ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Prevalence of Mental Illness among Youths in Ogun State, Southwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Mental health issues continue to be a serious public health concern, affecting people's wellbeing and ability to operate, despite advances in research and raised awareness. Mental illness imposes a substantial public health burden, affecting individuals, families and communities at large. Mental disorders are often stigmatized, leading to discrimination, social exclusion and in worse case, suicide. This stigma prevents individuals from seeking help and hinders the provision of appropriate support. Based on this premise this study investigated the prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State, Nigeria. Biopsychosocial Model, Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT), Psychodynamic theory, Social Learning Theory and The Stress-Diathesis Model were used as the framework. The survey design of the descriptive correlational typed was adopted. The population of the study were 225 nurses at Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North, Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro, and Abeokuta South and Edijalo Health Service Limited Abeokuta North, Ogun State and total enumeration was used as the sampling technique. Questionnaire was the instrument used with a reliability of (α= 0.761). The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation. From the characteristics of the respondents, the majority of respondents were female (85%), Diploma had the highest number for qualification (52%), 42.7% were NO2 . The prevalence of mental illness among youths is Severe (x=3.53) and patients were between 18-40 years. The most prevalent type of mental illness among youths was Schizophrenia and Substance use disorder moderately (x=2.72), The study concluded that the prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State has been assessed as severe, indicating a significant level of mental health issues among this demographic.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health denotes a condition of overall well-being wherein an individual recognizes their capabilities, effectively manages routine stressors, engages in productive endeavors, and contributes to the welfare of their community. It encompasses emotional, psychological, and social facets, shaping cognitive processes, emotions, and behaviors (World Health Organization (WHO), 2021). The intricate interplay of genetic, biological, environmental, and psychosocial elements collectively influences mental health. Factors such as biological predispositions, life experiences, trauma, family history, and the availability of social support systems contribute to the dynamic nature of mental well-being (NIMH, 2021).

Mental health disorders encompass conditions affecting cognition, emotions, behavior, and overall functionality. Prevalent disorders include anxiety disorders, mood disorders (e.g., depression and bipolar disorder), schizophrenia, eating disorders, and substance use disorders (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration SAMHSA, 2021). The prevalence of mental disorders has been immense, and a greater number of life's mental disorders occur before adulthood, with 50% or more occurring by the age of 14 years (Javed, 2021). Traumatic stress has been known to affect psychological development in adolescents and has led to severe impairments in adulthood (Barboza, 2018; Lee *et al.,* 2020).

Mental health conditions are estimated to cost the global economy over \$1 trillion per year in lost productivity (World Health Organization, WHO 2020).In Nigeria, around 20%–30% of the populace experiences mental health issues (Suleiman, 2016). Mental disorders have also been identified as significant risk factors for both suicidal behavior and suicidal ideation, especially among younger adult depressed patients (Pompilli *et al.,* 2015). Suicide is a major health problem, and the global suicide mortality rate amounts to 1.4% of all deaths worldwide. Most suicides are related to psychiatric disease, with depression, substances use disorders and psychosis being the most relevant risk factors (Bachmann, 2018).

Mental health issues continue to be a serious public health concern, affecting people's wellbeing and ability to operate, despite advances in research and raised awareness. Mental illness imposes a substantial public health burden, affecting individuals, families and communities at large. Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and substance use disorders are just few examples of conditions that affect a significant proportion of the global population. According to Fatiregun and Kumapay (2014), mental illnesses like depression are the fourth most common source of total disease burden and the primary cause of disability worldwide.Global Burden of Disease Study in 2017 estimated that the one-year prevalence of anxiety disorders worldwide was approximately 7.3%. It is estimated that around 284 million people worldwide had an anxiety disorder. The prevalence of bipolar disorder varies across countries, with estimates ranging from 0.3% to 1.5% of the population.

There are very few studies on the prevalence of mental health in Ogun State. This study aimed to investigate the prevalence and the most prevalent type of mental illness among youths in Ogun State, located in the South West region of Nigeria. Therefore, this study intends to provide knowledge on prevalence of mental disease in Ogun State. Studying the prevalence of mental illness among youth is significant for understanding the scope and disease burden in Ogun State as well as providing insights and base for further studies on mental illness.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research method of a correlational type. This method prevented the researcher from manipulation of the study variable. This study aimed to gather information on youth mental illnesses from selected Psychiatric hospitals in Ogun State.

