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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND POSSIBLE INTERVENTION TO MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG YOUTHS IN OGUN STATE

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

Mental health problems can have a great influence on the quality of life of an individual and their overall well-being. Psychopathology of mental illness covers multiple dimensions, comprising the categorization and identification of disorders, evaluation of symptoms, and comprehension of the psychological and biological mechanisms involved. Based on this premise, this study investigated the psychopathology and possible intervention to mental illness among youths in Ogun State, Nigeria. The research, involving 242 nurses from selected hospitals, revealed key demographic information, with a majority being female (85%) and the highest age group being 31-40 years old (37. 3%).The study highlighted psychopathological causes, with head injuries, neurological conditions, and alcohol abuse identified as major contributors to mental illness. Symptoms of mental illness among youths in Ogun State were emphasized, with a consensus (x=3.20) on early signs including decline in personal care and extreme mood changes. The study proposed intervention plans, with a focus on financial support from health-related organizations and the implementation of effective laws against substance abuse. Respondents strongly agreed (x=3.56) that challenges in developing intervention plans stemmed from a lack of funds for proper training and an insufficient mental health work force. In conclusion, findings from the study revealed that there should be collaborative efforts among stakeholders to ensure a holistic approach to mental health care in Ogun State.

KEYWORDS

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Introduction

Psychopathology is the study of psychological disorders and abnormal behaviors, focusing on the identification, classification, and evaluation of mental illnesses. It seeks to understand the symptoms, causes, and manifestations of these disorders by investigating the psychological and biological mechanisms that underlie them (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Traditionally, psychopathology has encompassed a wide range of mental health issues, including mood disorders such as depression and bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders like schizophrenia, personality disorders, and substance use disorders. However, a comprehensive understanding of mental health requires an approach that integrates biological, psychological, and social factors.

The biopsychosocial model offers a framework that considers genetic predispositions, individual psychological traits, and social contexts, such as family dynamics and community support systems (Pilgrim & Rogers, 2005). Complementing this is the stress-vulnerability model, which suggests that individuals with certain biological or psychological vulnerabilities are more likely to experience mental health issues when exposed to stress (Aneshensel & Avison, 2015). These models emphasize the complex nature of mental health, indicating that outcomes result from the interplay of multiple factors rather than from isolated biological or psychological influences.

Approaches to managing and intervening in mental health issues differ significantly across countries and regions due to variations in cultural, social, and healthcare systems. Effective mental health interventions require collaboration among governments, healthcare institutions, communities, and international agencies (Patel et al., 2018). In Nigeria, particularly in Ogun State, cultural beliefs, economic difficulties, and healthcare system deficiencies heavily impact the prevalence and management of mental health disorders. Cultural perceptions often foster stigma, deterring individuals from seeking care, while economic challenges and an under-resourced healthcare system complicates these issues (Ozota, 2024; Aladeh, 2024).

The Nigerian healthcare system faces significant challenges particularly in integrating mental health services into primary care. Although integrating mental health into primary care has been shown to improve access and reduce stigma, the existing infrastructure frequently lacks the necessary support and resources for effective implementation (Iheanacho, 2024; Sodeinde, 2024). Stigma and gender discrimination against People Living with Mental Illness (PLWMI) in Ogun State further complicate efforts to address these issues, despite increasing concerns about youth mental health in the region (Olawande et al., 2018).

In response to these challenges, community-based mental health programs, peer support initiatives, school-based mental health education, and digital mental health solutions are recognized as effective strategies for improving youth mental health in similar contexts (Adu et al., 2022; Bisal et al., 2022; Bassi, 2024; Monnapula-Mazabane & Petersen, 2022). Research in psychopathology provides important insights into the complexities of mental disorders, guides evidence-based practices and supports the development of effective prevention, intervention, and treatment strategies (Panksepp, 2011). Understanding these factors is crucial for the efficient allocation of resources, the reduction of the mental illness burden, the promotion of mental well-being, and the improvement of overall quality of life for those affected (Babasola et al., 2024). This study sought to contribute to this understanding by examining the causes, symptoms, and potential interventions for mental illness among youths in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design, which facilitates the collection of data without altering the study variables. The primary objective was to obtain information regarding the psychopathology of mental illness and potential interventions among youths in selected psychiatric hospitals in Ogun State.

