

Study of Socio-demographic Factors among Re-admitted Psychiatric Patients in relation to their diagnoses in Malaysia.

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Abstract

Objectives: The aim of this study is to find out the demographic, and clinical profile of frequently re-hospitalize psychiatric patients. The study will determine relationship between particular psychiatric illness and recurrent admissions. This study investigates and collects all relevant data to reflect the factual situation in Malaysia population. **Methods:** Cross sectional study of 250 psychiatric patients with different mental illnesses admitted by Psychiatrist in 6 months duration. Patients were included of age 18 years and above and excluded those who were not conversant either in Malay or English language. The questioner with various demographic aspects was used and clinical data of the participants obtained for statistical analysis. **Results:** It has been noted that there is significant association between socio-demographic factors and frequent hospitalization of Psychiatric patients in relation to their diagnoses. **Conclusion:** Patients with mental illnesses have higher prevalence of readmission. Although treatment facilities are available, environmental factors play a vital role in relapse of mental illness and readmission to the Psychiatric wards.

Keywords: Psychiatric patients, Psychiatric services, Readmissions, Clinical data, Malaysia

1. Introduction:

Deinstitutionalization is a global inclination which began with the wide-ranging starter of chlorpromazine. The development of supervisory mental health care and the accumulation of psychiatric beds in most developed countries peaked in the middle of this century. Malaysia is also following the trend of the developed countries when the government started employing decentralization of psychiatric facilities. In the last decade, the number of institutionalized beds has been reduced. Community-based psychiatric services were initiated in general hospital to lessen readmission rates and to develop newer patient-oriented models of care, including the delivery of care near to where people live and work to improve accessibility. Decentralization evolution observed an immense

number of patients returning to the family. On the other hand, a large number of chronic patients failed community management because of the breakdown of family support. Some researchers have explained the increasing number of readmissions as a consequence of de-institutionalization policies.

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A transition is taking place in the organization of psychiatric services. The length of stay in hospitals is reduce and relatively replaced by treatment and care in the community. The readmission rate is projected as one indicator to evaluate the effectiveness of this transition. Majority of all patients admitted to psychiatric hospitals are previously admitted patients. On the basis of the analysis of the literature review it is concluded that readmission rates are not a suitable indicator of quality of care in psychiatric hospitals. Readmission rates may, however, be a important tool in the planning of mental health services. In several countries the proportion of readmissions ha been used as a performance indicator and for this motive it has gathered much consideration. Universally the monthly readmission rates have been said to be between 15-35%. The association between the consumption o services and treatment outcome is very multifaceted and may depend upon many factors other than the clinic variables. Comprehensive evidence has shown that social factors are strongly related to the readmission rate I psychiatric patients.

2. Methods:

his is a cross sectional study conducted on a sample of 250 psychiatric patients with different mental illnesses admitted by Psychiatrist at the Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan, Kuantan, Pahang state of Malaysia over a period of 6 months duration. Before the start Rao soft sample size calculator was used to get expected sample size. Margi of error was expected 5%, whereas confidence level was 95%. Estimated number of admissions was 40-50 patient per month. An ethical approval from relevant authorities was sought before the study started. The researcher introduced themselves to the patients/care givers and inform them about the aim and the methodology about the research. Informed consent was obtained from the participants after the nature of the procedure was fully explained to the patients/care givers. All participants were ensured of the confidentiality and they were able to understand that the information gathered will only be used for research purposes.

The patients were included following the strict inclusion criteria. To enter into the study the age limit of the subject was kept from 18 years and above. All Participants were confirmed as diagnosed cases with psychiatric illness an were indicated for admission by specialist psychiatrist to the psychiatric ward. During the data collection, patient were not considered to include who were not conversant either in Malay or English language.

The questionnaire containing various aspects of the socio-demographic status and the clinical data of the participants was used. The researchers interviewed the patients/care givers to obtain information using a list o questions about the history of mental illness and other relevant information. All the data obtained was used for statistical analysis. Chi-square test was performed using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21.

3. Results:

During the 6 months period from the beginning of 2013 to the end of June 2013, there were 250 patients admitted to the Psychiatric ward of Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan, in Kuantan, Pahang state of Malaysia. These

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include 201 patients with history of admissions before into Psychiatric ward. It was found that majority (80%) of the patients were readmitted. Majority of the patients were males (121) with female patients (80).

Among the 201 readmitted patients, Schizophrenia was found to be the commonest illness (147) followed by Bipolar mood disorder (20) and other illnesses (34). Considerable association was recorded between the mental illnesses and other demographic factors. Racial component (.002) has got significant association with Psychiatric diagnosis whereas educational status (.038) also found important factor together with the occupational status (.007). There is evident association (.011) between the diagnosis and duration of the illness.

It was also noted that the Age, financial status, marital status, and previous admissions were found non-significant to the prevalence of readmissions. (Tab:1).

