A STUDY ON QUALITY OF LIFE IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

ABSTRACT

Background

Few studies have explored the Quality of Life among patients with schizophrenia. In the treatment of schizophrenia, the subjective quality of life is an important outcome.

Aims - To determine the quality of life in patients with schizophrenia in Indian population, and to compare it with individuals without mental illness in general population. This study aimed to identify factors which influenced the quality of life in patients with schizophrenia.

Methodology - This was a Cross sectional study in the Institute of Mental health- a Teaching institute and tertiary care referral centre involving WHOQOL-BREF questionnaire to evaluate the quality of life. Further Positive and negative syndrome scale, Calgary depressive scale for schizophrenia, Beck’s cognitive insight scale, WHODAS-II scale, UKU side effects scale, Social support questionnaire were all employed to study the psychopathology, insight, side
effects and social support in the patient group. Descriptive statistics and tests of correlation, multivariate analysis using SPSS software-20 were performed.

**Results**- The quality of life in patients with schizophrenia was found to be lower than the individuals without mental illness. The variables which showed a strong association with quality of life in these patients were gender, age, employment, socio economic background, education, duration and phase of illness. Depression and negative symptoms had a strong correlation with quality of life. Disability and insight also influenced the quality of life.

**Conclusion**- It was concluded that it is imperative to study the quality of life in patients with schizophrenia. Depressive and negative symptoms has to be catered to decrease lowering of quality of life. Early treatment and reduction of symptoms also is important an increased duration and active phase of illness causes a decline in quality of life. Disability prevention by early recovery and rehabilitation measures is very important to increase the treatment outcome and thereby the quality of life. The knowledge of these factors in these patients should be crucial to implement health policies and psychosocial rehabilitation programs focused on improving the quality of life of these patients.

**Keywords** : Quality of Life, Schizophrenia, WHOQOL – BREF, Psychopathology and Insight.