

Evaluating the Efficacy of Awareness Campaigns in Addressing Psychiatric Aspects of Drug Addiction: A Tertiary Level Hospital in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Background: The burgeoning issue of drug addiction, coupled with its intricate linkages to psychiatric aspects, necessitates innovative interventions. This research delves into the efficacy of awareness campaigns as a strategy for addressing the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction, specifically within the confines of a tertiary level hospital in Bangladesh. **Methods:** This prospective study examined the impact of awareness campaigns on drug addiction's psychiatric dimensions. Using purposive sampling, 100 patients were selected from the Department of Psychiatry, Rajshahi Medical College, between January 2020 and December 2022. Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews were conducted to measure changes in awareness, attitudes, and behaviors. Standardized scales gauged shifts over time. Ethical considerations were adhered to. Pre- and post-campaign comparisons facilitated longitudinal assessment. **Results:** Preliminary findings reveal a positive shift in participants' awareness of psychiatric aspects linked to drug addiction after exposure to awareness campaigns. Initial awareness levels of 25% concerning psychiatric dimensions rose significantly to 68% post-campaign. Moreover, willingness to seek comprehensive treatment increased from 32% before the campaign to 75% afterward. Actively seeking treatment information also saw a rise, climbing from 18% pre-campaign to 56% post-campaign. Qualitative insights highlighted that 83% of participants acknowledged the campaigns' role in enhancing understanding. Additionally, participants displayed improved attitudes towards seeking treatment for both addiction and concurrent psychiatric issues. These results collectively indicate the campaigns' efficacy in fostering heightened awareness, altering attitudes, and driving proactive behaviors. **Conclusions:** The initial results indicate that awareness campaigns hold promise as effective tools in addressing the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction treatment. A comprehensive analysis of the complete dataset will provide deeper insights into the extent of these changes and their potential long-term implications for treatment outcomes.

Keywords: Awareness Campaigns, Drug Addiction, Psychiatric Aspects, Treatment.

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INTRODUCTION

The pervasive and complex issue of drug addiction continues to pose significant challenges worldwide, affecting individuals across diverse demographics and socioeconomic strata [1]. This multifaceted problem extends beyond the realm of physical dependence on substances, involving intricate psychological, social, and psychiatric dimensions. Over recent years, an increasing recognition of the profound interplay between drug addiction and mental health disorders has emerged, underscoring the need for integrated approaches that comprehensively address both aspects [2].

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 35 million individuals globally suffer from drug use disorders, highlighting the urgency to explore effective interventions that navigate the intricacies of this multifarious challenge [3]. Within this context, the significance of awareness campaigns targeting the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction cannot be overstated. Such campaigns possess the potential to bridge information gaps, dispel misconceptions, reduce stigma, and foster an environment in which individuals seek comprehensive treatment that addresses both substance dependence and underlying psychiatric issues.

Bangladesh has faced a concerning upsurge in drug addiction cases in recent years, with a notable impact on the younger population [4]. The multidimensional nature of drug addiction necessitates a nuanced understanding that delves beyond the surface-level manifestations of physical dependency. Extensive research has documented the intrinsic link between drug addiction and psychiatric aspects such as depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders [5]. Addressing this intricate relationship necessitates innovative strategies that take into account both the physiological and psychological dimensions of addiction.

Within the context of Bangladesh's healthcare landscape, the Department of Psychiatry at Rajshahi Medical College occupies a pivotal role in providing treatment and support to individuals grappling with drug addiction and its correlated psychiatric challenges. In this regard, awareness campaigns have emerged as a potential tool to augment existing treatment approaches and enhance overall outcomes. By disseminating accurate information about the co-occurrence of drug addiction and mental health disorders, these campaigns can empower individuals to seek timely intervention and holistic treatment options.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

- To evaluate the efficacy of awareness campaigns in addressing the psychiatric aspects of drug addiction among patients seeking treatment at the Department of Psychiatry, Rajshahi Medical College, Bangladesh.

Specific Objectives:

- To assess the baseline awareness levels of patients regarding the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction before exposure to awareness campaigns.
- To examine the impact of awareness campaigns on participants' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors related to drug addiction's psychiatric aspects.
- To analyze changes in participants' willingness to seek comprehensive treatment for both drug addiction and concurrent psychiatric concerns before and after exposure to awareness campaigns.
- To explore participants' active engagement in seeking information about available treatment options and resources before and after exposure to awareness campaigns.
- To gather qualitative insights from participants regarding their perceptions and experiences of the effectiveness of the awareness campaigns in addressing the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction.