Study population

The study focuses on health workers, specifically nurses responsible for mentally ill patients, given the challenges posed by the patients' conditions, which may hinder their ability to respond to inquiries and raise concerns about patient confidentiality. Three hospitals in Ogun state, Nigeria, were chosen for this research: Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North; Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro, Abeokuta South; and Edijalo Health Service Limited, Abeokuta North, Ogun State. The selection criteria were based on the substantial number of nurses at these facilities and their extensive involvement in mental health cases. The combined population from these three hospitals amounted to Two Hundred and Forty-Two (242), as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Population of the Study

S/No	Name	Population
1	Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North,	94
2	Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro, Abeokuta South	136
3	Edijalo Health Service Limited Abeokuta North, Ogun State.	12
	TOTAL	242

Source: The Hospital Human Resource Department, 2023

Sample size and sampling techniques

The adopted sampling technique for this study was the total enumeration sampling technique, as the number of respondents was manageable. At the time of the study, the total number of nurses at the Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital was 230, and at Edijalo Health Service Limited, it was 12. This approach ensures equal representation of the study population, effectively eliminating bias.

Instrument for data collection

The instrument for the study was a self-structured questionnaire. The nurses who consented to take part in the study were given the questionnaires to fill using a pre-tested and validated structured questionnaire as a schedule as a guide. The questionnaire was a four-rating scale with seven sections, A-F.

Section A dealt with demographic factors with six items with close-ended questions. Examples were name of the hospital, years of experience, age, gender, and so on.

Section B focused on information on prevalence of mental illness among youths of Ogun State. It was aimed at receiving responses on item such as "how frequents do the hospitals receive patients that are youth "how often they admit and discharge patients" and so on. It contains six

items with the response format on *Always=4, Often=3, Sometimes=3, Never=1*.

Section C elicited information on the most prevalent type of mental illness among youths of Ogun State with 7 items such as "how frequent do you encounter patients exhibiting symptoms of mental illness" with the response format scale as *Always=4, Often=3, Sometimes=3, Never=1*.

Validity of the Instrument

Printed version of the instrument was sent to the supervisor, the Head of Nursing, Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Aro and the Chief Medical Director, Edijalo Health Service Limited. They examined it for appropriateness, thoroughness, and clarity of the questionnaire's contents. In response to suggestions and advice, the questionnaire's questions were revised, which increased the instrument's face and content validity and approval was given to be used.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ascertain the reliability of data collection, a test pre-test method of reliability was used. The 30 copies of questionnaire was administered to the nurses at Federal Neuro-psychiatric hospital, Aro, Abeokuta. It was calculated using Cronbach Alpha Correlation Coefficient to measure the strength instrument. Result revealed that scale on prevalence of mental illness was 75.6%, most prevalent type of mental illness was 76.5%, the overall scale has 76.1%.

Procedure for Data Collection

The Letter of Introduction was submitted to the Department of Nursing at the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Aro, and the Administrative Unit of Edijalo Health Service Limited for the Human Resource Manager's attention. After careful review, the letter, along with the accompanying questionnaire, was signed, stamped, and permission granted for questionnaire distribution among their nurses. Printed questionnaires were then administered to consented participants to gather information on youth mental health in the study areas.

Method of data analysis

The data collected for this study was collated and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation for the research questions one, two, three, four, five and six. The Statistical Product and Support Service (SPSS, Version 22.0) was used for computing and analyzing the data generated from the study.

Ethical Approval

Written approval was obtained from the Head of Department, Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital Aro, Abeokuta and Chief Medical Director of Edijalo Health Service Limited before administering the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Questionnaire Response Rate

The According to Table 3, the majority of respondents are affiliated with the "Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro, Abeokuta South" (55%), followed by "Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North" (42%), and "Edijalo Health Service Limited, Abeokuta North, Ogun State" (3%). This indicates that the largest proportion of respondents work at the Annex of the Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital. Concerning gender, the majority of respondents are female (85%) compared to male respondents (15%). This suggests that the survey population is predominantly female. In terms of age, the largest age group is "31-40 years" (37.3%), followed by "21-30 years" (33.8%). This implies that the majority of respondents fall within the age range of 21-40 years. Regarding the highest qualification, the highest proportion of respondents hold a "Diploma in Nursing (Dipl)" (52%), followed by "Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)" (31.5%). This indicates that a significant number of respondents are registered nurses.

