

Article: 1682

Topic: EPV31 - e-Poster 31: Schizophrenia

Clinical Implication of Smoking Among Patients with Schizophrenia at a Tertiary Institution in South East Nigeria.

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Introduction: The chronic and debilitating nature of schizophrenia creates a disease with marked clinical and economic consequences. Among patients with schizophrenia the prevalence of smoking is significantly higher than in the general populace. Smoking in schizophrenia appears to be associated with increased psychopathology and disability. However, there is a dearth of Nigerian studies attempting to determine the effects of smoking on clinical outcome among patients with schizophrenia. Understanding the effects of smoking on the severity of disability and psychopathology in schizophrenia would help us to plan appropriate psychosocial interventions for these patients

Objectives: To determine if comorbid smoking in schizophrenia is associated with increased disability and psychopathology.

Aims:

- To determine the difference in the severity of disability and psychopathology among smokers and non smokers with schizophrenia.
- To determine the association between dosage of antipsychotics prescribed and disability among smokers and non smokers with schizophrenia.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study in which 367 out patients with ICD 10 diagnosis of schizophrenia were recruited. Socio-demographic questionnaire, Present State Examination Schizophrenia and Tobacco sections, Positive And Negative Syndrome Scale and World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedules were administered.

Results: Current smoking was associated with increased disability ($t=2.32$, $p<0.02$) among the participants studied.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicate that smoking in Nigerian schizophrenia patients is associated with significant disability. Effective measures to promote smoking cessation in schizophrenia should be implemented in Nigerian patients.