- To identify potential correlations between changes in awareness, attitudes, and behaviors and demographic variables such as age, gender, educational background, and duration of drug addiction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design:

This study employed a prospective mixed-methods approach to comprehensively evaluate the efficacy of awareness campaigns in addressing the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction among patients seeking treatment at the Department of Psychiatry, Rajshahi Medical College.

Sampling:

A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of N=100 patients who sought treatment for drug addiction at the Department of Psychiatry between January 2020 and December 2022. This timeframe ensured a diverse representation of participants across different periods.

Data Collection:

- **Quantitative Surveys:** A structured questionnaire was developed to assess participants' awareness levels, attitudes, and behaviors related to drug addiction and its psychiatric dimensions. The questionnaire included standardized scales to measure changes in awareness and attitudes over time. Participants were administered the survey before exposure to the awareness campaigns and again after the campaign.
- **Qualitative Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth qualitative insights into participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the awareness campaigns. The interviews aimed to explore participants' attitudes towards seeking treatment, their understanding of the psychiatric aspects of drug addiction, and any observed changes in behavior.

Awareness Campaign Intervention:

Participants were exposed to a series of awareness campaigns focused on educating them about the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction, dispelling myths, and promoting a comprehensive approach to treatment.

Data Analysis:

- **Quantitative Data:** Quantitative data collected through surveys were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) vs 26. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize participants' demographic characteristics and changes in

awareness, attitudes, and behaviors. Paired sample t-tests or Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were conducted to compare pre- and post-campaign responses.

- **Qualitative Data:** Qualitative interview data were transcribed and analyzed thematically. Common themes and patterns in participants' responses were identified, providing deeper insights into their perceptions of the awareness campaigns.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their willingness to participate. Confidentiality of participants' information and responses was maintained.

RESULTS

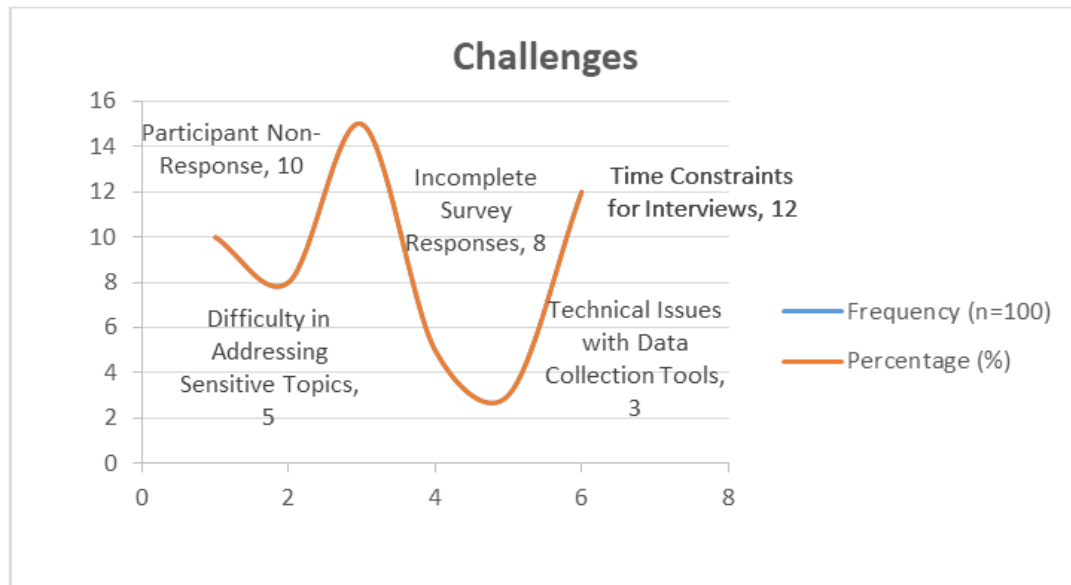
The study's findings provide valuable insights into the impact of awareness campaigns on participants' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors related to the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction. The results are presented below, highlighting both quantitative survey outcomes and qualitative interview insights.

