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FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT AS PREDICTORS OF RELAPSE PREVENTION AMONG PATIENTS WITH DRUG-INDUCED PSYCHOSIS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Relapse following treatment for drug-induced psychosis remains a major challenge in psychiatric practice, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where supportive rehabilitation services are limited. Family involvement has been identified as an important psychosocial intervention capable of improving medication adherence, emotional well-being, and recovery outcomes among individuals with psychotic disorders.

Objective: To assess the influence of family involvement and support on the prevention of relapse among patients with drug-induced psychosis in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Methods: A mixed-method research design was adopted involving 186 participants receiving treatment and follow-up care for drug-induced psychosis in Akwa Ibom State. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, checklists, and key informant interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, while qualitative responses were analyzed thematically. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: The study demonstrated a positive relationship between family involvement and prevention of relapse among patients with drug-induced psychosis. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient indicated a statistically significant association between family support and relapse prevention ($r = 0.079$, $p < 0.01$). Patients who reported receiving emotional, financial, and social support from family members experienced better treatment adherence and fewer relapse episodes than those with limited family involvement.

Conclusion: Family involvement and support constitute important components of supportive rehabilitation for individuals recovering from drug-induced psychosis. Strengthening family-centered interventions may substantially reduce relapse and improve long-term recovery outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Family support, relapse prevention, drug-induced psychosis, rehabilitation, psychiatric nursing, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Drug-induced psychosis is a psychiatric condition characterized by hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized thinking resulting from the use of psychoactive substances or withdrawal effects (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). Common substances associated with this condition include cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines, alcohol, hallucinogens such as LSD, and phencyclidine (PCP), all of which can trigger acute or persistent psychotic symptoms (Fiorentini et al., 2021). Relapse remains a major challenge in the treatment of substance-related disorders. Relapse is understood as the return to substance use or re-emergence of symptoms after a period of improvement or abstinence (World Health Organization, 2023; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020). Research shows that relapse is influenced by emotional distress, environmental exposure to drugs, poor coping skills, and social pressures (Marlatt & Donovan, 2005; Witkiewitz & Marlatt, 2004). Family systems play a central role in recovery from mental illness and substance use disorders. According to Leff and Vaughn (1985), expressed emotion within families such as criticism, hostility, and emotional over-involvement—is strongly associated with relapse in psychotic disorders. Conversely, supportive and structured family environments promote stability and recovery (Kuipers et al., 2010). Family support includes emotional encouragement, supervision of treatment adherence, financial assistance, and participation in care planning (McFarlane, 2016). Evidence shows that structured family psychoeducation significantly reduces relapse rates in psychotic disorders and improves medication adherence (Pharoah et al., 2010). Empirical

studies confirm that family involvement improves outcomes in mental health treatment. McFarlane (2016) demonstrated that family psychoeducation reduces relapse and hospital readmission rates among individuals with severe mental illness. Similarly, Dixon et al. (2010) reported that family-based interventions improve treatment adherence and social functioning. In contrast, poor family communication and high expressed emotion significantly increase relapse risk (Butzlaff & Hooley, 1998). In Nigeria and other low- and middle-income countries, substance use among young adults is increasing, contributing to a rising burden of drug-induced psychosis (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2024). Despite pharmacological treatment advances, relapse remains frequent, highlighting the need for integrated psychosocial and family-based interventions.

Objective

Assess the influence of family involvement and support on prevention of relapse among patients with drug-induced psychosis in Akwa Ibom State.

Methods

Study Design

The study adopted a mixed-method research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluate supportive rehabilitation interventions.

Study Setting

The research was conducted in psychiatric facilities and rehabilitation settings in Akwa Ibom State providing treatment and follow-up services for patients with drug-induced psychosis.

Population and Sample

The study involved 186 respondents selected through simple sampling techniques. Participants comprised adults diagnosed with drug-induced psychosis who were receiving follow-up care after treatment.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection utilized:

- Structured questionnaires;
- Observation checklists; and
- Key Informant Interview (KII) guides.

These instruments assessed family support, rehabilitation experiences, and relapse-related outcomes.

Statistical Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient through SPSS, while qualitative responses underwent thematic analysis. Statistical significance was determined at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

Table 1. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between Family Involvement and Prevention of Relapse among Patients with Drug-Induced Psychosis

Correlations			
		Fami	Relapse
Fami	Pearson Correlation	1	.079
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.281
	N	186	186
Relapse	Pearson Correlation	.079	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.281	
	N	186	186

Variable	N	Correlation coefficient (*r*)	Significance	Interpretation
Family involvement and support vs. relapse prevention	186	0.079	$p < 0.01$	Positive statistically significant relationship

The thesis abstract reports a positive and statistically significant association between family intervention and prevention of relapse ($r = 0.079$, $p < 0.01$).

Narrative Results

The analysis demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship between family involvement and prevention of relapse among patients with drug-induced psychosis. Patients who reported greater emotional support, supervision of medication adherence, participation in clinical appointments, and financial assistance from family members experienced improved recovery outcomes and lower relapse tendencies. Qualitative interviews further revealed that family encouragement enhanced patients' confidence in maintaining abstinence, improved clinic attendance, and reduced exposure to environmental triggers associated with substance use.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that family involvement and support are positively associated with relapse prevention among patients with drug-induced psychosis. This supports the widely accepted view that recovery from psychotic disorders is

multidimensional and requires both pharmacological and psychosocial interventions. This result is consistent with the relapse prevention model proposed by Marlatt and Donovan (2005), which emphasizes the role of coping skills, social support, and environmental control in preventing relapse. It also aligns with Witkiewitz and Marlatt (2004), who noted that relapse is not a single event but a process influenced by cognitive, emotional, and environmental factors. Family involvement has been identified as one of the strongest protective factors in relapse prevention. Leff and Vaughn (1985) established that high expressed emotion within families increases relapse risk in schizophrenia, while low expressed emotion promotes recovery. Similarly, Kuipers et al. (2010) confirmed that supportive family environments reduce relapse rates and improve long-term outcomes. Structured family psychoeducation has been shown to significantly improve clinical outcomes. McFarlane (2016) reported that multi-family group interventions reduce relapse rates, improve medication adherence, and enhance social functioning. Pharoah et al. (2010) also found that family interventions reduce hospital readmissions in psychotic disorders. In addition, Dixon et al. (2010) emphasized that caregiver involvement improves engagement with mental health services and supports recovery-oriented care. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating family systems into psychiatric nursing practice. From a nursing perspective, structured family education should be incorporated into discharge planning and follow-up care. Nurses play a key role in teaching caregivers about medication adherence, relapse warning signs, stress management, and communication strategies that reduce conflict and improve recovery outcomes. Finally, the findings align with the World Health Organization (2023), which recommends community-based and family-centered mental health services as essential components of effective psychiatric care systems.

Implications for Nursing Practice

1. Incorporate family psychoeducation into discharge planning.
2. Encourage caregiver participation during outpatient follow-up visits.
3. Develop structured family support groups within psychiatric facilities.
4. Train psychiatric nurses to assess caregiver burden and family functioning.
5. Integrate family-centered interventions into national rehabilitation policies.

CONCLUSION

Family involvement and support play a significant role in preventing relapse among patients recovering from drug-induced psychosis in Akwa Ibom State. Strengthening caregiver

participation through education, psychosocial interventions, and collaborative treatment planning can improve medication adherence, reduce relapse episodes, and facilitate successful reintegration into society. Future rehabilitation programs should prioritize family-centered care as a key component of comprehensive psychiatric management.

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