

Functional Impairment and Social Support of Persons with Schizophrenia and Bipolar Affective Disorder: A comparative study

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Abstract

Psychiatric illness is the health condition which is characterized by gross disruption in person's cognition, feeling, mood or behaviour and also affects the daily functioning. This may result into decreased ability in coping with everyday demands of life. Mental illness reveals an interruption in the biological, psychological or developmental progression which is essential for mental performance. Mental health problems can become chronic and unceasing states when there is substantial and considerable psychosocial morbidity which not only can influence the individual's family life but also can make an impact on their social life. Persons with psychiatric illnesses need help and support from family which provides physical and psychological strength to face with stressful events and decreases their discomfort. Objective of the study was to assess and compare the functional impairment and social support in persons with schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder. A two group design was employed. A sample of 60 persons out of which 30 with schizophrenia and 30 with bipolar affective disorder fulfilling the selection criteria administered Weiss Functional Impairment Scale by Weiss (2000) and Social Support Questionnaire by Nehra and Kulhara (1987). Data was analyzed by using t- test. Results Indicated significant differences between persons with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder on most of the domains of functional impairment and on social support. It was concluded that persons with bipolar affective disorder had less functional impairment than persons with schizophrenia but had more social support.

Keywords: Functional impairment, social support, psychiatric illness