



MOHAMMED HASSEN

University of Gondar, Ethiopia

Living with Stigmatized Identity: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Lived Experiences of Patients with Chronic Illness in Ethiopia

Abstract:

Introduction: Anticipated stigma or the fear of future prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping is a bad experience that harms the mental and physical well-being of individuals with chronic illnesses. Exploring the lived experiences of anticipated stigma is crucial for enhancing the standard of care for all patients, especially in countries with few resources. With this context, the goal of this study was to explore the experiences of chronic illness patients who attended follow-up clinics in the Amhara Region Referral Hospitals in Ethiopia.

Methods: Twelve participants with chronic illnesses were interviewed using semi-structured questions after being purposefully chosen from the University of Gondar Specialized Hospital and Felege Hiwot Specialized Hospital. The data were analyzed using an interpretative phenomenological inductive approach.

Results: The overarching category was “Living with stigmatized identities.” The three main themes identified were chronic illness, altered self, and suggested solutions to handle disease-related consequences and the disease outcome. Behavioral changes, discrimination, health service-related factors, stigma, solutions, and signs of the disease outcome were the six superordinate themes.

Conclusion: Our conclusion that a stigmatized identity incorporates significant experiences related to chronic illnesses and an altered self leads us to recommend solutions that address both the disease’s symptoms and its side effects. Reorganizing chronic care systems, using evidence-based protocols, improving patient education about opportunities and challenges, expanding access to senior chronic care experts, such as chronic care nurses, and expanding the availability of clinical management at the closest healthcare facility are among the interventions that are effective in improving outcomes in this group of patients.

Biography

Dr. Mohammed Hassen is an Assistant Professor of Medical Nursing at the School of Nursing at University of Gondar. He received a Bachelor of Degree in Advanced clinical Nursing and a Master of Degree in Medical Nursing from University of Gondar, Ethiopia in 2009 and 2013 respectively. He also earned a diploma in clinical Nursing from Bahir Dar Health Science College, Ethiopia in 2004. He is currently completed the doctor of nursing program. Currently, he is working as an Assistant Professor of Medical Nursing at the School of Nursing at University of Gondar. He has extensive experience in clinical nursing practice, Nursing Education, Research, Leadership, and community service. Dr. Mohammed began his Nursing career over 19 years ago as a clinical nurse, serving the community in the rural health care facility. Then, he has joined the University of Gondar Specialized Hospital as a clinical nurse in 2004. Thus, throughout most of his career, as a clinical nurse practitioner, clinical teaching preceptor, Nursing team leader and coordinator, Hospital Reform tool coordinator and medical nursing consultant, he has worked at University of Gondar specialized hospital.