

Efficacy of Group Therapy in the Psycho-Social Management of Patients with Mental Illness in Federal Medical Centre, Owo Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract:-

Introduction:- To escape isolation, an individual must become a member of a group in which he/she must be able to relate easily with other people which will help the individual to use the going experience to solve his/her psychological, emotional or social problem. Therefore, this study investigated the efficacy of group therapy in the psychosocial management of parents with mental illness.

Methodology:

This is an experimental research design. The subject consisted of sixty (60) mentally ill patients that were group into experimental and control groups. Three (3) null hypotheses were showed tested at 0.05 level of significance using chi-square test using SPSS window 17.

Results:

The results of the three (3) null hypotheses showed that:-

1. There was significant efficacy of group therapy in the psychosocial management of Patients with mental illness ($\chi^2=19.54$, $df=1$; $P<0.05$)
2. There was significant difference in the level of mental health of patients who attended Group Therapy sessions ($\chi^2 = 13.46$, $df = 1$; $P<0.05$)
3. There was significant difference in the recovery of patients who attended group therapy sessions and who did not attend group therapy sessions ($\chi^2 = 37.6$, $df = 1$; $P<0.05$).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research it was concluded that intensive group therapy should be given to the mentally ill patients by the health care givers most importantly psychiatric nurses and clinical psychologist.

Key words: Efficacy, Group therapy, psychosocial managements, Mental illness.

Introduction

An isolated person is sick in mind and will exhibit disorders of behaviour and thought. He/She will have an impaired capacity for maintaining his or her equilibrium under the ordinary shock of life. To escape isolation therefore an individual must be able to relate easily with other people. Such a relationship with other members of a group will among other things help the individual to use group experience to solve his/her psychological, emotional or social problems (Mojoyinola, 1992). Therefore, it behaves the mentally ill individuals to interact well with members of their groups in order to get over their mental illness on time. However, this is only possible in a treatment milieu which provides opportunity for the sick persons to verbalize their problems or ensures that they are helped to gain insight into their various problems and how to overcome them. This kind of treatment will help patients to understand their problems better and adjust or cope successfully with them (Noppen et al, 1997). Several studies have indeed document ed significant relationship between group therapy and mental health (Glatzer 1995; Mc Farlane et al, 1996; Noppen et al; 1997). Haddock et al. (2009), identified that benefits associated with group interventions to include reduced time in hospital, increased knowledge of the illness and of individual response patterns, enhanced medication compliance and improved social and vocational functioning. The effectiveness of group therapy in the psycho-social management of personality disorders was in the study conducted by Budman, Amette and Joclyn in 1995. They, in the study on time limited group psychotherapy for patients with mental disorders reported that subjects who remained in the therapy until the formal completion of the group therapy, experienced many areas of change. They reported substantial changes in self-esteem, symphatology and diagnosability in the Axis II of the DSM-III-R. Lanza et al. (1995), in their study on whether psychodynamic group. Psychotherapy decrease physical assents of aggressive in patients found that after follow-up, group subjected to group psychotherapy express less aggressive behaviour. The control subjects expressed increased anger at follow-up.

Similarly, Meager et al. (1997), evaluated the effectiveness of group psychotherapy for post-partum depression (PD). They carried out their study among mothers suffering from post-partum depression and found a significant improvement in post-partum depression.

Volkmar, Baccum, Shakir and Pfefferbaum (1981), found that contrary to expectations, the manic depressive patients worked well in a homogenous therapy group; they also found that the common experience of manic-depressive illness made the episodes of hypomania or depression much less disruptive than would have been in a case of heterogeneous therapy group. In the same vein, Keller et al; (1982), investigated the effectiveness of group therapy in the treatment of patients with profound gender identity disturbances, they found out that group treatment helped a group of patients to consolidate their cross-gender identity and were able to live comfortably in their role.

It also led to decrease in psychiatric symptoms (lessened guilty and anxiety feelings). They equally found that there was also a decrease in the patients' detachment, suspicion, hostility, self confidence, intellectualizing, acting-out, and affective inslity. According to Nice (2009), twenty six trial trials compared family intervention with standard care, metal analysis focusing on critical outcomes found benefits from family intervention on symptom seventy at the and a treatment and at follow-up and a reduction in rehospitalization rates during the first year of treatment and reduction of duration of rehospitalization.

A subsequent Italian study randomized 40 families to 12 months of systemic family intervention reduced response during the treatment period although this was not sustained at follow-up (Bressi, Monenti, Frigia, Porcellina & Invenizzi, 2008).

Based on different finding from literature, this study was to explore the efficacy of Group Therapy in the psychosocial management of psychiatric patients.