Study Population

The study focused on health workers, particularly nurses, who were directly involved in the care of mentally ill patients. This choice was driven by the patients' conditions, which could limit their ability to participate in the study, as well as the importance of maintaining patient confidentiality. Three hospitals in Ogun State, Nigeria, were purposively selected for the study: The Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro; the Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro; and Edijalo Health Service Limited, Abeokuta. These hospitals were chosen due to the large number of nurses and their extensive involvement in mental health care. The total population across these three hospitals was 242 (Babasola et al., 2024).

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A total enumeration sampling technique was employed in this study due to the manageable number of respondents. At the time of data collection, the Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital had 230 nurses, while Edijalo Health Service Limited had 12 nurses. This approach ensured equal representation of the study population, effectively minimizing bias (Babasola et al., 2024).

Instruments

The data collection instrument used in this study was a self-structured questionnaire adapted from Babasola et al. (2024), with a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.761$. The questionnaires were distributed to nurses who consented to participate in the study.

Section A focused on the psychopathology of mental illness, specifically examining the causes and symptoms among youths. This section was further divided into two subsections. Subsection I addressed the causes of mental illness among youths, featuring seven items measured on a response scale: *Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1*. Subsection II focused on the symptoms of mental illness among youths in Ogun State, with eight items measured using the same response scale.

Section B gathered information on possible intervention plans for addressing mental illness among youths in Ogun State. This section included eleven items, also measured on a response scale of *Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1.*

Section C explored the challenges encountered in developing intervention plans for addressing mental illness among youths in Ogun State. This section contained seven items, measured on the same response scale of *Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1.*

Procedure for Data Collection

A 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, addressed to the Human Resource Manager. Following a thorough review, the letters were approved and stamped, granting permission to distribute the questionnaires to participants who provided their consent. This process was instrumental in gathering data on youth mental health within the study areas.

Methods of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Ethical Approval

Written approval was secured from the Head of Department at the Federal Neuro-psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta, and the Chief Medical Director of Edijalo Health Service Limited prior to the administration of the questionnaires.

Results

Characteristics of the Respondents

The majority of participants are affiliated with the "Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Annex, Lantoro, Abeokuta South" (55%), followed by the "Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta North" (42%), and "Edijalo Health Service Limited, Abeokuta North, Ogun State" (3%). This distribution indicates that most respondents are employed at the Annex of the Federal Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital. In terms of gender distribution, a predominant majority are female (85%) compared to male respondents (15%), suggesting a largely female survey population. The age distribution shows that the largest group is between "31-40 years" (37.3%), followed by those aged "21-30 years" (33.8%),

indicating that most respondents are within the 21-40-year age range. Regarding educational qualifications, the highest proportion hold a "Diploma in Nursing" (52%), with "Bachelor of Science in Nursing" (31.5%) being the next most common qualification, reflecting a substantial number of registered nurses. In terms of position/cadre, the majority are classified under "NO2" (42.7%) and "NO1" (27.1%), with "CNO" (11.5%) being the next category, suggesting that most respondents hold positions in the NO1 or NO2 categories. Marital status data shows that a larger percentage are married (68.8%) compared to single respondents (31.2%), indicating a predominance of married individuals. Lastly, in terms of professional experience, the largest group has less than five years of experience (43.6%), followed by those with "5-10 years" of experience (22.7%).

Research Question One: What is the Psychopathology (Causes) of Mental Illness among Youths of Ogun State

Table 1 outlines the primary causes of mental illness among youths in Ogun State. The highest mean score was attributed to physical conditions, such as head injuries or neurological disorders like epilepsy, which are recognized as potential risk factors for mental illness (Mean: 3.28, Standard Deviation: 0.755). This mean score indicates a general agreement among respondents that these physical conditions can indeed contribute to mental health issues. The relatively low standard deviation suggests a strong consensus among respondents regarding this link, underscoring the importance of considering physical health in mental well-being.

Following this, substance abuse, particularly alcohol, was noted as a significant cause of mental illness among youths, with a mean score of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 0.837. While there is agreement on this issue, the higher standard deviation points to some variability in responses. Nevertheless, the data highlights the need for effective prevention and intervention programs targeting substance abuse in this age group.