Table:1 RE-ADMISSION OF PATIENTS IN PSYCHIATRIC WARDS FOR 6 MONTHS

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Characteristic	Population, N (%)	Diagnosis, N (%)			Comparison towards Diagnosis P-value
		Schizophrenia	Bipolar Mood Disorder	Other	
<u>Gender</u>					
Male	121 (60.2)	84 (41.8)	14 (7.0)	23 (11.4)	.339
Female	80 (39.8)	63 (31.3)	6 (3.0)	11 (5.5)	
<u>Race</u>					
Malay	156 (77.6)	116 (57.7)	13 (6.5)	27 (13.4)	.002
Chinese	27 (13.4)	20 (10.0)	7 (3.5)	0 (0)	
Indian	5 (2.50)	2 (1.0)	0 (0)	3 (1.5)	
Others	13 (6.50)	9 (4.5)	0 (0)	4 (2.0)	
<u>Age</u>					
24 years old and less	20 (10.0)	11 (5.5)	2 (1.0)	7 (3.5)	.207
25 – 49 years old	143 (71.1)	108 (53.7)	13 (6.5)	22 (10.9)	
50 years old and above	38 (18.9)	28 (13.9)	5 (2.5)	5 (2.5)	
<u>Marital Status</u>					
Single	131 (65.2)	96 (47.8)	10 (5.0)	25 (12.4)	.215
Married	70 (34.8)	51 (3.5)	10 (5.0)	9 (4.5)	
<u>Education Status</u>					
Low (Primary/Secondary)	187 (93.0)	140 (69.7)	16 (8.0)	31 (15.4)	.038
High (Collage/University)	14 (7.00)	7 (3.5)	4 (2.0)	3 (1.5)	
<u>Occupation Status</u>					
Employed	48 (23.9)	28 (13.9)	10 (5.0)	10 (5.0)	.007
Unemployed	153 (76.1)	119 (59.2)	10 (5.0)	24 (11.9)	
<u>Duration of Illness</u>					
Less than 1 year	25 (12.4)	11 (5.5)	6 (3.0)	8 (4.0)	.011
1 – 5 years	48 (23.9)	37 (18.4)	3 (1.5)	8 (4.0)	
More than 5 years	128 (63.7)	99 (49.3)	11 (5.5)	18 (9.0)	
<u>Level of Income</u>					
Low (RM1,500 and below)	192 (95.5)	143 (71.1)	18 (9.0)	31 (15.4)	.136
High (RM 1,500 and above)	9 (4.50)	4 (2.0)	2 (1.0)	3 (1.5)	
<u>Re-admission Prevalence</u>					
3 times and less	51 (25.4)	34 (16.9)	4 (2.0)	13 (6.5)	.190
3 – 10 times	68 (33.8)	48 (23.9)	10 (5.0)	10 (5.0)	
More than 10 times	82 (40.8)	65 (32.3)	6 (3.0)	11 (5.5)	

****Significant value is $p \leq 0.05$ with 95% confidence level***

4. Discussion:

Readmitted psychiatric patients are particularly pertinent if we bear in mind that, even if they are a minority, these are the patients who spend the most resources. The association between the utilization of services and

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treatment outcome is very complex and may depend upon many factors other than the clinical variables. The continuous collection of data is a way to go in minimizing responsible factors. Although efforts had produced impact in western countries, the data achieved might not be applicable to our patients due to the psycho-social and cultural diversity. This application seeks support for research initiative and shall provide a platform for more nationwide collaborative approach. The collected materials shall be source for future medical research.

Rehospitalization is not an uncommon issue among Psychiatric patients. High readmission rate has been often measured as poor prognostic out comes in Psychiatric patients. More significantly, an elevated readmission rate can reveal a large number of patients who cannot be adequately contained in communities and can be used as a marker of insufficiency or inappropriateness of community-based after care. Furthermore there has been a huge amount of health budget consumed while the patients are admitted and the readmission rate is considered as a performance indicator.

Malaysia is among those countries that are following the trend of decentralization of Psychiatric Services. This devolutionary process observed a great number of chronic mentally ill patients returning to the relatives. Presently the Psychiatric hospital is performing like the other psychiatric units of General hospitals and there is no more transfer for long-term stay. It has been noted that with reduction in number of patients in the Psychiatric hospitals in Malaysia, the Psychiatric department of general hospitals became overloaded.

5. Conclusion:

The aim of this study is to find out the social, demographic, and clinical profile of frequently re-hospitalized psychiatric patients. There are several collaborative studies explored the risks and rates of readmission and their predictors. In spite of the importance and high relevance only a few researches were done on this topic worldwide with limited studies published on this topic in Malaysia yet. Given the importance of comprehending this phenomenon and the lack of investigation in this area, the present analysis aims to characterize the population with repeated admissions.

Disclosure:

The Authors report no conflict of interest. The authors alone are Responsible for the content and writing of the paper

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