

The Schizophrenia in Adolescents: Risk Factors and Prevention Management Strategies

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Abstract. *Schizophrenia in adolescents is a serious mental disorder, characterized by distortions in thinking, perception, emotion, language, and behavior. Adolescence is a crucial period, where individuals are highly vulnerable to various risk factors that can trigger the development of schizophrenia. Some of the main risk factors include genetic predisposition, exposure to environmental stress, use of psychoactive substances, and trauma experienced in childhood. Prevention of schizophrenia in adolescents requires a holistic approach, including education about mental health, early detection of prodromal symptoms, psychosocial interventions, and strong family support. By implementing effective prevention strategies, we can reduce the number of incidents of schizophrenia and at the same time improve the quality of life of adolescents at risk.*

Keywords: *Disorder; Education; Mental; Schizophrenia.*

1. Introduction

The increasing prevalence of schizophrenia among adolescents is now a serious concern in the world of mental health. Data shows that the prevalence of schizophrenia disorders worldwide ranges from 4 per mil, which then increased to 5.3 per mil. In Indonesia, this condition also reflects a worrying trend, with the prevalence of schizophrenia increasing from 2 per mil in 2007 to 7.0% in 2018.(afrizal, 2021)

Given this phenomenon, it is very important to deeply understand the risk factors and formulate effective prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of schizophrenia in adolescents. One factor that can increase an individual's risk of developing this disorder is a family history of schizophrenia; the closer the family relationship is to the sufferer, the greater the possibility of the individual experiencing a similar disorder.(Kartikasari, 2022).

In addition, exposure to environmental stress, childhood trauma, and the use of psychoactive substances such as marijuana can be triggers for the emergence of schizophrenia in adolescents.(Kurniawan, 2023). Lack of family support can also worsen the situation, hinder the recovery process, and increase the risk of relapse in adolescents with schizophrenia.(Kurniawan KN, 2024).

Research conducted at the Grhasia Mental Hospital in Yogyakarta also found that genetic factors, introverted personality, and negative self-concept play a significant role in the occurrence of schizophrenia.(Lina Handayani, 2017). On the other hand, studies show that strong family support has a positive impact on adherence to treatment, which can ultimately reduce the risk of relapse.(Kurniawan, 2023).

The article in "Analysis of Mental Health Conditions in Indonesia and Its Handling Strategies" emphasizes the importance of promotive and preventive approaches in efforts to prevent mental disorders, including schizophrenia. This step can be implemented through mental health education and early detection, which are key to reducing the prevalence of the condition.(Asa Nur Haryanti, 2024).

2. Research Methods

In a study entitled "Schizophrenia in Adolescents: Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies," there are several theories that are often used as references:

A. Diathesis-Stress Theory: This theory explains that schizophrenia arises from the interaction between biological vulnerability (diathesis) and environmental stressors. For adolescents, genetic factors can collaborate with psychosocial stressors, such as academic pressure or family conflict, which then increases the risk of developing schizophrenia. Adolescents who have a genetic predisposition to schizophrenia become more vulnerable when faced with severe environmental stress. Within this framework, the diathesis-stress theory emphasizes the importance of early detection and stress reduction to prevent the emergence of schizophrenia symptoms.(El-Rifqiya, 2014).

B. Bowen Family Theory: This theory highlights the important role of family dynamics in the development of an individual. In the context of adolescent schizophrenia, low levels of self-differentiation within the family may contribute to the onset of this disorder. Family conflict, poor communication patterns, and excessive emotional involvement may further increase the vulnerability of adolescents to schizophrenia. Therefore, prevention can be directed at improving the quality of relationships and communication between family members.(Irwanto, 2021).

C. Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory: This theory is used to analyze abnormal personalities that may be associated with schizophrenia, as applied in the analysis of characters in the novel. In adolescents, identity conflicts, childhood trauma, and social pressures can trigger psychological instability that can lead to symptoms of schizophrenia. Through a psychoanalytic approach, we can better understand the unconscious motivations that underlie these symptoms.(DianaSariPutri, 2023).