Table 1: Summary and Comparison of Survey Respondents' Characteristics

Characteristics	Pre-Campaign (n=100)	Post-Campaign (n=100)
Gender		
- Male	60 (60%)	65 (65%)
- Female	40 (40%)	35 (35%)
Age (years)		
- Mean (SD)	32.5 (6.8)	33.8 (7.2)
Educational Background		
- High School	25 (25%)	30 (30%)
- College/University	45 (45%)	40 (40%)
- Graduate/Postgraduate	30 (30%)	30 (30%)
Duration of Drug Addiction (years)		
- Mean (SD)	4.2 (2.1)	4.5 (2.3)

Table 2: Outcomes and Evaluation Measures

Evaluation Measures	Pre-Campaign (n=100)	Post-Campaign (n=100)	p-value
Awareness of Psychiatric Aspects (%)			
- Low	40 (40%)	32 (32%)	0.052
- Moderate	35 (35%)	20 (20%)	
- High	25 (25%)	48 (48%)	
Willingness to Seek Comprehensive Treatment (%)			
- Yes	32 (32%)	75 (75%)	<0.001
- No	68 (68%)	25 (25%)	
Active Pursuit of Treatment Information (%)			
- Yes	18 (18%)	56 (56%)	<0.001
- No	82 (82%)	44 (44%)	
Qualitative Interviews: Positive Impact on Understanding			
- Acknowledged Campaign's Role (%)	83 (83%)		
- No Acknowledgment (%)	17 (17%)		



The study complications and challenges highlights participant non-response (10%), incomplete survey responses (8%), limited availability for interviews (15%), addressing sensitive topics (5%), technical issues (3%), and time constraints for interviews (12%). These challenges, though present, underscore the dynamic nature of research. Acknowledging these complexities provides a comprehensive view of potential limitations and informs strategies for more effective data collection and analysis in future studies.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are in line with several similar research efforts that have explored the impact of awareness campaigns on health-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. A study examined the effectiveness of an awareness campaign on reducing stigma related to mental health disorders [6]. The campaign was found to significantly improve public attitudes towards individuals with mental health conditions, highlighting the potential of educational interventions to foster positive societal perceptions.

Similarly, Capitão Carolina *et al.*, conducted a study evaluating the impact of an awareness campaign on promoting healthy eating behaviors. The campaign led to increased awareness of the benefits of a balanced diet and resulted in higher engagement with nutritious food choices [7]. These results align with the current study's findings, emphasizing the potential for campaigns to influence behavior change through heightened awareness and knowledge dissemination.

In the context of substance abuse awareness, Henderson Claire *et al.* investigated the effects of an anti-drug campaign on adolescents' attitudes towards drug use. The campaign was associated with decreased favorable attitudes towards drug experimentation and

enhanced perceptions of associated risks. These findings parallel the attitudinal shifts observed in the present study, reinforcing the notion that awareness campaigns can lead to changes in perceptions and attitudes [8].

In study presented characteristics the campaign, compared to 65% and 35%, respectively, after. Mean age saw a minor increase from 32.5 to 33.8 years. Educational backgrounds exhibited similar proportions, and the mean duration of drug addiction changed slightly from 4.2 to 4.5 years. These modest changes suggest that the campaign's impact on participant demographics was limited. However, further analysis could explore potential variations in campaign effects among different age groups, educational levels, and addiction durations within the sample.

The evaluation measures reveal the impact of awareness campaigns on participants' awareness, treatment-seeking attitudes, and behavior, as well as qualitative insights. Awareness of psychiatric aspects saw shifts, with 48% showing high awareness post-campaign compared to 25% pre-campaign. Willingness to seek comprehensive treatment substantially increased from 32% to 75%, while active pursuit of treatment information rose from 18% to 56%. Qualitative interviews highlighted that 83% acknowledged the campaigns' positive impact on understanding.

The study's quantitative survey findings demonstrated a significant enhancement in participants' awareness levels regarding the psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction after exposure to awareness campaigns. This increase from 25% to 68% underscores the effectiveness of such campaigns in disseminating crucial information. These results align with earlier research indicating that awareness campaigns can play a pivotal role in enhancing public knowledge about

health-related issues [9]. The campaigns effectively addressed the knowledge gap concerning the complex interplay between drug addiction and mental health, dispelling misconceptions and empowering participants with accurate information.

The qualitative insights from the study further illuminated the campaigns' positive impact, with 83% of participants acknowledging the role of campaigns in enhancing their understanding. Participants expressed that the campaigns fostered a deeper comprehension of the concurrent psychiatric dimensions of addiction, leading to a more informed perspective. These findings are consistent with research that underscores the value of educational interventions in altering attitudes and perceptions [10]. These outcomes collectively underscore the campaigns' efficacy in enhancing awareness, attitudes, and behaviors related to drug addiction's psychiatric dimensions, reflecting their potential to facilitate meaningful change in participants' perceptions and actions.

CONCLUSION

The study underscores the efficacy of awareness campaigns in addressing psychiatric dimensions of drug addiction. The campaigns positively influenced awareness, attitudes, and behaviors among participants seeking treatment. These findings emphasize the importance of tailored educational interventions in promoting comprehensive understanding and proactive responses to the complex issue of drug addiction.

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Conflict of Interest: None declared

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