The impact of gender as a contributory factor to mental illness received a mean score of 3.02 with a standard deviation of 0.813. This indicates a general agreement that gender-related factors may play a role in the development of mental health issues among youths, although there is some variability in the responses. This suggests the necessity for gender-sensitive approaches in mental health interventions.

The statement about long-term caregiving for someone with mental illness as a contributory factor had the lowest mean score of 2.54 and a high standard deviation of 1.073. This indicates a disagreement among respondents, with considerable variation in opinions on whether caregiving contributes to mental illness among youths. The high standard deviation reflects the diverse perspectives on this issue.

Overall, the mean score for the psychopathology causes of mental illness among youths in Ogun State is 3.04. According to the criteria in Table 5, this score suggests that respondents generally agree that symptoms such as a decline in personal care and extreme mood changes are recognized as early signs of mental illness in this population.

Research Question Two: What is the Psychopathology (Symptoms) of Mental Illness among Youths of Ogun State.

Based on the data in Table 2, the highest mean score is for the statement that a decline in personal care can be an early symptom of mental illness (Mean: 3.33, Standard Deviation: 0.701). This indicates that respondents generally agree that a decline in personal care is a potential early indicator of mental health issues. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.701 suggests a consistent level of agreement among respondents, highlighting the importance of monitoring personal care habits for early detection and intervention in mental health among youths.

Following this, the statement that extreme mood changes can be an early symptom of mental illness received a mean score of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 0.776. This suggests that respondents agree that significant mood swings may signal early mental health issues. Despite some variability in responses, there is a clear consensus on the importance of recognizing mood changes as potential indicators of mental health concerns.

The statement that exaggerated self-importance and constant need for admiration can be symptoms of mental illness scored a mean of 3.25 with a standard deviation of

0.840. Respondents generally agree that these traits may indicate mental health issues, although the higher standard deviation suggests less uniformity in responses compared to the previous statements. This indicates an awareness of narcissistic traits as possible symptoms of mental health concerns.

The mean score for the statement regarding distorted body image due to eating disorders as a symptom of mental illness was 3.06, with a standard deviation of 0.805. This score shows agreement that a distorted body image linked to eating disorders can be a symptom of mental illness, though there is some variability in responses. This underscores the need for early intervention for those struggling with body image issues and eating disorders.

Overall, the mean score for psychopathology symptoms of mental illness among youths in Ogun State is 3.20. According to the criterion in Table 5, this score falls within the "Agreed" category, indicating that respondents consistently recognize symptoms such as a decline in personal care and extreme mood changes as early signs of mental illness among youths in Ogun State.

Research Question Three: What are the Possible Intervention Plans for Addressing Mental Illness among Youths in Ogun State.

According to the data in Table 3, the majority of respondents strongly agreed that grants from health-related organizations are beneficial for the treatment of mental illness, with a mean score of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.744. This high mean score indicates a strong belief in the value of such financial support for addressing mental health issues. The low standard deviation suggests a high level of consensus among respondents, highlighting the importance of funding from health organizations as a crucial component of mental health intervention.

The next highest mean score was for the effectiveness of laws and policies against substance abuse (Mean: 3.52, Standard Deviation: 0.732). This indicates strong agreement that stringent laws and policies are essential for tackling mental illness, with a consistent level of agreement among respondents. The data emphasizes the critical role of effective legislation in combating substance abuse, which is a major factor in mental health issues among youths.

Respondents also strongly supported improving training for health workers through seminars, workshops, and conferences to enhance their ability to treat mental illness, with a mean score of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 0.745. This indicates a high level of agreement on the importance of continuous professional development for healthcare providers to effectively address mental health issues.

In contrast, occupational therapy received the lowest mean score of 2.31 with a high standard deviation of 1.250, reflecting mixed opinions on its effectiveness. The wide range of responses suggests less consensus among respondents regarding the role of occupational therapy as an intervention for mental illness among youths.

Similarly, the addition of mental health services to the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) received a mean score of 2.27 and a high standard deviation of 1.126, indicating varied opinions among respondents. This suggests that there is less agreement on the effectiveness of incorporating mental health into the NHIS for addressing mental illness.

