatric re-hospitalizations **.**

MATHODOLOGY

Research Approach	:	Qualitative research approach was used for the study
Research Design	:	Phenomenological research design
Research Setting	:	Selected Psychiatric Hospital at Kottayam
Target Population	:	Family members who take care of patients with mental illness were attending psychiatric outpatient department in a selected hospital at Kottayam

Accessible Population:		Family members who take care of patients with mental illness were attending psychiatric outpatient department in a selected hospital during the period of data collection
Sampling technique	:	Non probability purposive sampling technique
Sample Size	:	30 samples were selected
Validity of the Tool	:	The tool was validated by 7 experts

The following tools were used to collect the data on the present study

Tool 1: Structured Questionnaire to elicit demographic variables .

Tool 2: Interview Schedulewith open ended questions regarding factors affecting non compliance to psychotropic drugs.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY WERE
Section 1:Description of sample characteristics
- With regard to the age of the sample 45.0% patients were below 20 years of age group, 35.0% patients were age between 41-50 And only 20%are above 51 years.
- Regarding the sex 45.0% of the patients were male and 55.0% were female,
- Concerning the education status 40.0%of them has high school education, 25.0% are graduates, 21% has higher secondary education and 14%of them has only prinmary education.
- When considering occupation 43% are homemakers ,35% are self-employee,20% are private employee and only 2% are government employee.
- Distribution of sampling according to income shows that 50% is having income of 10,000 to 19,999 whereas 20% ,17% and 13% are having income of >20,000,5001 to 9,999 and <5,000 respectively.
- With regard to the type of the family 75% lived as a nuclear family and 25% lived with joint family.
- When considering the residential area of the sample 60% of them were staying in rural areas and other 40%were in urban area.
- With regard 80% patients were getting external support and other 20% of patients are not getting any support.
- All 100%had history of hospitalization,

Section 1: factors affecting non compliance to psychotropic drugs.
- The noncompliance of patients with major mental illnesses were explored and categorized under the eight

dimensions, themes and sub themes.
- The identified dimensions were stigma and ego, side effects, mental state, communal, economical, mystical, involvement in caring and health services.

The findings have highlighted the following data, under the following dimensions
- stigma all 100% samples had feeling of ashamed regarding the mental illness.
- 30.0% of them hiding their illness.
- 85.0% samples are faceing societal ridicule.
- All (100%) had sleep disturbance.
- 85.0% had irregular dietary pattern,
- 100% of them had various pain and physically abused by the patient and altered health maintenance was also expressed by 85.0% patients under somatic aspect.

In dimension of mental state
- 100% patients had feeling of worries/sadness, fear and frustration due to various reasons and experienced burnout.
- Under communal aspect, 20.0% had normal relationship with others and 50.0% faced lack of support from relatives and 30.0% faced lack of support from neighbors'.
- 80.0% of the patients experienced financial difficulties,
- 60.0% of them were irregular to work, under the economical dimension.
- 80.0% expressed their faith in god and sixteen 80.0% had conducted prayers.
- Under the aspect of involvement in caring, 20.0% were getting the complete/partial care from the family members, 30.0% were getting the supportive care and 50.0%patients got only guidance.
- 20.0% of the family members were spending their most of the time with the patient, 30.0% of them were spending part time and 50.0% family members were spending very little time to take care of the patients.
- 10.0% patients getting free treatment from this hospital.
- 65.0% satisfied with the hospital services
- Only 15.0% patient received pension from the government 25.0% patients received disability benefit and 60%of them didn't get any benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY
a) A detailed study can be conducted among larger sample.
b) A similar study can be replicated in rural area.
c) A descriptive study can be done to assess the attitude towards mental illness and social issues, and its relation to compliance.
d) A comparative study can be conducted between the patients with mental illnesses and patient with physical illnesses.
e) The same study can be done using quantitative approach.

LIMITATIONS
- The study was conducted in a single setting, generalization of findings was limited.
- The study was limited to the family members who are caring for the patients with noncompliance to psychotropic drugs.
- The time required for each family members were different because of consultation and patient's behavior.

CONCLUSION
This study explored the various dimensions of the factors affecting non compliance to psychotropic drugs among patients with mental illness as perceived by the family members. So many factors affected the patient's physical, mental and social health. Not only mentally ill patients, their family members also need special attention and guidance from the health services.

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