Furthermore, concerning position/cadre, the majority of respondents belong to categories "NO2" (42.7%) and "NO2" (27.1%), followed by "CNO" (11.5%). This suggests that the majority of respondents hold positions classified as NO1 or NO2. However, the marital status revealed a higher percentage of respondents are married (68.8%) compared to those who are single (31.2%). This indicates that a larger proportion of the respondents are married. Lastly, regarding years of experience, the largest group of respondents has experience less than five years (43.6%), followed by "5-10 years" (22.7%). This suggests that a significant number of respondents are relatively in the middle of their careers. Overall, this analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the surveyed healthcare professionals, which can be valuable for tailoring interventions, policies, and strategies within the context of the surveyed institutions.

Research question one: What is the Prevalence of Mental Illness among Youths in Ogun state.

The Table 4 presents data on the prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun state, Nigeria. The data is collected through a survey, where respondents were asked to rate the frequency of certain situations related to mental illness cases among youths.

The result reveals the high mean score as how frequent do you have patients with mental illness cases? Always.

(Mean: 3.81, Standard Deviation: 0.434). This statement indicates that, on average, respondents reported a frequency of (x=3.81), which suggests that mental illness cases are moderately frequent among the respondents' patients. The standard deviation of 0.434 indicates that there is relatively low variability in the responses, meaning that most respondents reported similar frequencies. Followed by how regular do you have patients with mental illness cases that are between 18-40 years? (Mean: 3.62, Standard Deviation: 0.587), the respondents reported a mean frequency of x=3.62, indicating that they moderately regularly encounter mental illness cases in the age range of 18-40 years. The standard deviation of 0.587 implies that there is somewhat more variability in responses. And the least mean score is how frequent do you discharge patients with mental illness cases that are youths? (Mean: 3.31, Standard Deviation: 0.725), this statement suggests that respondents, on average, discharge youths with mental illness cases with a frequency of 3.31, indicating a moderate level of discharge. The higher standard deviation of 0.725 implies that there is more variability in responses for this statement compared to the previous two statements.

● Calibration-Criterion

Mild = 0-1.34

Moderate = 1.35-2.75

Severe= 2.76-4.00

Overall prevalence of mental illness among youths of Ogun state x= 3.53

Based on the provided calibration criteria, the overall prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State can be categorized as in the category of Severe: 2.76-4.00.

Given that the overall prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State is weighted mean x=3.53, it falls within the "Severe" category according to the provided calibration. This indicates a significant level of mental illness among the youth population in Ogun State with high responses that they always have patients with mental illness cases who are between 18-40 years.

Research question two:What is the most Prevalent Type of Mental Illness among Youth of Ogun State

Based on the provided data in Table 5, the most prevalent type of mental illness among youth in Ogun State, as perceived by the respondents, is as follows:

The highest mean score was **Schizophrenia** (Mean: 3.38, Standard Deviation: 0.868). Respondents reported a mean score of x=3.38 for how frequently they encounter patients exhibiting symptoms of schizophrenia. This

indicates that schizophrenia is observed relatively frequently among the youth in Ogun State. **Substance Use Disorder** (Mean: 3.22, Standard Deviation: 0.892). The respondents reported a mean score of 3.22 for how frequently they encounter patients exhibiting symptoms of substance use disorder. This suggests that substance use disorder is also prevalent among the youth in Ogun State. With least score of bipolar disorder (Mean: 3.06, Standard Deviation: 0.735) The respondents reported a mean score of 3.06 for how frequently they observe patients displaying signs of bipolar disorder. This indicates that bipolar disorder is observed with some frequency among the youth in Ogun State. And lastly, eating disorder (Mean: 2.71, Standard Deviation: 0.907). Respondents reported a mean score of 2.71 for how often they encounter patients with eating disorders. This suggests that eating disorders are observed, but perhaps less frequently compared to the other mentioned mental illnesses.