Overall, the mean score for possible interventions to address mental illness is 2.99. According to the criteria in Table 5, this falls within the "Agreed" category, indicating general agreement with the proposed intervention strategies. The respondents particularly emphasized the effectiveness of grants from health-related organizations and the importance of stringent laws and policies against substance abuse, reflecting support for these strategies among the respondents in Ogun State.

Research Question Four: What are the Challenges in Developing Intervention Plan towards Prevention of mental illness among youths in Ogun State.

According to the data in Table 4, the highest mean score was for the statement that a paucity of funds for the proper training of psychiatric health workers is a significant challenge (Mean: 3.62, Standard Deviation: 0.630). This high mean score indicates that respondents view inadequate funding for training as a major issue. The relatively low standard deviation suggests a moderate

level of agreement among respondents, highlighting the importance of sufficient resources for training psychiatric health workers in Ogun State. Limited funding can negatively impact the quality of mental health services.

The next highest mean score was for the statement regarding the insufficient health workforce in psychiatry limiting the effectiveness of services (Mean: 3.60, Standard Deviation: 0.647). Respondents agreed that a shortage of psychiatric health workers is a significant challenge. The moderate standard deviation indicates a consistent level of concern among respondents. This underscores the need for more qualified professionals to effectively address mental health issues among youths, as a limited workforce can restrict the quality and reach of mental health services.

Respondents also viewed the abandonment of patients by their families as a significant challenge (Mean: 3.57, Standard Deviation: 0.665). This high mean score indicates that the lack of family support is seen as a major obstacle to effective treatment. The moderate standard deviation reflects a consistent recognition of the importance of family involvement in mental health care. Family abandonment can impede treatment progress and have negative effects on patients' mental health.

The lowest mean score was for the impact of long-standing postures in attending to mental patients on increasing work stress (Mean: 3.47, Standard Deviation: 0.682). Respondents acknowledged that prolonged periods in such postures contribute to work-related stress among healthcare workers. The moderate standard deviation suggests a general agreement on this issue, highlighting the need for strategies to mitigate work-related stress in mental health settings.

Overall, the mean score for challenges in developing intervention plans to prevent mental illness among youths is 3.56. This falls within the "Strongly Agreed" category according to Table 5, indicating that respondents perceive these challenges as significant. The highest-rated challenges include the lack of funds for proper training and an insufficient workforce in psychiatric services. Addressing these issues is crucial for improving mental health interventions in Ogun State.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents on the Psychopathology (Causes) of Mental Illness among Youths of Ogun State

S/No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std Dev.
1	Most cases of mental illness among youths are linked to adverse childhood experiences e.g. rape, trauma	83 (36.9)	88 (39.1)	46 (20.4)	8 (3.6)	3.09	.843
2	Mental illnesses are mostly caused by abuse of substance such as alcohol among youths	90 (40.0)	97 (43.1)	26 (11.6)	12 (5.3)	3.18	.837
3	Personality traits such as perfectionism can lead to mental illness	77 (34.2)	99 (44.0)	45 (20.0)	4 (1.8)	3.11	.778
4	Gender is a major contributory factor to mantal illness	68 (30.2)	101 (44.9)	48 (21.3)	8 (3.6)	3.02	.813
5	Physical conditions cause such as injury to head or neurological conditions such as epilepsy can be a risk factor of mental illness	101 (44.9)	91 (40.4)	29 (12.9)	4 (1.8)	3.28	.755
6	Family history of mental illness or genetic factor can be a cause of mental illness	104 (46.2)	55 (24.4)	36 ()16.0	30 (13.3)	3.04	1.077
7	Being a long-term carer for someone with mental illness can be a contributory factor to mental illness	45 (20.0)	87 (38.7)	37 (16.4)	56 (24.9)	2.54	1.073
	Weighted mean x=3.04			Arithmetic mean		21.26	

Table 2: Distribution ofRespondents on the Psychopathology (Symptoms) of Mental Illness among Youths of Ogun State

Symptoms of Mental illness							
S/No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std Dev.
1	Isolation from group can be an initial symptom of mental illness	86 (38.2)	104 (46.2)	27 (12.0)	8 (3.6)	3.19	.781

