

Support Exercised by People with Mental Illness from Early Times to the Present Era

Shaina Chhabra*

Student, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, New Delhi, India

Abstract: This paper presents an overview on support exercised by people with mental illness from early times to the present era.

Keywords: Cognitive behavioral therapy, Mental health, Mental illness, Support.

1. Introduction

Mental health problems are increasing by leaps and bounds in the modern-day world. It is on the rise especially among adolescents and young adults. Although references to mental health and problems is found in the books long before the 20th century, mental health as a field came to existence in 1946 when the International Health Conference, held in New York, established the World Health Organization and a Mental Health Association London.

Mental Health, to state briefly, includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects a person's ability to think and act in everyday life. From performing functions of the body to taking mundane decisions, the mind controls every part of a person's life. Despite holding monumental importance, mental health is treated much differently than physical health. This disparity can take many shapes and forms, ranging from negative social perceptions to discrimination in health coverage for mental health. This study aims to focus on the stigma around

mental health, prevailing from early times to the contemporary society.

There are treatments in the form of medication and communication that are used to combat mental health conditions. Lately, due to the COVID-19, online cognitive behavioural therapy has been introduced with the advancement of technology. Henceforth, the study also focuses on whether online therapy is as effective as live or direct therapy.

2. Research Questions

1. What have been the attitudinal problems towards the issue of mental health in the society from the start?
2. How many people suffering from any mental disorder are getting supported by their family and friends?
3. Are therapies (e.g., cognitive behavioural therapy) delivered via digital technology as effective as those delivered face-to-face?

3. Research Hypothesis

A. Research question-1

- During the 1800s, mentally ill people were secluded in mental asylums away from the society and were

Table 1
Literature Review

S. No.	Authors	Name of the Study	Main Findings
1.	Thalappillil Mathew Celine & Jimmy Antony	A Study on Mental Disorders: 5-year Retrospective Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Total of 7908 mental disorder cases reported in the medical college hospital, 70.36% being males and 29.64% being females. > Most cases in the age group of 30-44 years. > Mental disorders were reported more in males than females each year. > Most of the cases were mood disorders.
2.	John Hopkins Medicine	Depression and Other Mental Illness Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > In any given 1-year period, 9.5 percent of the population suffer from a depressive illness. > Most individuals with depression seek care from general internists and other primary care providers; few seek care from mental health specialists.
3.	MS Bhatia and A Goya	Anxiety disorders in children and adolescents: Need for early detection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Common anxiety disorders among children have mean prevalence rates between 2.2% and 3.6%. > Agoraphobia (1.5%) and post-traumatic stress disorder (1.5%) are less prevalent, whereas panic and obsessive-compulsive disorders are relatively rare (i.e., below 1%). > Girls have higher prevalence compared to boys, and this difference gets accentuated with development and reaches 2-3:1 by adolescence.
4.	YC Janardhan Reddy, Naren P. Rao and Sumit Khanna	An overview of Indian research in obsessive compulsive disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The study found lifetime prevalence of 0.6%. > History of suicidal attempt was reported in 27% of the subjects. Major depression, unmarried status and hopelessness were the major risk factors for suicidal behavior.

*Corresponding author: shainachhabra128@gmail.com

beaten to isolation.

- In Asia, where people are generally more sensitive towards their cultural values, mental illnesses are often stigmatized and seen as a source of shame.
- Even if they try to address their issues, they are contemplated to ask for attention by faking their illness.

B. Research question-2

- Null Hypothesis: There are not many people who are being supported by their family and friends.
- Alternative Hypothesis: About 70% of people with a mental disorder are being supported by their family and friends in seeking treatment. Families of some of the people with mental disorder are even unaware of their condition.

C. Research question-3

- Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in effectiveness of online therapy and face-to-face therapy in treating mental illness.
- Alternative Hypothesis: A greater proportion of patients (about 57%) find online therapy more effective mainly due to lack of hassle of commuting and scheduling and problems like social anxiety and distancing.

4. Variables Used

A. Research question-1

- Independent variable (X): Total no. of people who suffer from symptoms of any mental illness.
- Dependent variable (Y): No. of people who have faced biasness in their lives.

B. Research question-2

- Independent variable (X): Total no. of people who suffer from symptoms of any mental illness.
- Dependent variable (Y): No. of people being supported by their family in seeking treatment.
- Extraneous variable: No. of people who have been clinically diagnosed and are seeking treatment.

C. Research question-3

- Independent variable (X): Total no. of patients treated using cognitive behavioural therapy.
- Dependent variable (Y): No. of patients treated through online cognitive behavioural therapy.

5. Type of Data

- The study focuses on both qualitative and quantitative

aspects. The attitudinal problems of the society towards mental health are the qualitative part, whereas the no. of people getting supported by their family and the effectiveness of online therapy constitute the quantitative part. Hence, the research is more of the mixed type of research.

- Half of the data presented is secondary data. The information derived is from already established sources. The number of people being supported by their family and the number of people who find online cognitive behavioural therapy effective is derived from survey of few people online and the results are, thus, taken from primary data.
- Therefore, to sum up, the whole research is a mixed type of research containing information derived from both primary and secondary data.

6. Conclusion

- The research has focused on the prejudice people with mental conditions have been facing from the start and whether their family is being supportive through dealing with these conditions. It can help the society get familiar with the problems being faced by the people with mental disorders and make their attitude more empathetic rather than prejudiced towards these people.
- The research also focuses on the effectiveness of online therapy and whether people prefer online therapy to face-to-face therapy. It helps in better understanding of preferences of people and the reason they choose one over the other. It can, thus, lead to updating the ways of giving therapy according to the needs of every patient.
- Mental health is a sensitive issue nowadays as one out of every third person is suffering from a kind of mental disorder. By spreading more awareness regarding mental health, people will start considering their mental health conditions just as important as they consider their physical health and will be encouraged to seek treatment, if they face any of the symptoms, with better support.

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