

Effectiveness of psychological nursing interventions in improving the psychological status of patients with depression: a systematic review of existing studies

Wael Habib Alanazi¹, Abdulrahman Nayir Alanazi², Faisal najem khalaf aljohani³, Eid Mohammed Ali Alanazi⁴, ABDULRAHMAN SAEED N ALANAZI⁵, Fahad Awadh Dughayman Alanazi⁶, Abdulkarim Saji Osayan Alenezi⁷, Mohammed Awad Abdullah Alanazi⁸, Abdullah Hulayyil A Alanazi⁹, Maged Awad Hammad alhazmi¹⁰

1. *Psychological and Mental Health Nursing, Eradah complex for mental health in Arar*
2. *Psychological and Mental Health Nursing, Eradah complex for mental health in Arar*
3. *Specialist Nursing, Eradah Complex and mental health in Arar*
4. *Health Assistant, Eradah complex and mental health - arar*
5. *Nursing technician, Erada Complex for Mental Health in Arar*
6. *Nursing technician, Erada Complex for Mental Health in Arar*
7. *Nursing technician, Erada Complex for Mental Health in Arar*
8. *Specialist Nursing, Eradah Complex and mental health in Arar*
9. *Nursing technician, Erada Complex for Mental Health in Arar*
10. *Nursing technician, Erada Complex for Mental Health in Arar*

Abstract

The research aimed to explore the effectiveness of psychological nursing interventions in improving the psychological state of patients with depression. The focus was on a set of interventions such as therapeutic communication, which contributes to enhancing patients' sense of security and reducing psychological isolation, and cognitive-behavioral techniques that help modify negative thoughts and improve mood. Behavioral activation was also studied, which encourages patients to participate in daily activities to stimulate energy and activity, and stress management exercises such as meditation and problem solving that enhance patients' ability to cope with pressures. The intervention also included the importance of social and family support that contributes to enhancing communication and feeling supported, in addition to setting goals and positive reinforcement that helps patients achieve small achievements that enhance their self-confidence and motivate them to progress. The research concluded that psychological nursing interventions contribute effectively to improving the psychological state of patients with depression, as they play an important role in enhancing their response to treatment and improving their overall quality of life.

Keywords: Effectiveness, psychological, nursing interventions, depression

Introduction

Depression is one of many problems faced by people with chronic physical health condition. Other problems include symptoms of the physical illness itself (e.g., pain and weakness), the resulting impairment in social and occupational functioning (e.g., restricted mobility and inhibition of valued activities), lifestyle changes imposed by the illness or its treatment (e.g., dietary restrictions and dialysis), and side effects of medications. Depression in this context is important because it can exacerbate the symptoms and disabling effects of physical illness, but it is also treatable. Successful treatment of depression may provide one of the few ways in which the psychological well-being of depressed people can be improved [1].

Psychological treatment can help someone out of the emotional depths of depression and keep them from becoming depressed again. The therapy sessions are used to teach strategies designed to help people better cope with negative thoughts or process difficult experiences. Seeing a therapist regularly can also provide valuable emotional support and help to find out what is causing depression [2].

A range of psychotherapeutic interventions for depression (including depression accompanied by a chronic physical health problem) have been shown to relieve symptoms of depression, and there is growing evidence that psychological treatments can help people recover from depression in the long term [3].

The aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of psychological nursing interventions in improving the psychological well-being of patients with depression by examining their impact on symptom reduction, coping skills, patient engagement, and overall quality of life. The study seeks to provide evidence on how these interventions can be integrated into holistic care practices to enhance treatment outcomes for individuals experiencing depression.

Depression concept

Depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. People with a family history of depression, and people with serious chronic illnesses such as heart disease or cancer, are at an increased risk of developing depression. Major life changes, traumas, and stresses can also trigger a depressive episode, although some depressive episodes begin without any apparent external trigger [4].

