



Social functioning and quality of life of people with schizophrenia in the northern region of Malaysia

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Abstract

This is an explorative study on the quality of life of 258 people with schizophrenia living in the northern region of Malaysia. The study samples were selected from the Outpatient Department of the Departments of Psychiatry attached to the General Hospitals located in Northern Malaysia. Details on background and illness characteristics of the respondents were collected through a questionnaire prepared by the researcher. The Disability Assessment Schedule (WHO/DAS) was used to collect information related to respondents' social functioning. The Quality of Life Interview (QOLI) was used to collect the information about quality of life (QOL). Results of the present study indicated serious deficits in the areas of social functioning and quality of home environment and these deficits were found to have a significant association with low QOL. Based on these findings, the present research argues that policy makers must focus more on creating rehabilitation resources within communities which will complement the level of success achieved in reducing psychotic symptoms. Results of the study highlight an urgent need for the creation of community-based rehabilitation facilities for the successful care of people with a mental illness in Malaysia. This is necessary for other countries in the region as well.

Keywords

schizophrenia, severe mental illness, social functioning, quality of life, positive and negative symptoms, community, rehabilitation, home environment, Asia

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