● Calibration-Criterion

Low = 0-1.34

Moderate = 1.35-2.75

High= 2.76-4.00

Overall prevalence of mental illness among youths of Ogun state x= 2.72

Based on the provided calibration criteria, the overall prevalence of the most prevalent type of mental illness among youths in Ogun State can be categorized as moderate: 1.35-2.75

Given that the overall most prevalent type of mental illness among youths in Ogun State is X=2.72, it falls within the "Moderate" such as (**Schizophrenia** and **Substance Use Disorder)** category according to the provided calibration. This indicates a moderate level of prevalence for this specific type of mental illness among the youth population in Ogun State. It suggests that while the prevalence is not extremely high, it still requires attention and intervention.

Table 2: Questionnaire Response Rate

S/No	Number of Questionnaire	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Administer	242	100
2	Returned	239	98
3	Usable	225	93

Table 3: Characteristics of the respondents

S/No		Name;	respondents	percentage
1	Hospital	Federal Neuro-psychiatric hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North,	92	40.9
		Federal Neuro-psychiatric hospital, Annex, Lantoro, Abeokuta South	122	54.2
		Edijalo Health Service Limited Abeokuta North, Ogun State.	11	4.9
2	Gender	Male	34	15
		Female	191	85
3	Age	Less than 21	27	12
		21- 30 years	76	33.8
		31 - 40 years	84	37.3
		40-50 years	26	11.6
		Above 51 years	12	5.3
4	Highest Qualification	Dipl	117	52
		BSN	71	31.5
		MSc	33	14.7
		PhD	4	1.8
5	Position/Cadre	DDN	4	1.8
		ADN	11	4.9
		CNO	26	11.5
		ACNO	10	4.4
		PNO	8	3.6
		SNO	9	4
		NO1	61	27.1
		NO2	96	42.7
6	Marital Status	Single	53	31.2
		Married	172	68.8
7	Years of Experience	Less than 5	98	43.6
		5-10	51	22.7
		11-15	28	12.4
		16-20	31	13.7
		21 and above	17	7.6

Table 4: Prevalence of Mental Illness among Youths in Ogun State

S/No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Mean	Std. Dev
1	How frequent do you have patient of mental illness cases	187 (83.1)	34 (15.1)	4 (1.8)	--	3.81	.434
2	How regular do you have patient of mental illness cases that are between 18-40 years	151 (67.1)	62 (27.6)	12 (5.3)	--	3.62	.587
3	How frequent do you receive male patient of mental illness cases that are youths	153 (68.0)	56 (24.9)	16 (7.1)	--	3.61	.618
4	How frequent do you receive female patient of mental illness cases that are youths	90 (40.0)	117 (52.0)	18 (8.0)	--	3.32	.616
5	How frequent do you admit patient of mental illness cases that are youths	132 (58.7)	73 (32.4)	20 (8.9)	--	3.50	.656
6	How frequent do you discharge patient of mental illness cases that are youths	104 (46.2)	86 (38.2)	--	35 (15.6)	3.31	.725
Weighted mean x=3.53				**Arithmetic mean**		**21.17**	

Table 5: Most Prevalent Type of Mental Illness among Youth of Ogun State

S/No	Statement	Always	Often	occasionally	Never	Mean	Std Dev
1	How frequently do you encounter patient exhibiting symptoms of anxiety disorder	82 (36.4)	89 (39.6)	54 (24.0)	--	3.12	.769
2	How frequently do you observe patient displaying signs of bipolar disorder	64 (28.4)	115 (51.1)	42 (18.7)	4 (1.8)	3.06	.735
3	How frequently do you come across patient with depressive symptoms	82 (36.4)	98 (43.6)	43 (19.1)	2 (.9)	3.16	.755
4	How often do you encounter patient with eating disorder	50 (22.2)	79 (35.1)	77 (34.2)	19 (8.4)	2.71	.907
5	How frequently do you encounter patient exhibiting symptoms of substance use disorder	109 (48.4)	66 (29.3)	40 (17.8)	10 (4.4)	3.22	.892
6	How frequently do you encounter patient demonstrating post-traumatic stress disorder	86 (38.2)	77 (34.2)	58 (25.8)	4 (1.8)	3.09	.840
7	How frequently do you have patient exhibiting symptoms of schizophrenia	135 (60.0)	48 (21.3)	34 (15.1)	8 (3.6)	3.38	.868
Weighted mean x=2.72				**Arithmetic Mean**		**19.03**	

