

Triggers of anorexia nervosa in adolescents and young adults and therapeutic input in outpatient setting: A qualitative approach**Shazia Mushtaq**

Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, Australia

Statement of Problem: Anorexia is a chronic illness of adolescence, with significant mortality (up to 10%) and morbidity. The illness is marked by significant weight loss (15% of normal or expected weight for age and height) with intense fear of being fat. Psychiatric comorbidities such as anxiety disorders, phobias, affective disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders and personality disorders are common in anorexia. Serious physical complications rates are high and may continue into the adult life. Because of high cost of treatment and inadequate provision of service many young people end up in unsuitable general health facilities. Average duration of illness is about 6 years.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: We conducted a qualitative study using thematic analysis on four candidates, age range 14-20 years following consent. Semi-structured interviews lasting for an hour were conducted in place of patient's choice. Interviews were transcribed and the details were analyzed using thematic analysis. To validate the analysis, a chunk of data was analyzed by the second researcher for emerging themes and then compared with researcher's interpretation, which helped to increase internal validity.

Findings: Several themes inclusive of delay in treatment, patient clinician relationship, supportive social network, patient's health seeking behavior, cognitive styles, experience of treatment, family therapy, role of psychoeducation, family dynamic difficulties, recovery, therapeutic relationship, insight and comorbidity with other psychiatric disorders emerged as the main themes.

Conclusion & Significance: Based on these themes, it became apparent that there are qualitative aspects to the triggers as well as treatment in the outpatient setting that are rarely incorporated in the treatment packages at the outpatient service level. Personalized care plans informed by the themes and narrative young people who present with this illness are likely to reduce morbidity and mortality as well as help towards preventative strategies.

Biography

Shazia Mushtaq is Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Head of Service for Community Child Psychiatry in Perth. She has special expertise and interest in eating disorders and neurodevelopmental disorders. She has set up services and contributed to service developments in various continents (Europe, Australia) and is very passionate about patient and career involvement in service designs and delivery in the least restrictive environment. She is actively involved in teaching training and governance activities. She has also been part of the leading in mental health reforms for which the child and adolescent mental health service won State Award for Clinical Excellence. Her current clinical project is the redesign of the acute services pathway with a view of integration of this model within the community services.

shazia.mushtaq@outlook.com

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