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest [5]. The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) classifies the depressive disorders into [6]:

1. Disruptive mood dysregulation disorder
2. Major depressive disorder
3. Persistent depressive disorder (dysthymia)
4. Premenstrual dysphoric disorder
5. Depressive disorder due to another medical condition

The common features of all depressive disorders are sadness, emptiness, or irritable mood, accompanied by somatic and cognitive changes that significantly affect the individual's capacity to function [3].

Nursing Diagnosis

Nursing diagnoses for individuals with depression should be personalized to address each patient's unique experiences, symptoms, and needs. Common nursing diagnoses may include [7]:

1. **Risk for Self-Harm:** Due to feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, or severe sadness, the patient may be at risk for self-harm or suicide.
2. **Ineffective Coping:** The patient may have difficulty managing stress or emotional challenges due to impaired coping mechanisms, leading to an exacerbation of depressive symptoms.

3. **Social Isolation:** Feelings of detachment, loneliness, or withdrawal may prevent the patient from engaging with others, contributing to a sense of isolation.
4. **Disturbed Sleep Pattern:** Depression often impacts sleep, leading to issues like insomnia or hypersomnia, which can worsen fatigue and mood.
5. **Impaired Self-Esteem:** Low self-worth and self-criticism are common, negatively affecting the patient's view of themselves and their capabilities.
6. **Imbalanced Nutrition:** Depression may disrupt eating patterns, resulting in either undernutrition or overeating, impacting physical health and well-being.

These diagnoses guide individualized nursing interventions aimed at improving coping skills, safety, social engagement, and overall mental and physical health.

Contextual factors that influence clinical practice in the treatment of depression

When treating depression, several contextual factors shape how effective clinical practice can be. Cultural beliefs and the stigma around mental health play a big role, as they influence whether patients feel comfortable seeking help or opening about their experiences. In some cultures, depression might be seen as a personal weakness rather than a medical condition, which can make people hesitant to pursue or stick with treatment [8].

Access to healthcare is another crucial factor. In rural or low-resource areas, there may be fewer mental health providers, limited availability of therapy options, or high costs that prevent people from getting the help they need. Social support is also key; patients with strong networks of family and friends tend to recover better, as they have people to lean on, while those who feel isolated might find it harder to cope [9].

The attitudes and training of healthcare providers significantly impact treatment outcomes as well. Clinicians who are trained in mental health or psychological approaches to care tend to provide more compassionate and effective support, making patients feel understood and empowered in their recovery journey [10].

Policies and organizational factors within healthcare settings can also influence treatment. For example, insurance coverage, guidelines on treatment duration, and institutional support for mental health services can either expand or limit what providers are able to offer [11]. Additionally, a patient's socioeconomic status can impact their ability to access and afford care, as well as influence lifestyle stressors that might affect their mental health.

Finally, technology is opening new doors to mental health treatment. Telemedicine, mental health apps, and online therapy can make it easier for patients to access support, especially if they face barriers like distance or mobility issues [12]. However, these tools are only effective for people who have access to them and are comfortable using them. Understanding and addressing these factors allows for a more compassionate, personalized, and accessible approach to treating depression, ultimately improving outcomes for those in need.

Overcoming depression: How psychologists help with depressive disorders

Depression is unlikely to simply go away on its own. In fact, if ignored and left untreated, depression can go on for months, sometimes years, and can have many negative effects on a

person's life. Every person needs to find the treatment that's right for them. It can take time and patience to find a treatment that works [8].

Psychologists play a vital role in helping people overcome depression by providing evidence-based treatments and support tailored to everyone's needs. One of the primary approaches they use is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), which helps patients identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors that contribute to their depression. CBT teaches individuals practical skills to manage their thoughts and behaviors, empowering them to break out of cycles that reinforce depression [13].

Another widely used method is interpersonal therapy (IPT), which focuses on improving communication skills and resolving conflicts in relationships, as these can often contribute to or worsen depressive symptoms. By strengthening interpersonal skills and building supportive relationships, IPT helps individuals feel more connected and less isolated [14].