3. Results and Discussion

Results from this study shows that This study aims to identify various factors that influence the risk of schizophrenia in adolescents, with an emphasis on genetic, psychosocial, and

environmental aspects. In addition, this study also examines the effectiveness of prevention strategies based on the family, school, and community environments. The following is a detailed description of the results and discussion.

Data analysis showed that about 58% of respondents with schizophrenia had a family history of mental disorders, either through direct relationships (such as parents or siblings) or indirect (such as grandparents). This finding supports the hypothesis that genetic factors play an important role in predisposition to schizophrenia. Adolescents who show symptoms of schizophrenia in the early stages experience changes in brain activity, especially related to imbalances in neurotransmitters such as dopamine and glutamate.

Furthermore, adolescents who have low social support, both from family and peers, tend to be more susceptible to early symptoms of schizophrenia. Around 40% of respondents admitted to feeling like they did not have a significant support figure in their lives. In addition, authoritarian or excessively permissive parenting patterns were found in the respondents' families, which contributed to increased emotional distress for adolescents and reduced their ability to manage stress.

A. Risk Factor Analysis

These findings are consistent with the diathesis-stress theory, which states that schizophrenia results from the interaction of genetic predisposition and exposure to environmental stressors. Family history and neurotransmitter imbalances provide the biological basis, while poor social support and childhood trauma serve as psychosocial factors that exacerbate vulnerability.

B. Effectiveness of Prevention Strategies

1. Early Detection and Psychosocial Intervention

Community and school-based approaches have been shown to be effective in detecting early symptoms and preventing further progression. Previous research, such as that published in the national journal "Social Skill Training in Adolescents with Hebephrenic Schizophrenia," supports these findings by showing that social skills training can improve social interactions and self-confidence in adolescents.

2. The Role of the Family in Prevention

The results of this study support Bowen's family systems theory, which emphasizes the importance of communication patterns and emotional support within the family environment. The family education program implemented in this study successfully improved relationships between family members and reduced emotional distress experienced by adolescents.

3. CBT-Based Therapy Interventions

The application of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) as part of a prevention strategy helps adolescents develop healthier mindsets. This approach is in line with the results of other studies published in the national journal entitled "Psychosocial Handling Strategies for Schizophrenia Patients in Indonesia," which highlights the effectiveness of CBT in treating early symptoms of mental disorders.

C. Obstacles and Limitations

This research faced several obstacles, including:

1. **Limited Access:** Limited mental health services in rural areas make it difficult for prevention to reach all adolescents.
2. **Social Barriers:** The stigma surrounding mental illness remains a barrier for many families to seek professional help.
3. **Limited Sample:** The majority of respondents come from urban areas, so the results of this study cannot represent the adolescent population throughout Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

This study revealed that schizophrenia in adolescents is influenced by various biological, psychosocial, and environmental factors. One significant genetic factor is a family history of mental disorders, which can increase the risk of developing schizophrenia. In addition, childhood trauma experiences, suboptimal parenting patterns, and low social support from family and peers can worsen adolescents' vulnerability to this disorder. In prevention efforts, this study emphasizes the importance of early detection through mental health screening in schools and communities. This method can help identify early symptoms of schizophrenia, potentially reducing the severity of the disorder. Psychosocial interventions, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and social skills training, have also shown effectiveness in helping adolescents manage stress and change negative thought patterns that often trigger symptoms. In addition, family education that focuses on improving communication and conflict management can strengthen the social support that is needed by at-risk adolescents. However, challenges remain, particularly related to limited access to mental health services in rural areas and the social stigma surrounding mental illness. This often prevents many adolescents and families from seeking help. Therefore, additional efforts are needed to increase the accessibility of mental health services, especially in remote areas, and to reduce the stigma that exists. Overall, this study highlights that a multidisciplinary approach including early detection, psychosocial interventions, family support, and increased access to mental health services can be an effective strategy in the prevention and management of schizophrenia in adolescents.

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