Objectives: The objectives of this study are to:

- ❖ Determine the efficiency of group therapy in the psychosocial management of patients with mental illness.
- ❖ Establish the level of improvement of those expose to group therapy over those that were not expose to it.
- ❖ Explore the recovery rate of the patients exposed to treatment over there not exposed to treatment.

Statement of Problems:

There is no gain-saying the fact that prompt medical treatment and adequate nursing care provide immediate cure for mental illness. However, such treatments do not ensure proper cure, as many psychiatric patients do relapse into their former mental status after being discharged from the psychiatric hospitals. Therefore, this study is to investigate the extent that the group therapy can be used to improve the mental health, of the patients, reduce symptoms of mental illness, strengthens the deteriorated ego of the patients and enhance recovery from mental illness.

Research Hypothesis:

Based on the objectives of the study and the statement of the problem, three null hypotheses were generated and tested.

- i. There is no significant difference in the efficacy of group therapy on the psychosocial management of patients with mental illness.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the level of mental health of patients exposed to the group therapy and those that are not exposed to it.
- iii. There is no significant difference in the recovery rate of patient exposed to group therapy and those without group therapy.

Methodology

Research Setting:

Federal Medical Centre Owo

Study Population

The study population consisted of all patients irrespective of diagnosis, were purposively selected for the study. The psychiatry disorders range from schizophrenia, drug abuse, bipolar disorder to neurtotic problems. The patients were grouped into experimental and central groups. The experimental group consisted of 30 patients, while the central group was equally made of 30 patients. A total of 60 patients constituted the sample size selected for the study.

Instrumentation

Two set of instrument were used for the study which were:

- Psychosocial Assessment and Group Therapy Evaluation (PSAGTEQ)
The instrument was developed by Steele et al. (1972). It contained 40 items. The questionnaire was divided into four (4) sections. The sections contained items soliciting for information on the demographic data of the patients, items measuring level of the participation in group therapy mental status and level of recovery of the patients. This instrument was revalidated using cronbach's coefficient. It yielded 0.75.
- Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE)
The scale was designed by Diener and Biswas-Diener (2009) which solicited information from patients on heir Negative and Positive well being. The scale ranges between strongly agree (7), agree (6) slightly agree (5), Mixed (4), slightly disagree (3) and strongly disagree (1). It has 3 sections – scales of positive thinking experience, psychological well – being and scale of Negative Experience.
The reliability of the instrument yielded 0.613 on the spearman Brown coefficient analysis.

Procedure

Participation in group therapy was made voluntarily for the patients. Thirty patients (experimental group) who indicated their willingness and readiness to participate in the group therapy were engaged in the therapy sessions twice weekly for a period of 10weeks by the psychiatry nurses, clinical psychologist and the researcher. The therapy included group discussion, debate, role plays, playing music and dance therapy. At the end of each therapy sessions, questions related to the illness or problems of the patients were asked and each patient was allowed to answer them in the group. The behaviour and responses of each patients at each of the therapeutic sessions were noted and the attention of the patient was drawn to the meaning contributions and useful suggestions were made or solutions were rendered by any member of the group. The dancing steps of patients were equally observed.

At the end of the tenth week, nurses, clinical psychologist and the researchers evaluated the patients with the research instruments. The control group was not involved in the therapeutic intervention, for the member of the control group not to feel isolated; they were only involved in an ordinary discussion with the researchers twice weekly for 10weeks.

Method of Data Analysis

The instruments collected were sorted out manually for proper filling. The analysis was carried out using Statistical Product and Service Solutions Window Version 17 on Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant difference in the efficacy of group therapy on the psycho social management of patients with mental illness.

In testing this hypothesis, table 1 was used.

Table 1 – χ^2 test showing the efficacy of group therapy in the psycho social management of patients with mental illness.

The predication of the hypothesis 1 that there is no significance difference in the efficacy of group therapy in psycho social management of mental illness was put to test using Chi-square statistics. Table 1 showed the efficacy of group therapy in the psycho social management of patient with mental illness. The result obtained from the Chi-square analysis indicated that there was significant efficacy of group therapy in the psycho social management of patient with mental illness $\chi^2 = 19.54$, $df = 1$, $p (0.05)$.

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant difference in the level of mental health of patient exposed to the therapy and those not exposed to the group therapy.

Table 2: χ^2 test showing difference in level of mental health of patients.

The predication of the second hypothesis was put to test by using Chi-square statistics. This was based in level of symptoms experienced by the patients in both experimental and control groups. Table 2, depicted difference in level of mental health of patients in experimental and control group. The result obtained from the test indicated that the mental health of the patient who attended group therapy sessions was significantly different from mental health of those patients who did not ($\chi^2 = 13.46$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) the result did not support the null hypothesis and was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 3 states thus “there is no significant difference in the recovery rate of patient exposed to group therapy and those not exposed to it.

Table 3 – χ^2 test showing in recovery patients.

