Staying in School: A Systematic Review of Interventions for Individuals with Mental Illness

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Objectives of Presentation:

- Recognize the impact of chronic mental illness on educational pursuits
- Discuss occupational therapy related interventions to support individuals with chronic mental illness in an academic setting
- Describe implications of educational attainment on social participation and work for individuals with chronic mental illness

PICO: What is the evidence for interventions that support the outcome of successful participation in educational settings for individuals with a mental health diagnosis?

Methods:

- Databases searched: PubMed, PsycINFO, CINAHL, Scopus
- Search Terms
  - P: Adolescent, Student, Mental disorder, Mental diagnos*
  - I: Occupational Therapy, Program, Treatment, Support, Service, Support*, Servic*
  - O: Academic Functioning, Diploma, Retention
- Critiquing Articles
  - Level I-IV: Evaluation of Quality of an Intervention Study Appendix E & F
  - Level V: Level 5 Evidence Critique
  - Qualitative: Critical Review Form - Qualitative Studies (Version 2.0)
- Number of Articles Found
  - Initial search yielded: 1488 articles
  - Final number of articles in systematic review: 9 quantitative and 1 qualitative

Results:

Themes: Outcomes resulting from single interventions with individuals with a mental health diagnosis

1. Skill Development
   a. Moderate evidence to support interventions which target academic skills as part of completing school
      i. Mentoring, supported education programs, and the use of memory strategies yielded statistically significant improvements in academic skills
      ii. A positive trend (improved academic skills) seen after use of a Cognitive Remediation computer program.
   b. Limited evidence to support interventions addressing social skills as part of successful educational pursuits
      i. Mentoring and supported education yielded statistically significant improvements in social skills
      ii. Supported education also yielded clinically significant improvements in social skill development
      iii. A mentoring approach resulted in a positive trend towards enhanced social skills

2. School Attendance
   a. Limited evidence to support interventions designed to increase rates of enrollment in educational programs
      i. Mentoring and supported education demonstrated a positive trend for increasing enrollment, average over 50%
   b. Limited evidence to support interventions to increase retention rates of students in an academic program
      i. Mentoring and cognitive remediation yielded statistically significant improvements in retention rates
      ii. Use of either Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), psychoeducation, or supported education yielded a positive trend towards increased retention rates

3. Improved Symptoms
   a. Moderate evidence to support interventions for decreased symptoms in support of academic participation
      i. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), cognitive remediation, mentoring, and supported education each yielded statistically significant results for improving symptoms
      ii. CBT and supported education yielded clinically significant results as a means of improving symptoms
      iii. Use of DBT demonstrated a positive trend towards improving symptoms

4. Feelings of Competence as a Student
   a. Insufficient evidence to support the use of interventions to enhance feelings of competence as a student
      i. Cognitive remediation, mentoring, and supported education each reported statistically significant improvements in participants’ reported feelings of competence
      ii. A mentoring approach, with additional usage of a binder of specific skill sets, resulted in a trend towards enhanced feelings of competence as a student

References


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