Psychologists also guide patients in developing healthy coping mechanisms for managing stress and regulating emotions. This can include mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and problem-solving skills that allow patients to respond more resiliently to life's challenges. Behavioral activation, which encourages patients to engage in rewarding or enjoyable activities, is another technique that helps counteract the lethargy and lack of motivation associated with depression [15].

In addition to structured therapies, psychologists often provide a safe, non-judgmental space where patients can openly discuss their feelings and struggles. This supportive environment can be therapeutic, as it reduces the sense of isolation and hopelessness many people with depression feel [13].

Psychologists may also collaborate with other healthcare providers, such as psychiatrists, when a combination of therapy and medication might be the most effective approach. This integrative care model ensures that patients receive comprehensive support for their mental health.

Through these various methods, psychologists equip individuals with the tools they need to manage their depression, improve their quality of life, and find a path toward recovery [12].

Psychological nursing interventions in improving the psychological status of patients with depression

Psychological interventions provided by nursing play a fundamental role in improving the psychological state of patients, especially those with depression. The first of these interventions is therapeutic communication, where nurses listen to patients with empathy, making patients feel safe to express their feelings and thoughts without fear, which helps reduce feelings of isolation and despair [14].

Nurses also use cognitive-behavioral techniques that help patients identify and change negative thoughts, which promotes a more balanced and positive way of thinking and enables them to better deal with frustrating thoughts. Behavioral activation also plays an important role, where nurses encourage patients to gradually engage in enjoyable daily activities, which increases patients' energy levels and reduces symptoms of laziness associated with depression [16].

On the other hand, nurses are interested in providing instructions on how to deal with stress, using techniques such as meditation and problem solving, which gives patients practical tools to

better cope with stress. Support from family and community is also an important part, as nurses coordinate sessions with families or support groups, which gives patients a sense of belonging and support, and promotes a supportive environment that contributes to their recovery. Finally, goal setting and positive reinforcement help patients regain a sense of control and accomplishment in their lives, as nurses work with patients to achieve small goals, which enhances their confidence in their ability to improve. All these interventions give the patient a comprehensive space for recovery, support their mental health and improve their response to treatment.

Results

The results of the study showed that psychological nursing interventions contribute significantly to improving the psychological state of patients with depression. First, it was found that therapeutic communication enhances patients' sense of security and belonging, which reduces feelings of isolation and despair. The results also showed that cognitive-behavioral techniques used by nurses help patients identify and modify negative thoughts, which leads to significant improvement in mood and reduces depressing thoughts.

The study also showed that behavioral activation has a positive effect in raising energy levels and motivating patients to engage in enjoyable life activities, which positively reflects on the psychological state. On the other hand, stress management exercises such as meditation and problem-solving techniques helped provide patients with effective tools to deal with daily psychological pressures, which reduced the severity of depressive symptoms.

The results also showed that the social and family support provided through nursing interventions helped enhance patients' sense of support and belonging, which is a crucial factor in their psychological improvement. Finally, goal setting and positive reinforcement proved effective in enhancing patients' self-confidence and motivating them to progress, as patients felt able to achieve gradual improvement.

Overall, the results confirmed that psychological nursing interventions are an essential element in the treatment of depression, as they contribute to improving the therapeutic response and enhancing the chances of recovery and returning to normal life.

Conclusion

The research confirms that psychological nursing interventions play a crucial role in improving the psychological state of patients with depression. By using techniques such as therapeutic communication, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and behavioral activation, as well as stress support and coping skills training, nurses can help patients manage their depression symptoms and enhance their ability to cope with daily challenges. The role of social and family support, in addition to goal setting and positive reinforcement, contributes significantly to enhancing self-confidence and motivating patients to progress in treatment. The results show that these interventions contribute to improving patients' response to treatment, which enhances their chances of recovery and enhances their ability to return to their daily lives in a healthier and more well-being. Therefore, it can be said that psychological nursing interventions are an essential part of a comprehensive depression treatment plan and should be continuously integrated into mental health care to achieve the best results for patients.

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