S/No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std Dev.
2	Extreme mood changes can be an early symptom of mental illness	101 (44.9)	91 (40.4)	27 (12.0)	6 (2.7)	3.28	.776
3	Difficulties in concentration is one of early symptoms of mental illness	75 (33.3)	113 (50.2)	29 (12.9)	8 (3.6)	3.13	.768
4	Distorted body image due to eating disorder can be a symptom of mental illness	72 (32.0)	103 (45.8)	42 (18.7)	8 (3.6)	3.06	.805
5	Prolong and abnormal sleeping can be an early symptom of mental illness	77 (34.2)	108 (48.0)	32 (14.2)	8 (3.6)	3.13	.783
6	Decline in personal care can be an early symptom of mental illness	105 (46.7)	90 (40.0)	30 (13.3)	--	3.33	.701
7	Exaggerated of self-importance and constant admiration can be a symptom of mental illness.	108 (48.0)	71 (31.6)	40 (17.8)	6 (2.7)	3.25	.840
8	Excessive worry and fear can be an early symptom of mental illness	107 (47.6)	73 (32.4)	39 (17.3)	6 (2.7)	3.25	.835
	Weighted mean x=3.20			**Arithmetic Mean**		**25.62**	

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on the Possible Intervention Plans for Addressing Mental Illness among Youths in Ogun state.

S/No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std Dev.
1	Public awareness about mental health	154 (68.4)	37 (16.4)	16 (7.1)	18 (8.0)	3.45	.935
2	Reduction of stigma among mentally ill patients	136 (60.4)	65 (28.9)	14 (6.2)	10 (4.4)	3.45	.801
3	Effective law and policies against abusive use of sustenance's	144 (64.0)	61 (27.1)	14 (6.2)	6 (2.7)	3.52	.732
4	Partnership with community, religion and traditional healers promote holistic care for mental illness patients	138 (61.3)	63 (28.0)	12 (5.3)	12 (5.3)	3.45	.823
5	Improve training through seminar, workshop, conference improve health workers on treatment of mental illness	141 (62.7)	66 (29.3)	10 (4.4)	8 (3.6)	3.51	.745
6	Grant from health-related organization body is useful for treatment of mental illness	148 (65.8)	55 (24.4)	16 (7.1)	6 (2.7)	3.53	.744
7	occupational therapy	61 (27.1)	37 (16.4)	37 (16.4)	90 (40.0)	2.31	1.250
8	Addition of mental health services to NHIS	46 (20.4)	42 (18.7)	63 (28.0)	74 (32.9)	2.27	1.126
9	Family therapy	63 (28.0)	69 (30.7)	23 (10.2)	70 (31.1)	2.56	1.198
10	NGO support	79 (35.1)	35 (15.6)	21 (9.3)	90 (40.0)	2.46	1.326

11	Through the media	60 (26.7)	44 (19.6)	41 (18.2)	80 (35.6)	2.37	1.219
	Weighted mean x=2.99			**Arithmetic Mean**		**32.88**	

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on the Challenges in Developing Intervention Plan towards Prevention of mental illness among youths in Ogun state

S/No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std Dev.
1	Paucity of fund for proper training of psychiatric health workers	156 (69.3)	55 (24.4)	12 (5.3)	2 (.9)	3.62	.630
2	Insufficient health work force in psychiatric limit the effective service discharged.	152 (67.6)	61 (27.1)	8 (3.6)	4 (1.8)	3.60	.647
3	Long standing posture in attending to mental patients increase work stress	128 (56.9)	77 (34.2)	18 (8.0)	2 (.9)	3.47	.682
4	Inability of mentally ill patient family to provide funds for treatment hinder improvement of patients.	146 (64.9)	63 (28.0)	12 (5.3)	4 (1.8)	3.56	.680
5	Increased number of mental ill patient among youth affect utilization of available mental resources for their treatment.	142 (63.1)	61 (27.1)	18 (8.0)	4 (1.8)	3.52	.720
6	Inconsistency among patients to come for their regular checkups hinder their treatments and progress	144 (64.0)	65 (28.9)	12 (5.3)	4 (1.8)	3.55	.680
7	Abandoning of patients by their families hinder patient's treatments	148 "(65.8)	59 (26.2)	16 (7.1)	2 (.9)	3.57	.665
	Weighted mean x=3.56			**Arithmetic Mean**		**24.89**	