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This study investigated the prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State, and the findings revealed a significantly high level of mental illness prevalence within this demographic. Mental illness cases among youths (aged 18-40) appeared to be slightly more common compared to the general population. A similar study conducted by Ogbonna et al. (2020) in Enugu among adolescents aged 15-18 showed an increased prevalence of mental illness with age, peaking at 18 years in the retrospective study. Although the prevalence was lowest at 15 years, this might have been attributed to underreporting and late presentation among adolescents (Beauchamp et al. (2018). In contrast, the current study focusing on the age group 18-40 suggested that individuals within this range were more informed about their mental health, leading to early help-seeking behaviors as signs and symptoms manifested. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that research indicating that approximately 40% of older adults with past-year or current ideation used mental health services, suggesting a positive trend in help-seeking behaviors among younger individuals (Hom et al., 2015).

The lower rating for discharging youth patients with mental illness cases implied that treatment or recovery for this age group might have taken longer or been more complex(Kelly & Coughlan,2018). This suggested a

consistency in mental health challenges within this age group, leading to frequent visits and encounters within mental health facilities. This is corroborated by Anoshiravani et al. (2015) that indicated the disproportionate impact of mental illness on detained youth, leading to increased hospitalizations and encounters with the mental health system. Additionally, a retrospective study conducted by Celine and Antony in 2014 reported a higher prevalence of mental disorder cases in the age group of 30-44 years

Based on healthcare professionals' responses, schizophrenia and substance use disorder were perceived as the most prevalent types of mental illnesses among the youth in Ogun State. This finding aligned with Ogbonna et al.'s (2020) study among adolescents in the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Enugu, where schizophrenia was identified as the most common mental health disorder. Furthermore, a study by Adejimi, 2021 in Ogun State, based on clinical case file sampling, identified schizophrenia and mood disorder as the most prevalent mental disorders.

The prevalence of schizophrenia may have been attributed to its complex and chronic nature, characterized by symptoms such as delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech or behavior, and impaired cognitive ability. The early onset and chronic course of the disease may have

contributed to its disabling nature for many patients and their families (Lavretsky, 2008). The observed prevalence of substance use disorder in this study may have been linked to the comorbidity of substance use and other mental illnesses, as reported by Lubman *et al.* in 2010, where patients with schizophrenia exhibited higher rates of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use disorder than the general population. Bipolar disorder was also noted with some frequency, although it may have been slightly less common than schizophrenia and substance use disorder. Merinkaga *et al.* in 2007 reported variations in the prevalence of bipolar disorder across countries. Eating disorders, while present, were perceived to be comparatively less prevalent among the youth.

This study has aided in the provision of an accurate and appropriate data on mentally illness to the existing ones which will be useful for educational purpose, researches and stakeholders. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government, international organization, corporate bodies and non-government organization should allocate additional funds to ensure proper training of psychiatric health workers. This will enhance their capacity to provide effective mental health care services to the youth population. Health management, workers and media houses should develop targeted intervention programs focusing on schizophrenia

and substance use disorder, as these were identified as the most prevalent types of mental illness among youths in Ogun State. Finally, there should be collaboration among government agencies, non-profit organizations, healthcare institutions, and community stakeholders to collectively address mental health challenges and ensure a holistic approach to mental health care.

CONCLUSION

Based on the extensive research conducted on the prevalence for mental illness among youths in Ogun State, the following key findings have emerged:

The prevalence of mental illness among youths in Ogun State has been assessed as severe, indicating a significant level of mental health issues among this demographic. Respondents consistently reported encountering patients with mental illness, particularly those within the age range of 18-40 years. Additionally, the most prevalent type of mental illness among youths in Ogun State is categorized as moderate. Schizophrenia and substance use disorder were identified as common types of mental illnesses in this population.

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