The predication of the hypothesis 3 was put to test using Chi-square (χ^2) analysis using the scores obtained on items measuring the recovery in the two groups of patient were compared. Table 3 showed the difference in the recovery of patient in experimental and central groups. The result obtained from the test indicated that there was significant difference in the recovery of patient who attended group therapy season and those who did not ($\chi^2 = 37.6$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) therefore, the third hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

In testing the hypothesis 1, it was discovered that the patient exposed to group therapy showed significant effect of group therapy in psycho social management of patient with mental illness. The finding supported the testing of Budman et al. (1996) that group treatment is promising mode of intervention for those with personality disorders. It was equally consistent with the finding of Golstein (1996) that psycho education and multiple family groups were effective in preventing relapses among the psychotic patients. It was also consistent with NICE (2009) that family intervention reduces symptom severity and re-hospitalization rate during the first year of treatment and reduction of duration of hospitalization. Several studies supported this findings (C+latzer, 1995, Mcfarlane et al. 1996, Noppen et al. 1957) Haddock et al (2009) identified benefits associated with group interventions to reduce time in hospital, increased knowledge of the illness and of individual response patterns, enhanced medication compliance and improved social and vocational functioning.

In testing the second hypothesis, it was discovered that the mental health of patients who attended group therapy seasons was much improved or better than those who did not. This finding was consistent with Dixon et al. (1995), that interventions with multi family groups that include the patient reduced the rate patients relapse and improved his functioning. The finding supported that of Bressi et al (2008) that the family intervention reduced relapse during the treatment period. The finding was consistent with that of Keller (1982), that group therapy reduced symptoms of psychiatric illness among patient with profound gender identity disturbances.

The hypothesis three that was tested showed group therapy enhanced recovery of the patients, or improved the conditions of the patient who attended group therapy sessions more than those who did not. This result was in agreement with Keller et al. (1982) that found group treatment helped a group of patients to consolidate their cross-gender identity and were able to live comfortably in their roles it also led to decrease in psychiatric symptoms (lessened guilty and anxiety feelings). The findings was corroborated that of Lanza et al (1995), that group therapy helped aggressive in-patients to control their anger, show less aggressive behaviour and enhanced their coping with aggressive impulses.

It was also consistent with the finding of Mcfarlane et al. (1996), that patients who received psycho-education multiple group family treatment consistently showed trends towards positive symptom reduction, medication compliance and dosage reduction, then those who received psycho-educational single family treatment.

Conclusion

It is not an exaggeration to say that the group therapy was efficacious in the psychosocial management of patients with mental illness. Such efficacy was seen in the enhancement of the mental health of the patients and in their recovery from mental illness. It is imperative therefore, that intensive psycho therapy needs to be given mentally ill patients by health care givers. To this end, the government or the hospital management board should provide adequate personal and recreational facilities in the various psychiatric units or hospitals.

Implication Of Study For Mental Health Nursing Practice

Effective psycho therapy in any form (group, therapy, individual therapy, and family therapy) championed by a trained professionals such as nurse is committed to help mentally ill to address a variety of issues and reach a range of therapeutic goals.

Hence the findings indicated that group therapy helps in foster psychosocial support and direction for members suffering from save mental disorders.

Secondly, discussing their problems with therapist that offered genuine therapy also gave the respondents sense of belonging and encouragement which they believe allaying the fear of rejection.

Lastly, since the study also revealed that recovery rate between the participants and non-participants was different, group therapy should be a continuous process for psychiatric nurses and psychologist to promote early recovery and prevention of relapse for mentally ill individuals.

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Table: 1 χ^2 test showing the efficacy group therapy in the psycho-social management of patients with mental illness.

Treatment groups	Responses		Total	d.f	χ^2 cal	χ^2 cnt	p
	Yes	No					
Experimental group (n=30)	82	43	125				
Central group (n=30)	140	20	160	1	19.54	3.84	0.05
Total	222	63	285				

χ^2 19.54, df =1, p<0.05.

Table: 2 χ^2 test showing different in level of mental health of the patients.

Treatment group	fo	F4	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^2$	Fo-fe fe	df	χ^2 cal	χ^2 cnt	p
Experimental group(n=30)	294	342	48	2308	6.73	1			0.05
Central group (n=30)	392	342	48	2304	6.73				

$\chi^2 = 13.46$, df=1, p < 0.05

Table: 3 text showing difference in recovery of patients.

Treatment group	fo	Fe	Fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^2$	(Fo-fe) fe	df	χ^2 cal	χ^2 cnt	p
Experimental group(n=30)	53.1	72.5	18.8	353.44	18.8	1	37.6	3.84	0.05
Central group (n=30)	91.3	72.5	18.8	353.44	18.8				

$X^2 = 37.6$, df = 1, p< 0.05.