Table 5: Criteria for Interpreting the Four-point Likert scales for Overall Intervention Plan among Youths in Ogun State

Means	Interpretation
3.50-4.00	Strongly Agreed
2.75-3.49	Agreed
1.75-2.74	Strongly Disagreed
1.0-1.74	Disagreed

Discussion of Findings

The first research objective aimed to identify the psychopathology (causes) of mental illness among youths in Ogun State. The findings indicate that respondents believe physical conditions such as head injuries and epilepsy, as well as substance abuse, are the highest risk factors for mental illness among youths in Ogun State. This aligns with a study by Orlovska et al. (2013), which associated head injuries with a higher risk of schizophrenia, depression, and bipolar disorder. Similarly, Urbanoski et al. (2007) reported that individuals with mental disorders due to substance abuse exhibit more severe psychiatric symptoms, poorer treatment outcomes, and more frequent use of health services. The study's findings also acknowledge the multifaceted nature of mental illness, recognizing various potential causes, including substance abuse, physical conditions, and gender-related factors (Olawande et al., 2018). Fleury et al. (2014) confirmed that sociodemographic variables such as age, gender, civil status, education, and employment are major causes of substance abuse among individuals with severe mental

disorders. The variability in responses, particularly regarding long-term caregiving, suggests that this factor requires further investigation and discussion.

The second research objective focused on identifying the psychopathology (symptoms) of mental illness among youths in Ogun State, particularly early signs and symptoms. A decline in personal care received the highest responses. This finding is supported by Babasola et al. (2024), Nwobu (2024) who found that individuals with mental disorders often struggle to recognize their need for self-care. Other recognized indicators of mental health concerns include extreme mood changes, exaggerated self-importance, and distorted body image. While there is general consensus, there is also some variability in responses, indicating differing interpretations of symptoms among respondents. Overall, the data suggests that respondents are generally aware of various early signs and symptoms of mental illness among youths, with declines in personal care and extreme mood changes being the most frequently identified.

The third research objective was to assess possible intervention plans for addressing mental illness among youths in Ogun State. The majority of respondents agreed that financial grants from health-related organizations are useful for treating mental illness. Overall, the data indicates strong support for financial grants, effective laws against substance abuse, and improved training for health workers as important intervention plans. This finding is supported by Park et al. (2023), Patel et al. (2018), who emphasized the need for collaboration between governments, stakeholders, healthcare organizations, communities, and international agencies to implement and sustain effective mental health control and intervention programs. However, there are mixed opinions on the effectiveness of occupational therapy and the inclusion of mental health services in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The variability in responses suggests that these interventions require further discussion and evaluation.

The fourth research objective aimed to identify challenges in developing intervention plans for mental illness among youths in Ogun State. Respondents identified a lack of funds for the proper training of psychiatric health workers as a significant challenge. Overall, the data indicates several perceived challenges, including insufficient funding for training, a shortage of healthcare workforce in psychiatric services, family abandonment of patients, and work-related stress. These challenges are consistent with the reports of the World Health Organization (WHO, 2017). Adiukwu et al. (2024), Omiyi et al. (2024) highlighted a shortage of mental health professionals, particularly in rural areas, and limited funding and resources for mental health care in Nigeria. Addressing these challenges will be crucial for effectively preventing and managing mental illness among youths in the region.

Conclusion

The findings from this study highlights the significance of physical conditions, such as head injuries and neurological issues, and the abuse of alcohol as major contributors to mental illness among youths in Ogun State. Early signs of mental illness, including a decline in personal care and extreme mood changes, were consistently recognized by respondents. Additionally, there was strong agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of financial grants from health-related organizations for the treatment of mental illness. The importance of implementing effective laws and policies against substance abuse was also highlighted. Furthermore, significant challenges were identified in developing intervention plans for the prevention of mental illness among youths, with the lack of funds for proper training of psychiatric health workers and the insufficient health workforce in psychiatric services being major hurdles.

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